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Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council

on

Andrei Sakharov and Human Rights in the USSR

February 19, 1987
Bal Harbour, FL

The AFL-CIO welcomes the release from forced exile of Nobel Peace Prize winner and human rights advocate Andrei Sakharov. We wish this valiant fighter for human rights, good health and strength in his struggle for justice and dignity.

Last year when he was under virtual house arrest in the city of Gorky, the AFL-CIO invited Dr. Sakharov to come to the United States to receive the George Meany Human Rights Award. We renew that invitation today, and we call upon the Soviet authorities to respect his right to travel and to speak freely, in accordance with the Helsinki Accords.

Despite the release of Dr. Sakharov and other prominent dissidents, thousands of prisoners of conscience languish inside Soviet prisons, forced labor camps and psychiatric hospitals. Their unconditional release would end great suffering and prevent additional prison deaths, such as those of the dissident worker Anatoly Marchenko and Ukrainian rights advocate Vasyl Stus.

Despite Mikhail Gorbachev's publicity campaign aimed at projecting an image of openness, Soviet society remains closed, its citizens highly controlled and its fundamental totalitarian structure unaltered. Total state control of trade unions, of religious organizations and of the press continues. Soviet workers are nowhere represented in deliberations over the "restructuring" of the economy.

Soviet citizens continue to be denied the right to travel freely or to emigrate. Recent legislation on immigration is more restrictive than the laws which had been on the books. The number of Jewish and other immigrants from the USSR remains a small trickle. The reunification of divided families is an issue the Kremlin refuses to address

seriously. Jamming of Radio Liberty broadcasts into the USSR has intensified in clear violation of international law.

Mikhail Gorbachev's stated intention to introduce greater "openness" must be measured by the steps he takes to reduce the suffering of the great masses of men and women--Russians, Ukrainians, the Baltic peoples, Kazakhs and Jews--who are denied the right to their own independent organizations and who are punished for simply expressing a desire to live freely and in dignity. The threat of the gulag, where millions remain trapped in slave labor, continues to hang over any who challenge the monopoly of power by the Communist Party.

While any relaxation of repression in the Soviet Union is to be welcomed, there is still no evidence of structural change in the Soviet totalitarian system, which is incompatible with free trade unionism.

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Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council

on

Latin America and the Caribbean

February 19, 1987
Bal Harbour, FL

The AFL-CIO regards with great satisfaction the long-term trend in Latin America toward governments chosen by the people in honest elections, and toward greater respect for human and trade union rights. It urges the government of the United States to take all possible steps to reinforce this process and to support the forces that contribute to increased freedom of association, trade union rights and the democratization of this hemisphere.

Central to this process is the resolution of the critical debt problem in a manner that does not force debtor governments into harsh austerity programs that impose more hardship on the working men and women of Latin America and the Caribbean. These workers and their unions are not the cause of the debt crisis, and it is unjust to expect them to resolve it through a drastic decline in living standards. Such a decline can only endanger the newly created and fragile democracies of the area. The debt plan put forward by Senator Bill Bradley comes closest to displaying the sensitivity and common sense that should characterize U.S.-Latin American relations.

The AFL-CIO continues to hold to a single standard with regard to dictatorships of either the reactionary right, as in Chile and Paraguay, or the totalitarian left, as in Cuba, Suriname and Nicaragua. No political ideology can justify restrictions of the right to freely associate, to form independent unions, and to represent the authentic interests of workers.

Trade relations between the United States and other nations of the Western Hemisphere should be conditioned upon the observance of human and trade union rights. Such conditions already are included in the Generalized System of Preferences and in the

Caribbean Basin Initiative, and should be a vital part of all trade legislation. To be effective, however, these conditions must be vigorously enforced by the Administration.

The AFL-CIO affirms its desire for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America through dialogue and negotiations between the governments of Nicaragua and of El Salvador and the rebel movements of their respective countries--whether such dialogue takes place under the auspices of the Contadora nations or some other democratic group of nations and/or institutions. The AFL-CIO applauds the recent efforts by the Secretary General of the United Nations and representatives of the Organization of American States to reinvigorate the Contadora process, and to seek peace based on the establishment of democracy in each country of the region.

The ICFTU-affiliated CUS (Confederacion de Unidad Sindical) labor confederation in Nicaragua has called for a withdrawal of U.S. military assistance to the Contras linked to the simultaneous withdrawal of Soviet/Cuban military assistance to the Sandinistas. To contribute to this objective, the AFL-CIO will redouble its efforts to assist the CUS in promoting dialogue between the Nicaraguan government and its opposition, to seek a settlement of the conflict based on the 21 points of the Contadora process, which include guarantees of freedom of association, freedom of the press, and free and honest elections.

The AFL-CIO reiterates its support for the Salvadoran democratic trade union movement, represented by the ICFTU-affiliated CTD (Confederacion de Trabajadores Democraticos) and its umbrella organization, UNOC (Union Nacional de Obreros y Campesinos), which has called for a negotiated end to the fighting based on respect for democratic rights. We continue to insist that U.S. economic and military aid be conditioned on improvements in human and trade union rights; and to condemn efforts by the left and right extremes to destabilize the democratic process. We re-emphasize our commitment to bring about judicial reform and justice in the AIFLD-Union Comunal Salvadoreno murder case.

The AFL-CIO strongly supports the formation of the Central American Development Organization (CADO) whose tripartite structure can help the trade unions of the region advance workers' rights within the context of shaping programs for economic development and social reform. We urge the governments and business communities of Central America to join with the democratic trade unions of the area in the founding congress of CADO on March 15.

The AFL-CIO applauds the on-going transition to democracy in Brazil, but at the same time calls upon the Sarney government to bring to justice the reactionary large landholders who are attempting through violence and intimidation to stall the land reform program necessary for social justice.

Finally, the AFL-CIO vows to continue the fight against those right-wing forces in Latin America and the Caribbean which seek to weaken and destroy the trade union movement. Typical of their efforts is the movement to create free trade zones, which virtually preclude the possibility of forming unions--free trade zone employers in Haiti over the past year have fired an estimated 2,000 workers for attempting to form unions--and the management-inspired development of company unions, called Solidarista Associations, as alternatives to union representation.

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Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council

on

The Strategic Defense Initiative

August 19, 1987
Washington, D.C.

AFL-CIO

The AFL-CIO Executive Council, having received the report and recommendations of the AFL-CIO Committee on Defense, adopts the following:

Recognizing the large and ongoing Soviet effort to develop strategic defense systems and taking into account the consensus among defense experts, the AFL-CIO supports continued American research, development and limited testing of strategic defenses.

The AFL-CIO rejects the notion that the Strategic Defense Initiative can be a substitute for the pursuit of arms reductions. Eight years ago, the Executive Council criticized the SALT II agreement for permitting warheads "to increase dramatically in numbers and accuracy." At its last convention, the AFL-CIO endorsed "the objective of a balanced reduction of nuclear arms within a system of verification guaranteeing collective security." We reiterate that position now. The AFL-CIO recognizes that negotiated arms limitation agreements are essential to the maintenance of world peace.

The AFL-CIO accepts the dominant view of defense and scientific experts that the President's vision of a shield that would protect the American people against nuclear weapons, and thus render such weapons obsolete, is not feasible in the foreseeable future. Indeed, we believe that the President's "Star Wars" rhetoric, while perhaps stimulating the popular imagination, has grossly oversimplified complex issues of defense policy, confused public debate and thus not served the cause of national security.

While never foreclosing the possibility that radically new technologies could emerge to alter this assessment, we consider it irresponsible to focus on strategies linked to the improbable while ignoring more practical, attainable measures to enhance national security.

Given the near certainty that nuclear weapons will be a threat for at least the remainder of this century, the United States must continue to rely on a strategy of deterrence--that is, to prevent the use of these weapons or the launching of a conventional attack that could lead to their use, against either the United States or its allies.

A credible deterrence thus has two elements: assuring the survivability of our nuclear retaliatory capability to discourage a first strike against us; and strengthening our conventional forces to discourage a conventional attack, especially in Europe, that could escalate into a nuclear exchange.

The AFL-CIO therefore believes that the first objective of our strategic defense efforts should be the protection of our nation's retaliatory capability, including our land-based ballistic missiles, our communications, command and control systems, as well as other vital military assets. This objective can be met in part by the deployment of the mobile single-warhead Midgetman missile--as advocated in the 1983 Interim Report of the AFL-CIO Committee on Defense and, subsequently, by the Scowcroft Commission--by maintaining the invulnerability of our nuclear submarine forces, and by other steps not commonly thought of as part of the Strategic Defense Initiative, including the strengthening of our ailing space program.

But ensuring the survivability of our strategic forces in the face of the Soviet Union's increasingly accurate and powerful offensive weapons systems clearly requires an investment in research, development and limited testing of new strategic defense systems. The weight of the evidence presented to the AFL-CIO Committee on Defense indicates that this objective--as contrasted with the President's vision of an astrodome over America--is attainable. The AFL-CIO supports such an effort. We would also encourage any scientifically promising research that could ultimately lead to a broader defense against nuclear weapons.

The AFL-CIO believes that a realistic and effective strategic defense development program of the kind outlined here could be financed at a modest, consistent rate of spending. While the AFL-CIO Committee on Defense did not recommend a specific dollar or percentage level of spending, it noted that a range of 1 percent to 2 percent of the non-personnel defense budget was most frequently cited by the experts who came before it, and that several affiliates favor specific spending limitations within the lower end of this range.

The AFL-CIO calls upon the Congress to approach strategic defense appropriations in a cautious and non-partisan spirit, giving careful consideration to the views of the experts and taking into account the budgetary realities confronting the nation and our growing backlog of unmet social needs.

The AFL-CIO will not support spending for the strategic defense effort at the expense of social programs. We have already seen, under the Reagan Administration, huge cuts in vital social programs to pay for vast increases in the defense budget, increases that have not produced commensurate improvements in our usable defense capabilities. We reiterate our demand that the burden of national defense be distributed equitably and not borne disproportionately by working people.

As we have repeatedly stated, if additional funds are required for national defense, those funds must be generated either by economic growth or by fair taxation-- not by slashing social programs or by burdening future generations with the costs of defending our own.

Because the AFL-CIO views strategic defense as a part of, and not a substitute for, deterrence, and because we believe that achieving a balance of conventional forces is an equally vital component of deterrence, we will not support strategic defense spending at the expense of enhancing our conventional force capabilities. The clear Warsaw Pact advantage in conventional forces in Europe continues to pose a threat to peace. As the AFL-CIO Committee on Defense stated in its interim report four years ago:

"The reliance on nuclear weapons at the expense of our conventional forces has produced an imbalance in the Western military posture that must be redressed. The United States and its NATO allies should strengthen their conventional forces in Europe to the point where, if attacked, they could reasonably be expected to halt and repel the attack without resort to nuclear weapons."

The AFL-CIO recognizes that, while research and development of strategic defense systems are permitted under the ABM Treaty (and cannot be verified in any case), there are serious disagreements between strategic arms experts over the kinds of testing the treaty allows. We note, also, the following points:

A. The view of most of the strategic defense experts is that over the next several years no tests will be required that violate the "narrow" interpretation of the ABM Treaty, as opposed to the "broad" interpretation advocated by the Administration.

B. The relevant treaty language is opaque, and each party to the agreement has, over the years, offered inconsistent interpretations. Indeed, the current U.S. and Soviet governments hold positions on testing which are substantially the reverse of the U.S. and Soviet government positions at the time the treaty was signed.

C. The treaty permits either side to abrogate it upon six months notice or to withdraw from it under circumstances deemed threatening to its national security.

It is the view of the AFL-CIO that unilaterally declared interpretations of an agreement reflect a loss of the spirit of conciliation that made the agreement possible in the first place. This is always an unhealthy development. It is, therefore, the conclusion of the AFL-CIO that the U.S. and Soviet Union should negotiate a clarification of the testing to be permitted under the treaty on the basis of current science and technology and consistent with the national security interests of each country. In the meantime, testing should be conducted within the limits of the "narrow interpretation."

Finally, the AFL-CIO believes that any decision regarding the actual deployment of strategic defenses should not be made until: there is something to deploy; the effect of deployment can be assessed in the light of any arms control agreements that may have been reached with the Soviet Union; and the full, long-term technological, financial and strategic implications of deployment have been considered.

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Worker Rights & FOREIGN TRADE



On Oct. 8, 1986, Jorge Millan, president of the Chile Laboratory Workers Union, was picked up in Santiago by persons in plainclothes identifying themselves as agents of the National Investigation Central (CNI). He was forced into a van and driven around for hours. With the drive came intensive interrogation about a labor training course he was about to attend in the United States, sponsored by the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development. Agents remained with his family too, interrogating them. During his trip, the agents discussed in front of him how they were going to kill him. One suggested that they hang him. Another proposed that they slit his throat. At the end of the trip one of them put a gun to Millan's head and pulled the trigger three times. The empty barrel clicked and he was released.

Millan has been trying to organize a free trade union in Chile for years. Yet workers in Chile, as in many other countries, are denied the basic right to organize freely into trade unions of their choosing and to bargain for better wages and working conditions free from government intimidation.

The American labor movement has long held that the denial of trade union rights in any part of the world affects the security of worker freedom everywhere. It is this belief that was behind American labor's involvement in international labor rights causes dating to the Mexican Revolution. It helps explain why American unions provided aid to European trade unionists anxious to preserve their democracies during and after World War II; why U.S. labor leaders helped them defeat Soviet-supported efforts to scuttle the Marshall Plan; why in the 1960s the AFL-CIO founded three regional labor institutes to work with free trade unionists in the developing regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America; and why today the AFL-CIO supports legislation to insure that trade benefits are withheld from countries who deny their workers fundamental trade union freedoms.

American labor's involvement in formalizing such pressure dates back to 1919, when the president of the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers, helped draft the documents at Versailles that were the basis for the formation of the International Labor Organization (ILO). Today the ILO is a tripartite body that brings together representatives of business, labor and government from 150 countries to devise standards for work including worker health and safety, child labor and wages. Among the ILO's historic achievements are the most important pieces of international labor legislation in the world—those guaranteeing freedom of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively

and the right to work free from government coercion and an absence of any form of forced labor.

These ILO conventions, as they are called, offer free labor unions worldwide a standard against which to measure their own advances. And while the ILO standards themselves bear improving, for many they present the only internationally recognized basis for judging what is free and what is fair to trade unions. They insist that workers have the right to create and join unions, draw up their own union rules, elect their own leaders, develop their own programs, make their own affiliations with national or international union organizations if they so wish. Current ILO standards also call for a 40-hour week, generally set the age limits of child labor at 15 and provide for extensive recommendations on mechanisms for preventing work place accidents and work-related illnesses.

As important as these ILO standards are, the ILO ultimately has little in the way of mechanisms to enforce their application. Thus, for the AFL-CIO, tying trade union rights to trade has become a creative approach to insuring that fair treatment becomes a reality for oppressed workers in countries around the globe.

American labor therefore argues that if there is to be fair competition, it cannot be based upon the exploitation of workers. For decades products made by slave or penal labor have been legally banned from international trade, as well as interstate com-

merce. Now the AFL-CIO is working to extend the scope of the idea to include related basic workers' rights.

The AFL-CIO proposals, supported in Congress by Rep. Don J. Pease (D-Ohio), were incorporated into the 1984 amendments to the Generalized System of Preferences section of the Tariff Act and in the 1985 legislation governing the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and, in more modest form, in regulations governing the Caribbean Basin Initiative. They were also included in the Trade Bill passed by the House in May 1986.

The Chile of Jorge Millan currently benefits from the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), a mechanism provided for in the U.S. Trade & Tariff Act. The GSP preference goes to qualifying products from countries judged to be "developing." There are 140 countries that reap such benefits for the sale of thousands of products here. The value of these products has steadily grown since the GSP was created, from \$3.2 billion in 1976 to \$13.3 billion in 1985.

The AFL-CIO has urged that such trade benefits be treated as privileges, demanding civilized democratic behavior in return. In this context the AFL-CIO has participated in the U.S. government's review process by providing up-to-date information on the status of workers in critical countries, hoping that a good faith effort to review both the laws and the practices of countries will contribute to a better future for the workers who live in them.

Beginning in 1985, at administrative hearings on GSP, the AFL-CIO called for the denial of GSP benefits to ten of the most egregious offenders of workers' rights: Chile, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua, Paraguay, The Philippines, Romania, South Korea, Suriname, and Taiwan. In future years it may target more.

Its charges were built on provisions in the law saying that:

"... the President shall not designate any country a beneficiary developing country under this section . . . if such country has not taken or is not taking steps to afford international recognized workers' rights to workers in the country (including any designated zone in that country)."

Further, the law defines "internationally recognized worker rights" to include:

- (A) The right of association;
- (B) The right to organize and bargain collectively;
- (C) A prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor;
- (D) A minimum age for employment of children; and
- (E) Acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work and occupational safety and health.

This article was prepared by the Free Trade Union Institute for the AFL-CIO Dept. of International Affairs.

Under the law the U.S. government is thus obligated to remove countries who deny worker rights from the list of those countries receiving special duty-free benefits under GSP. That review process began in June 1985, with public hearings, and will be completed by the end of 1986. Because a country judged in violation loses benefits for *all* products with GSP status, these first interpretations will set important precedents.

As the U.S. government considers taking countries off the list of GSP beneficiaries, a number of thorny interpretive disputes have emerged. One has to do with whether worker rights standards should be relative to the particular development level of the country at issue. Another is the question of what constitutes a fair definition of "taking steps" toward improvement.

Some relative judgments are inevitable. The AFL-CIO would not argue, for example, that a country should be denied GSP benefits simply because its labor standards do not precisely match our own. Few countries have established the level of benefits and protection that obtain in the United States. Yet, the notion that the right to organize or negotiate, or withhold work should somehow vary with a country's level of economic development reflects thinking more attuned to the enemies of democratic freedoms than the values of our own society.

As for "steps," they must clearly amount to more than promises and must involve fundamental change.

In making the labor rights case against GSP trade benefits (others have been made elsewhere), the AFL-CIO has adhered strictly to labor rights criteria. Some countries whose GSP status was challenged have minimal trade with the United States; others are among the top GSP beneficiaries.

In the course of this review some specious Administration arguments have emerged aimed at softening interpretations of compliance. Some maintain that freedom of association extends no further than traditional bread and butter issues, urging that political rights and activities have no place on union agendas. Others, acknowledging that labor rights are violated in some countries, say that the labor rights provisions of the law should simply be bypassed, and an "economic waiver" granted if the labor evidence is disquieting. (The law has a loophole for such side-stepping if the President determines that keeping a country on the list "will be in the national economic interest.") A third argument accepts at face value the promises of reform offered by some notoriously two-faced governments, as sufficient evidence that "steps" are being taken.

In answering these, the AFL-CIO first maintains that the right of unions to be involved in elections, to engage in get-out-the-vote drives and to speak out on issues debated by executives and legislators are functions inherent to worker representation. Second, American labor is unlikely to be sympathetic to a U.S. government claim that trade with any of these "developing" countries is essential to the "national economic interest." The notion that

we are helping those supposedly in need simply does not mix credibly with the idea that our own economic health is at stake. Third, the track record of some of these countries in making promises is notorious. It is practice, not promises, that should be judged. In short, all three types of arguments reflect a distorted interpretation of the law and fly in the face of congressional intent.

It must also be pointed out that it is the American labor movement that is engaged in this process and is responsible for the material presented. These are the positions of the AFL-CIO. While the unions in the individual countries discussed here know of the AFL-CIO's interest, and generally appreciate our efforts to ameliorate their condition, they are not responsible for American labor's arguments and should suffer no consequences from their governments because of them.

The cases made below have been updated since their original presentation in June 1985. In practically every instance, the governments in the countries charged, smarting from the AFL-CIO's critique, have tried to respond. In three cases—those of Guatemala, Haiti and the Philippines—governments have recently changed. And while fair labor postures are not yet in place there, the beginnings of improvement warrant a delay in the decisions on these countries.

So, for these three the AFL-CIO recommends that the decision on their status be postponed. The others should be removed from the GSP preferential list immediately.

CHILE

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

The current dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, in power since 1973, is one of the most blatant and crude opponents of democratic trade unions in Latin America. The Pinochet regime's long history of terror against democratic unions includes endless examples of violent intimidation. Chilean law itself does not camouflage restrictions designed to prevent the development of representative worker organizations. The record of the Chilean government clearly violates the fundamental trade union rights of freedom of association, and to organize and bargain collectively.

In 1979 the Pinochet regime put in place a Labor Plan which fragments and weakens the labor movement. Though its provisions were superficially modified in 1984 and 1985, basic restrictions on collective bargaining, dues checkoff, political activity and the establishment of union federations and confederations continue to take a heavy toll.

Many brave union leaders have suffered the consequences of the Chilean government's fear of democracy, some even with their lives. In 1982, days after he issued a call for trade union unity, Tucapel Jimenez, president of the National Federation of Government Employees, was found lying on the roadside, his throat cut, shot in the head twice.

Similar incidents are not hard to document. In November of 1984, following a successful national strike, the government banned union meetings, censored the press and monitored phone conversations and correspondence. (Such practices are legal under a "state of siege," three of which have been declared since Pinochet took office.) A number of trade unionists were arrested, two were assassinated, and two union offices were wrecked. On Mar. 29, 1985, Manuel Guerrero, president of the Metropolitan Council of Chile's National Association of Teachers, was kidnapped and murdered, just after the teachers' association headquarters had been forcibly entered, files and equipment destroyed, and five people arrested.

After a general strike on July 2 and 3, 1986, 15 civic leaders including some unionists, were arrested, and a state of siege declared once again. In mid-September shots were fired at a car driven by the son of Hernol Flores, secretary general of the Confederation of Democratic Workers (CDT)*, presumably aimed at Flores himself. While no one can specifically pin murders and attempted murders on the government, the failure of the government to arrest or prosecute suspects in these incidents is noteworthy.

As for Chilean labor law, the AFL-CIO finds the following to be intolerable:

- Provisions preventing union organizing, including government power to: interfere in union elec-



Young Filipino women work long hours for meager pay on assembly lines of today's electronic sweatshops. Ousted Marcos government collaborated with employers to stifle organizing efforts of unions in the Philippines.

tions, deny union recognition, restrict the number of trade union officers, inspect internal union records, including finances, prevent the unionization of civil servants, and prohibit collective bargaining in state administrations, selected public utilities and other companies.

- Restrictions on establishment of federations and confederations for multi-plant collective bargaining purposes.

- Prohibitions against trade union participation in political activity.

- Restrictions on the right to strike in "strategic industries," including public utilities and selected copper petroleum enterprises. Employees striking more than 60 days lose their jobs.

No significant changes have occurred to warrant a judgment that Chile has anything but a repressive posture toward democratic unions. In June 1986, a mission of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which included AFL-CIO Sec-Treas. Thomas R. Donahue, called the Pinochet stance "disgusting" and "intolerable." The government's behavior warrants its removal from the GSP list.

GUATEMALA

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

Circumstances in Guatemala have changed markedly since the AFL-CIO first indicated that this country should be removed from the GSP list. A military regime has been replaced by elected civilian officials.

A two-round democratic election was held in the

fall of 1985, resulting in the Presidency of Vinicio Cerezo and a victory for Guatemala's Christian Democratic Party. Since then, constitutional changes have gone into effect which allow for trade unions to engage in political activity. Reforms of the labor code are being considered which could result in the easing of restrictive legislation that has historically governed the right to strike and has inhibited unionization of some sectors of the economy.

While these changes and the hopes for more are pluses, there are also some disturbing signs that the government's party has plans to take over the union movement. The new Guatemalan president is building a base for his Christian Democratic Party, and a party-subordinate union seems to be part of that strategy. Leaders of the independent Confederation of Trade Union Unity of Guatemala (CUSG) have charged that some workers have been told that if they hope to keep their jobs they should join the party-controlled union, the General Coordinator of Workers. Conversely, some who are already members of the CUSG have been warned that unless they quit the union they may lose their jobs.

Supplementing this pressure has been the government's employment of workers whose assignment is to recruit members of the party union. For example, a memorandum distributed by the Guatemalan Institute of Social Formation, a private institute headed by the leader of the party-dominated union, announces that the Ministry of Development has employed special activists to recruit agricultural workers for the new union.

In recent weeks the Ministry of Labor instructed the Congress to table a labor law proposed by the Public Employees Federation of Guatemala designed to expand public employee rights to organize, indicating that only its own, as yet unannounced, plan should be considered. Government measures to correct labor practices have thus taken a back seat to party organization, and party organi-

*Acronyms designating unions are based on the language of origin.

zation is becoming the occasion for denying labor rights. It is too soon to make a clear judgment about Guatemala's labor rights policies. Its status on the GSP list should remain under review.

HAITI

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

Possibilities for the development of a free and democratic trade union in Haiti have taken on new life since the fall of the corrupt authoritarian dictator, Jean-Claude Duvalier, in January 1986. While labor organizing is increasing under the current military junta, the country faces chaos, poverty and strife that make the prospect for a vibrant free trade union movement tenuous at best. There is little there in the way of unions to begin with, owing to a series of repressive moves begun in 1979-80 by the deposed dictator. Few labor agreements have been signed even since Duvalier left, simply because there aren't many unions well enough organized to win them.

While today is better than yesterday for trade unions in Haiti, the future they face is by no means rosy. Just recently more than 200 workers were summarily fired for organizing by a number of different companies, and the government has not yet reacted to these violations of the labor code. Some labor leaders who have come to Washington to study at the George Meany Labor Studies Center have also been fired without cause upon their return. Labor law reform has been promised (under the Duvalier regime, the government prescribed specific conditions for organizing, maintained broad supervisory powers and could invoke compulsory arbitration in strike situations), but as yet circumstances are too chaotic for any progress to have been made.

The AFL-CIO is aware that the provisional government of Haiti has called for a constitutional assembly and a future democratic course but these goals are not yet realized. Until such time as they are, the Haitian case should be under constant review until the future course of Haiti becomes clear.

NICARAGUA

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

While Nicaragua is on the Generalized System of Preferences trade list, currently no trade is taking place with that country because of the U.S. government's imposition of economic sanctions. The AFL-CIO wants Nicaragua off the list whether or not other judgments have brought trade to a halt. Nicaragua's record on labor rights puts it in violation of the U.S. trade law, and now is as good a time as any for that judgment to be made.

Since the Sandinistas came to power in 1979, the government has insisted that all trade unions belong to one official labor center, the Central Sandinista de Trabajadores (CST). Various forms of interference in all types of union activities—elections, affiliations, finances—have been used to shore up the CST and eliminate most democratic opposition. Beyond this, the Sandinistas have resorted to arrests, layoffs, jailings, and the occupation of independent union offices. Two small and struggling unions have managed to survive despite these extensive pressures, the Confederation of Trade Union Unification (CUS) and the Christian Democratic oriented union, the Confederation of Nicaraguan Workers.

The list of specific repressive incidents the AFL-CIO presented in 1985 was a long one. It included specific examples with names and dates of: forcible occupations of union offices, which include shooting them up, rifling files, destruction of furniture, stealing funds and mob attacks; arrests, interrogations and indefinite detention of union leaders, including bombing the homes of some; the invalidation of union elections where non-Sandinista candidates won; mob attacks at independent union events and ceremonies; denial of travel permits and the confiscation of passports of union leaders; and police stoppage of peaceful demonstrations.

There has been no letup to these repressions. Recently the AFL-CIO has been supplied with an up-to-date list of repressive acts, including the arrest



Haitians rejoice following the ouster of the dictator, Jean-Claude Duvalier. But the outlook for workers in Haiti is by no means rosy.

and detention, without charge, of five members of the Peasant Union of Posoltega, Chinandega. They have been accused of criminal acts, but no proof has been submitted. The monthly publication of the CUS, Solidaridad, has been indefinitely suspended by the Ministry of the Interior since last year and 200 workers from La Prensa have been laid off because of the government's closure of that newspaper.

Government actions to deny independent trade unions the right to function come against a backdrop of an economy in chaos, where disproportionate amounts of public money go to shore up the maintenance of a large military force, where poverty is pervasive and few health and safety measures exist to protect workers. Child labor is widespread.

Nicaragua should come off the GSP list because of its labor practices, whether or not there is ever again reason to resume trade on other grounds.

PARAGUAY

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

There is only one legally recognized union central in the Paraguay of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, the longest reigning dictator in the hemisphere. The Confederation of Paraguayan Workers (CPT) serves the Stroessner regime, but has few members and does not engage in real trade union activity. Strikes are illegal and attempts to organize unions outside the official CPT structure are constantly thwarted. A pattern of refusal to recognize democratic unions persists and often workers who attempt to organize them are usually fired.

The government's successful control strategy includes not only a bogus union and government agencies responsible for labor affairs, but also a labor section of the police affiliated to the military intelligence apparatus. The "policia obrera" can easily deny a fledgling union the right to meet, or break up a meeting if things get that far, although union leaders are frequently arrested before meetings even occur. The last two years have brought such arrests in the transport, steel, construction, agriculture and commercial sectors. Mass firings have been instigated by the Ministry of Justice and Labor, a practice used recently in the textile, glass, bankworkers, woodworkers and beverages sectors. This same ministry can also deny union registration and the official credentials that companies can require of a union before they negotiate. Only pro-

government CPT leaders get such credentials.

Public employees have no right to organize. Special conditions apply to other sectors, severely circumscribing the right to strike in "strategic" industries, for example. No legal strike has taken place in Paraguay since 1958. Legal minimum labor standards for hours of work, wages, social security, etc. are broadly ignored.

Trying to compete with the CPT, is the Movimiento Inter-Sindical de Trabajadores (MIT)—an independent union that has been harassed every step of the way. A number of affiliates the MIT tried to organize recently were denied legal recognition by the government. Its May Day 1986 demonstration was violently stopped by the pro-Stroessner Colorado Party's urban guards who beat and gassed demonstrators and arrested a number of leaders.

The government of Paraguay is reportedly now talking up various promises to loosen current anti-labor practices, though apparently the form some of this takes is hardly serious. While any response at all may be a sign that foreign pressure is embarrassing the government into some kind of stopgap reaction, no moves have been made yet, and even those contemplated sound meaningless. Paraguay should be removed from the GSP list.

PHILIPPINES

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

While hopes that the new Aquino government will foster basic trade union rights have risen dramatically in The Philippines since the AFL-CIO first testified on this question in June 1985, serious problems remain. The new government is developing a legal framework for fairer worker representation, but not all of its steps are consistent with a pro-labor philosophy.

For example, as promised, the Aquino government has announced new guidelines for labor relations that greatly improve upon the restrictive measures supported by the Marcos regime. Among the pluses are:

- Revocation of measures that had allowed management to replace striking workers who defy return-to-work orders.

- Alteration of the old rule requiring two-thirds for a strike vote in favor of a simple majority.

- A reduction in the percentage of workers needed to petition for a recognition election from 30 percent to 20 percent.

The recently drafted Philippine Constitution has provisions for the right to strike and grants public employees the right to organize. But the Constitution still must be accepted by referendum and there are still other negatives to be corrected. One unfortunate holdover from the Marcos Administration is the Labor Ministry's right to grant exceptions to minimum wage requirements.

Strides have clearly been made of late in the Philippines, enough so that it would be unfair to argue for that nation's immediate exclusion from the GSP list. But it is too early to tell if new-found trade union rights will survive and if new regulations will be administered fairly. Besides, there are rights that remain to be granted. Retention of the Philippines on the GSP list should not constitute a final judgement on the matter. Its case should be left open pending further review.

ROMANIA

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

The Romanian government and its ruling party totally dominate the life of that country's labor organizations. Together they have snuffed out nascent efforts to organize independent unions, and then falsely denied their actions.

In its original case against Romania, the AFL-CIO argued that government and party control of the trade union movement constitutes denial of the basic trade union rights of freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively. The AFL-CIO also pointed out that work is not a matter of choice in Romania but is a constitutional "duty"; moreover, the nation's "parasitism" laws make it a crime to be unemployed. The AFL-CIO arguments are largely supported by documentation from the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Committee of Experts on the Application of Con-

ventions & Recommendations, and its Freedom of Association Committee, among others.

The most dramatic historic example of the suffocating effects of this control is the suppression of an effort to organize the Free Trade Union of Workers in Romania (SLOMR) in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The ILO chronicles an endless series of failures on the part of the Romanian government to respond to requests for information on the SLOMR trade union case, particularly with respect to the charge that union leaders and members had been beaten, arrested, exiled, interned in psychiatric hospitals and issued summary sentences. Only after the ILO committee urged that a direct-contact mission go into Romania to investigate did the Romanian government bother even to respond.

The response was predictable—that 99 percent of the workers are in an official union; that few of the alleged organizers of SLOMR could be found; that the charges about individual arrests and jailings were inaccurate; and that to the extent that SLOMR existed at all, it functioned as a human rights committee and not a trade union.

Romania has offered an equally defensive explanation to the U.S. government's GSP review team. It also dismissed the fate of SLOMR by deliberately misrepresenting conclusions of the ILO's Committee on Freedom of Association.

Despite Romania's promises to the ILO that new labor legislation is in the offing, the situation has actually deteriorated. In September of 1985 a new law was promulgated extending compulsory labor provisions beyond the earlier limit of 50 for women and 55 for men to cover workers of all ages. "Working people's control teams," an institutionalized system of amateur informants and investigators who cooperate with the state security personnel, have been revived and now engage in intensified surveillance. New efforts at resistance have brought additional repression. Protests and demonstrations toward the end of 1985 resulted in the arrest of many who were supporting a reduced work week, a minimum wage and the elimination of compulsory labor.

The government of Romania is an unrepentant trade union rights violator richly deserving of removal from the preferential trade list. Any fair reading of the new provision of the U.S. trade law would mandate that this be done immediately.

SOUTH KOREA

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

Today South Korea has a growing economy, a foreign trade surplus, a soaring export market and is now among the world's top trading nations. Yet recent outbursts of political dissent indicate that the sacrifices in political freedom and standards of living for the masses may not be tolerated forever. The government of Chun Doo-hwan continues to insist, contrary to the facts, that basic freedoms exist and that unions are able to play a truly representative role.

Despite its claims to the contrary, the "economic miracle" of the Republic of Korea has been built on the backs of men and women working among the longest hours in the world, workers who suffer increasingly from work-related diseases. Although labor laws purport to permit free and independent unions, in reality the labor relations system is dominated by the government. Unions play a role closely monitored and controlled by official watchdogs.

Although current constitutional guarantees purport to grant the basic right of association and collective bargaining, in reality labor practices work to the detriment of workers and the organizations trying to represent them. All unions within a sector are required to affiliate to a single federation. Sixteen federations form the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU), a centralized organization constantly scrutinized by government. When they seek to act as genuine advocates for workers, local unions can be disbanded or taken over by companies while government looks the other way. The constitutional guarantees, such as they are, do not cover public employees, or those in defense-related industries, public utilities and other select industries "that exercise great influence on the national economy."

Private goon squads and security forces generally have free rein to harass workers. Government intelligence agents are also given to intimidation and bribery. Supposedly neutral labor committees and theoretically representative management councils are under the government's thumb. Job actions, strikes and demonstrations can result in jailing and

violence. Wage guidelines are government-set. There is no minimum wage. The work week, even by the government's own reports, averages 54.4 hours in the manufacturing sector. The law requiring overtime pay is not enforced. Occupation-related diseases and accidents are on the rise.

Since the labor law revisions of 1980, labor organizations have faced additional curtailments resulting from intensified government pressure. Numerous top leaders have been forced to resign their positions because of government hostility to their tactical positions. Hundreds of union activists have been expelled from union membership or lost their jobs. Others have been blacklisted.

Strikes might as well be illegal because of the impossible bureaucratic process required to gain official approval. Unions can operate only in establishments of more than 30 workers. With 80 percent of Korean workplaces operating with fewer than 30 workers, union membership is therefore illegal for most. With few exceptions, only plant-by-plant collective bargaining is allowed, thus minimizing organizational consolidation and preventing company-wide or industry-wide representation at the table. In fact, a "third party intervention" prohibition explicitly formalizes this structure. Unions cannot give funds to political parties (employers' associations can). With all this, it is no surprise that union membership plummeted by more than 300,000 (nearly 30 percent) in the aftermath of the 1980 "labor law revision."

Several specific incidents illustrate just how the Republic of Korea is a labor rights violator:

- In the spring of 1985 eight leaders of a Daewoo Motor union were arrested and put on trial for their leadership of a strike. Some who protested the arrest were also seized. Efforts of metal workers to organize a Dong-Il Steel plant resulted in government refusal in 1985 to certify the registration papers. More than ten similar cases are well known.

- The Chongkye Garments Workers Union, attempting to represent workers in workplaces with less than 30 employees, has experienced serious government resistance for a decade. The Chongkye union has now been denied recognition. In another instance, workers of the Daewoo Apparel Union were ambushed and beaten upon their return to work after a difficult negotiated settlement was reached. A subsequent sit-in at Daewoo to protest the arrest of union leaders resulted in the arrest of 18 additional workers. In the spring of 1985, 368 workers were dismissed following additional sit-ins.

- Attempting to legitimize its actions with anti-Communist rhetoric, in July of this year the National Police Headquarters organized a special department to investigate "radical" labor leaders and students. Press reports indicate that it will deploy 1,300 police experts.

As the heavy evidence of its labor rights record accumulates, the government of the Republic of South Korea is once again resorting to a familiar tactic. In the final stages of the GSP general review, it has begun to give heavy lip service to promised labor law reforms. Trade unionists have heard these promises before (a minimum wage has been promised since 1983). South Korea should be off the GSP list until its promises are kept and other fundamental rights granted.

SURINAME

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

Little has changed with respect to trade union rights in Suriname since the AFL-CIO originally testified in 1984 against this country's GSP beneficiary status. If anything, the situation is worse, as there is now new evidence that the government is trying to gain control over what has been an independent union, De Moederbond.

Trade union freedom in Suriname has been virtually non-existent since the murder of Cyril Daal, president of De Moederbond, in 1982. Daal had called for the democratic elections that had been promised by the country's leader, Desi Bouterse, who took over the country by coup d'etat on Feb. 25, 1980. In December 1982, Daal and 14 other union leaders were beaten, tortured and shot at close range. According to reliable accounts Daal was killed by the dictator Bouterse himself.

It is thus hardly surprising that what remains of independent trade unionism (many legitimate leaders fled the country) may be caving in under government pressure. Trade union activity is paralyzed and the climate of government-induced violence has been pervasive. In this context De Moederbond, along with three other major labor groupings in the country, has joined the government's

high council, an official committee that purports to include representatives of various sectors of society. In one recent decision of this committee, a bauxite union strike was condemned by three unions simply because of government declarations that it was endangering the economy.

With what little is left of an independent national labor organization mouthing the government line, and given the murderous history of trade union suppression in Suriname, there can be little reason to overlook its blatant violation of the trade union rights provisions of the GSP law. It should be removed from the preferential list.

TAIWAN

The AFL-CIO says:

Remove from GSP list

Postpone decision pending further review

While numerous statements have been made by the Taiwan government attesting to its intentions to modify existing labor laws, fundamental alterations allowing for greater union freedoms have yet to be realized. While some labor changes have been declared recently, implementation of even these awaits better enforcement mechanisms, stiffer penalties against employers, and uniform application that would include export processing zones. Hopefully the recent announcement that martial law will be lifted presents new promise that change will come.

While uncertainty marks the long-term future of both the economy and the Chinese Federation of Labor because of the ongoing political standoff with claims of the People's Republic of China, the Taiwan government and its ruling party, the Kuomintang, have misused the supposed threat of war as a pretext for 37 years of martial law including tight control over the trade union movement. The government's own Dept. of Labor is in reality a part of the Ministry of the Interior, the government agency housing the security police.

The existing martial law means that the government can suspend the right of unions to exist at any time. Operating under the continuing threat of possible extinction puts a permanent damper on the ability of union organizations to function. While approximately 22 percent of Taiwan's work force is organized, few have comprehensive collective bargaining agreements. Instead, issue-by-issue protocols are agreed to in piecemeal fashion. The right to strike is virtually nonexistent and it is illegal to strike for increases in wages. The government keeps a tight hold on the inner workings of unions, forbidding union presidents to run for more than two terms and severely limiting the amount of per capita dues that can go to the national trade union center or to either provincial or industry federations. Workers who serve the government, educational organizations or "munitions" industries cannot join unions.

The Chinese Federation of Labor (CFL) is thus hampered because many of its leaders are preoccupied with maintaining the approval of the KMT, the government and employers. Compounding this weakness is the fact that only those industries that were organized prior to 1949 have nationwide federations because of continuing insistence that any federation must represent workers on the mainland as well as those in Taiwan.

Among the most pressing examples of Taiwan's continuing hostile labor posture is its ongoing refusal to sign a collective bargaining agreement with the Chinese Federation of Postal Workers (for more than 20 years) and recent mine disasters (at least four in the last two years) which killed more than 277 miners. The Taiwanese mines have a fatality rate more than twice that of the United States and its mines are in long-standing violation of fundamental safety regulations. As a consequence of the accidents, the government closed down most of the coal mines, provided special grants to assist miners who wished to be transferred to other employment, and initiated a special safety insurance program for the coal miners. The Chinese Federation of Labor also decided in August 1985 to establish a "labor safety fund" for the benefit of workers in distress.

The government of Taiwan has indicated it may ease up on the regulation of union dues collection and the restrictions on leadership terms of office partly in response to labor reform proposals made in January 1986 by the CFL. But these measures have not yet been taken and many more are necessary. Taiwan has proclaimed its intent to at last lift martial law, but what this will mean for unions remains unclear. Taiwan should be removed from the preferential trade list until promises are kept and major reforms are made.

AFL-CIO

Transmittal Slip

DATE: August 20, 1987

TO: Max Green

FROM: Adrian Karatnycky

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Note and File | <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Reply For My Signature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Note and Return To Me | <input type="checkbox"/> Take Appropriate Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Return With More Details | <input type="checkbox"/> Per Your Request |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Note and See Me About This | <input type="checkbox"/> Signature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please Answer | <input type="checkbox"/> Advice Please |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Approval | <input type="checkbox"/> Attach Complete File and Return |

COMMENTS:



Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council
on
Strikes in South Korea

August 17, 1987
Washington, D.C.

The current wave of strikes and protests in the Republic of Korea involving tens of thousands of workers is evidence of great frustration and an upsurge in worker confidence. Korean workers at last have found their voice. They want a share in the prosperity they have built. They want the right to organize unions and elect leaders without government interference. They want a better chance and a secure future for themselves and their families.

South Korean workers are testing the reality of ruling party leader Roh Tae-woo's blueprint for democratization. Political rights, after all, include the right of free association and the right to bargain collectively for a fair wage. It is heartening to see these basic trade union aspirations emerge with such vigor in the first days after the government reluctantly proclaimed its relaxation of political controls.

The AFL-CIO salutes the role of trade union activists in South Korea. We voice our solidarity with them in their efforts to win social justice, fair wages, decent working conditions, and democratic rights.

The AFL-CIO is troubled by the recent threats emanating from government circles about repression and intervention "if the situation is really out of control." The strikes are not "out of control." What is out of control is the current system which exploits the workers. Even Korean government officials have been forced to concede that the workers' wage demands are reasonable and that past government labor policy was "unfair."

"Unfair" is hardly the word. Since the Republic was founded, the AFL-CIO has supported the aspirations of Korean workers and tried to expose the often brutal repression of fundamental workers' rights in that country. In recent testimony urging a

revocation of trade benefits accorded South Korea under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences, the AFL-CIO described the systematic denial of basic trade union rights in that country. Through the Asian-American Free Labor Institute, the AFL-CIO has supported the efforts of independent Korean labor activists, who have endured years of unremitting intimidation and harassment by government security agencies.

In that light, the AFL-CIO reaffirms its longstanding support of Korean workers in their fight for democracy in their country, and for dignity and justice on the job. We salute the emergence of a new wave of trade union activism. We applaud the tenacious efforts of leaders and activists in the Federation of Korean Trade Unions to achieve genuine labor law reform.

The AFL-CIO calls on the South Korean government to prove its commitment to democratic practice in the weeks ahead, and to recognize that workers and their institutions must have a seat at the table if democratization is to succeed.

Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council

on

South African Mineworkers Strike

August 17, 1987
Washington, D.C.

The AFL-CIO joins with the 85 million workers united in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in expressing its fullest support and solidarity with the 340,000 black South African mineworkers now on strike for equality, justice, and dignity.

The AFL-CIO deplores the unwillingness of management to negotiate a fair settlement in good faith. The Federation is outraged at reports of widespread arrests of National Union of Mineworkers activists, who are engaged in leading a legal strike supported fully by their membership.

The AFL-CIO urges the managers of the South African mines to meet the legitimate demands of the hundreds of thousands of striking workers whose toil produces South Africa's wealth. We denounce the intervention of the racist government's security services in an effort to intimidate black mineworkers.

The blame for violence at struck collieries must be placed squarely on the shoulders of the gold and coal barons and the government. As events unfold we must be mindful of the words of the NUM's Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa: "Violence is always provoked by mine management, by using the security forces, and inviting the police to come in."

American workers stand for racial justice and democracy. They deplore the gross inequities inherent in the apartheid wage system, which pays black mineworkers less than one-third the wage of their white counterparts. They stand with the National Union of Mineworkers, the largest affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

The most recent manifestation of black South African worker power once again reaffirms the value of free trade unionism, South Africa's principal force for peaceful change and democracy. The AFL-CIO pledges its steadfast material and moral support for that trade union movement.

The AFL-CIO strongly urges its affiliates to support the solidarity strike fund established by the United Mine Workers of America.

Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council

on

Irangate

August 17, 1987
Washington, D.C.

Amidst the many revelations of deception, chicanery, incompetence, and perhaps criminal behavior brought to light in the so-called Irangate hearings, the most dismaying facts concern the substance and execution of American foreign policy under Ronald Reagan.

Although the nation still does not know, and may never fully know, exactly what the President knew and when he knew it, we know enough to conclude the following:

First, the President sought to buy the release of American hostages by selling arms to Iran. No hair-splitting flapdoodle about dealing with "moderate elements" in Iran can disguise the reality that Ronald Reagan sought to pay ransom to terrorists or their agents.

This was no mere tactical error of judgment that could be justified in the name of compassion. What the President did, against the advice of his wiser advisors, was to violate a longstanding and sound policy against making concessions to terrorists and thus encouraging them to seek more victims for their cause. That this policy had been expounded by no one more vociferously than the President himself, especially in his campaign against Jimmy Carter, only compounds the damage done to our government's credibility and robs the Administration of any moral authority to press upon our allies the case for a tougher stand against terrorism.

As a consequence of the President's folly, American arms have gone to a government that now threatens the destruction of American ships in the Persian Gulf and American lives and property anywhere in the world.

Second, we know that proceeds from the Iran arms sale went to finance the Nicaraguan contras. The AFL-CIO Convention took no position on U.S. military aid to the contras; but both opponents and supporters of the contras must condemn this cynical

maneuver to circumvent the will of the Congress--at the very time the President was proclaiming his wish to build a bipartisan consensus in the Congress. While the President has denied any knowledge of the diversion of funds, there is little reason to doubt that those who carried out this covert action believed they were implementing his objectives. Such was the climate in the White House, and for that only the President bears responsibility.

Mr. Reagan has acknowledged that he was "stubborn" in the pursuit of his ill-fated arms-for-hostages scheme. He asserts that he, and not his subordinates, is accountable for it to the American people. The AFL-CIO agrees that it is the President himself who must be judged, and we offer this judgment: Ronald Reagan has gravely injured the standing of the United States in the world community, encouraged terrorists to believe that violence pays, put more innocent Americans at risk, undermined the trust of our allies, handed Mikhail Gorbachev a propaganda bonanza in the midst of crucial arms control negotiations, and weakened the confidence of the American people in his office, his leadership and in their government.

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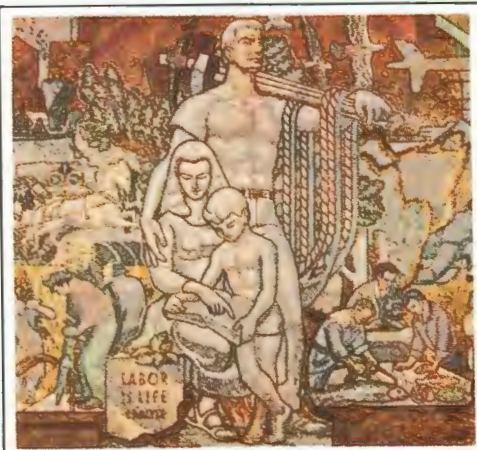
June 1987



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CORPORATION**



OUR WORLD

THE HUNGARIAN CASE



Sandor Racz (l.), with Lane Kirkland

A Free Trade Unionist

At 23 the elected leader of the Workers' Council of his nation's capital, ten days later the leader of a nationwide strike against Soviet armies on a murderous rampage against an entire population, jailed for the next seven years, for the next twenty-four years forbidden to travel outside the country and his other civil rights restricted because of his "criminal record," at 54 a toolmaker earning 78 cents an hour, and still active in the democratic movement in his country—this is Hungarian worker Sandor Racz, now in the United States for two months as a guest of the AFL-CIO.

Nor was the visit easily arranged. As *The Bulletin* has previously reported, Racz, leader of the Budapest Workers' Council during the democratic 1956 Revolution in Hungary, was twice refused permission for his current trip by the Hungarian Government (the second time on appeal to a Court). This obstacle was only overcome after a prolonged campaign waged in his behalf by the AFL-CIO and human rights organizations, and the intervention of U. S. Ambassador to Hungary Mark Palmer.

Referred to by democratic opposition activists as "Hungary's Lech Walesa," Sandor Racz continues to play a leading role in the democratic movement inside Hungary, despite constant police surveillance, intimidation, and frequent interrogations. In March of this year, he joined with some 10,000 Hungarian students and workers in a peaceful demonstration in Budapest for freedom and human rights.

At a recent AFL-CIO luncheon in Racz's honor, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland spoke of Sandor Racz and his fellow workers: "As with Solidarnosc in 1980, the Hungarian Revolution was led by the younger generation. These workers and intellectuals rejected the...

blandishments of Marxist-Leninist ideology. They recognized the gap between rhetoric and practice: between the workers' paradise and the forced labor camp."

As He Sees It

Hungary is frequently portrayed as a more mild, or "liberal," form of Communism. Racz disagrees with this view. He points to Government control of the media, repression of dissidents, and denial of basic workers rights. "A leash is a leash, whether it's held loosely or tightly," he told *The Bulletin*. Racz painted a picture of a worsening economy and growing unemployment. "Hungarian workers are threatened by growing joblessness, which is a direct consequence of the Government's failed economic policies," he said. To counter this economic decline, the Government seeks increased Western investment. Racz suggests this provides "the West an important lever with which to exert pressure on behalf of workers rights and human freedoms." Still, he believes that workers' rights can only be protected fully by "internal checks on the Government, especially free trade unions."

Racz dismisses Hungary's official state-controlled unions: "There is no organization in Hungary... that does not serve the interests of the Communist Party. Hungarians do not see the official unions as defending their interests." Because such unions, imposed on them from above, do not enjoy the support of Hungary's workers, Racz agrees with the AFL-CIO's policy of no contact with government labor fronts.

Despite the chilling presence of some 250,000 Soviet troops in Hungary, Racz foresees a productive future for the Hungarian democratic movement: "As the fear of society recedes and the economic situation worsens, the Government is forced to retreat somewhat from its repressive measures and society gains in bravery and confidence." These developments, and their working supporters, Racz says, "deserve the strong solidarity of free trade unions throughout the world." ■



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WORKER OWNERSHIP

THE DANGERS OF SOLIDARISMO

by

WILLIAM C. DOHERTY, Jr.

The following are extracts from an address to the Center for Economic and Social Justice at the National Graduate University, Arlington, Virginia, by the Executive Director of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development, who cautioned at the outset that "These . . . views . . . based on more than thirty years . . . with the international trade union movement and hundreds of worker ownership projects . . . are mine, and I can't blame them on anyone else":

" . . . Worker ownership . . . is certainly not a major issue in [American] labor circles. Only a few short years ago, worker participation on boards of directors along [European] lines was generally (but not totally) rejected by all but a few unions. The concepts of worker participation in management, as well as worker ownership, are not endorsed by the AFL-CIO. But neither are they somehow forbidden or scorned. Rather, I would suggest that their development is being watched and considered and evaluated . . . Let me [remind] you that of 10,000 Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) in this country, only about 100 are majority-owned by the employees.

" . . . The first duty of a union is to protect the interests of its members. Those interests include salaries, pension rights, seniority rights, etc. . . . Let's assume [the sale of a government operation having] the potential of making a profit. The operation might be sold to an individual, a corporation or some other form of business enterprise, or to the current employees. In my view, of these alternatives a worker-owned organization is preferable. In all three cases, however, a union should continue to represent, or be formed to represent, the interests of workers and to negotiate a collective contract.

" . . . There exists the possibility that in its pursuit [the] ideal—a more just and equitable society based on worker ownership of capital—can be distorted and used for other purposes . . . In Latin America . . . so-called worker ownership programs are often offered by businesses for the purpose of eliminating unions and in the name of establishing industrial peace. I am speaking specifically of the Solidarismo movement . . . As Solidarista Associations are currently being used they present what are, in the words of their advocates, 'alternatives to unionism.' It is to this extent . . . that they have come into conflict with unions: not because there is anything inherently wrong with their goals or their structure . . . The problem is the gap between promise and reality, and conflict with other interests such as collective bargaining and grievance resolution . . .

"Most of the strongest supporters of the Solidarista movement obviously are not supporters of real and meaningful worker ownership. After thirty-five years of

existence, not one Solidarista Association has achieved a majority ownership for the workers of a company. To be sure, workers own stock . . . [but] rarely more than ten or twenty percent of the outstanding shares. One suspects . . . that worker ownership is not a primary goal of the current directors of Solidarismo, but rather is a token effort designed to fortify the position of these Associations as alternatives to unions . . .

"Leading U. S. proponents of Solidarismo have told us that employers find that their initial contributions to set up the Solidarista Associations have *bought* labor peace and, interestingly enough, control of corporations doing subcontracting work with the primary employer. Virtually all Solidarista Associations are formed by the businessmen themselves, we are told, at great expense in both time and energy, but it is worth the effort to eliminate unions . . .

"Latin businessmen have hidden behind the facade of a free enterprise system to exploit workers and . . . workers therefore consider businessmen to be more a part of the problem than the solution; these same businessmen are not above identifying democratic unionists as communists if it suits their purposes . . . Maybe if businessmen would recognize democratic trade union leaders, there would be no need, as they have repeatedly said in the past, to sign 'sweetheart' contracts with communist-led unions. Maybe if businessmen would make such a recognition, they wouldn't have to spend so much time, money, and energy to form 'company unions' which they call Solidarista Associations . . .

"The goal of a more just economic society will not be furthered by collaboration between the worker ownership movement and organizations designed to serve as an alternative to unions—which are still the one best hope that most workers have to maintain not only their rights but their dignity." ■

THE DEBT BURDEN

ORIT SEMINARS

Massive debt continues to threaten the workers of Latin America and their fragile new democracies. Following its hemispheric conference on debt at Buenos Aires last year, the Inter-American Organization of Workers (ORIT) is now sponsoring regional seminars. May saw two such meetings, the first at Caracas involving labor confederations from the Andean countries, the second at Guatemala City, attended by democratic trade union representatives from the five Central American countries and Panama. At Caracas the theme of the Buenos Aires conference, "First the People—Then the Debt," arose again. It was agreed that sacrificing the living standards of the workers in Andean nations in order to make arbitrarily-scheduled debt payments is neither politically feasible nor morally justifiable. At Guatemala City the standard austerity packages imposed by the International Monetary Fund were described as economically unsound even from the standpoint of facilitating debt payment, as they result in economic recessions; the corollary is that Central American nations cannot repay more while producing less. ■



WORKERS' RIGHTS

GSP

AFL-CIO Official Complaints

On June 1 the AFL-CIO filed formal complaints with the U. S. Trade Representative against thirteen countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (Title V of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984). The complaints called for immediate termination of GSP benefits for Chile, Indonesia, Paraguay, Singapore, South Korea, Suriname, Taiwan, Thailand, and Turkey, on the grounds that government-sanctioned violations of internationally-recognized workers' rights warrant the termination of those benefits. Warnings of potential denial of GSP benefits for the same reasons, but in view of changes in government or other special circumstances, were asked for the Central African Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, and Zambia.

The AFL-CIO complaints were supported by detailed argumentation in each case, based upon reports from unions abroad, information compiled by the ICFTU, and on-the-spot observations of experienced and professional representatives of American labor.

HOW GSP WORKS

The GSP is an American program which unilaterally extends duty-free entry to certain goods from "developing" countries. Legislation in 1984, however, stipulates that a country is ineligible for GSP benefits if the following workers' rights (based on the ILO Conventions) are not protected:

- The right of association;
- The right to organize and bargain collectively
- Prohibition of any form of forced or compulsory labor;
- A minimum age for employment of children;
- Acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health.

The U. S. Trade Representative reviews the records of countries against whom complaints have been filed, and the President makes his decisions on removals on January 1 of each year. The first application of the law was January 1987, when beneficiary status for Nicaragua and Romania was terminated, and Paraguay's suspended. For details of the current AFL-CIO complaints contact the AFL-CIO's Free Trade Union Institute, at (202) 223-5352.

TRADE POLICY

The New York Times of May 31 published a lengthy article by Charles D. Gray, Executive Director of the AFL-CIO's Asian-American Free Labor Institute, on workers' rights and trade policy, from which the following is extracted:

The Abuses

Trapped by locked doors and barred windows, 19 persons died in a fire that swept a small factory in a Bangkok suburb one night last year. The victims, part of a work force of 30 producing leather goods, had bedded down for the night on three floors of their factory. Their normal work day was from 8 A.M. to 11 P.M. On that fatal night they had worked till 1 A.M. In the teeming metropolitan areas of that Thai capital and other third world cities, it is not uncommon for workers to spend 24 hours a day in a factory or a factory compound. The workers who died in the Bangkok fire, many of them rural migrants, did not earn enough to pay for housing. Their wages were between \$20 and \$80 a month, with the lower pay going to 13- and 14-year-olds. In Southeast Asia, the huge textile and electronic export industries thrive on the exploitation of young unmarried women between 16 and 23...

A Panacea?

The Bangkok tragedy and . . . ILO report[s] underscore a reality that confounds conventional wisdom among economists. According to their view, the United States must reduce its wages and working standards to adjust to the global economy. A Brookings Institution economist recently prescribed that the steel industry cut wages in half to meet foreign competition. The advice is wrong-headed.

. . . If the highest priority in international commerce is to beat the competition, we should also consider . . . putting a large number of high-school-age children into the full-time labor force, abolishing rules and practices that save lives and limbs on the job, giving manufacturers greater leeway to pollute the environment . . . [and] removing the penalties that now apply to discrimination against women and minorities.

An Alternative

There is another choice. Rather than adjusting our way of life—our standard of living—to that of nations with lower standards, we can help them raise their standards closer to ours. We can make the rights of working men and women more of a factor in international commerce . . . [The] worker rights provisions [of the Trade and Tariff Act of 1984] should be extended beyond GSP, which covers less than 5 percent of imports, to the entire range of our international trade. The trade bill now before Congress would do just that.

. . . Pasting the label of 'protectionism' on these concerns for human welfare is a gross error. At one time most Americans did not care what happened in other states—plantation owners could do what they wanted with their slaves, just so consumers got their cotton cheap. That callous indifference is no longer acceptable. In domestic commerce we find no contradiction between free trade and fair labor standards, such as a prohibition of child labor. In today's vastly more interdependent global economy indifference to human rights abuses outside our boundaries is also becoming less tolerable to Americans . . . Whatever its final form, the trade bill should reflect a commitment to a trade policy that fosters basic rights in the workplace. ■

DEMOCRATIC VALUES

AFT REPORT ON TEACHING

Many young Americans are growing up without the education needed for a solid commitment to democratic values at home and abroad, and lack "the learning necessary for an informed, reasoned allegiance to the ideals of a free society." This is the conclusion of a report jointly sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers, the Educational Excellence Network based at Teachers College, Columbia University, and Freedom House. *Education for Democracy, A Statement of Principles* was released May 19 with the endorsement of 150 leading citizens from the worlds of education (Terrel Bell, William Bennett, Shirley Hufstедler, Albert Shanker, Mary Hatwood Futrell), politics (Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Walter Mondale, the Chairmen of the Democratic and Republican National Committees), labor (Lane Kirkland, Morton Bahr, Owen Bieber, John T. Joyce, Robert A. Georgine, John J. Sweeney, Lynn R. Williams, William Wynn, among others), civil rights (Benjamin Hooks, Bayard Rustin), human rights (Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel), the churches, civic life, the arts, sports, and letters.

The Problem

As AFT President Albert Shanker put it, "Democracy will only survive if future generations remain committed to it. . . You've got to wonder what students can understand about democracy's needs at home or what it takes to defend democracy abroad when . . . half of our high school seniors don't know . . . who Winston Churchill or Joseph Stalin were." Or, as the *Statement*, arguing that students can't be expected to value or defend freedom without a clear grasp of the alternatives, says, "A systematic presentation of reality abroad must be an integral part of the curriculum. If students know only half the world, they will not know nearly enough."

Reordering the Curriculum

The importance of the interplay of Americans with the rest of the world, in both knowledge and action, is implicit throughout *Education for Democracy*, and frequently explicitly stressed. Having asserted the belief that "democracy is the worthiest form of government ever conceived," and "that we cannot take its survival or its spread—or its perfection in practice—for granted," the report calls for a thorough reordering of school curricula around a core of history and geography, augmented by social sciences and world studies. Its 17 pages recommend exposure to the many varied attempts, ancient and contemporary, to establish decent societies, and "more attention to world studies, especially to the realistic and unsentimental study of other nations—both democratic and non-democratic. Comparative study . . . offers students a healthy perspective on our own problems and a needed window on problems elsewhere."

Copies of the report are available for \$2.50 by writing to the Education for Democracy Project, American Federation of Teachers, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. ■

U. S. S. R.

TRADE UNIONISM AS MENTAL ILLNESS

Vladimir Klebanov, the founder of the first independent trade union in the U.S.S.R., has been transferred from the Tashkent Special Psychiatric Hospital (a prison for "mentally ill criminals") to an "ordinary" psychiatric hospital in his hometown of Makeyevka, in the Ukraine. Klebanov, who founded the Free Trade Union of Workers in the Soviet Union in 1977, was arrested by Soviet authorities in early 1978 and charged with "slandering the Soviet social and political system." His independent union was crushed by severe repression after having raised the banner of workers' rights and alerted Western public opinion to the growing problem of unemployment in the USSR.

Ruled mentally ill by a psychiatric commission, Klebanov was sent to a special psychiatric hospital for compulsory treatment. His transfer to an "ordinary" psychiatric hospital after nearly ten years of torture cannot be viewed as an improvement in his treatment; he is reported to be undergoing treatment with strong doses of neuroleptic drugs. The Chief Psychiatrist at the Makeyevka Hospital, Dr. Vladimir Klesov (who recommended the trade union leader's initial long confinement in a special psychiatric hospital), has threatened Klebanov that he may be confined at Makeyevka "for many years." Apparently, in today's Soviet Union free trade unionism is still regarded as a manifestation of mental illness.

"PARASITISM"

Crushing Jewish Activism

In brutally suppressing the rights of its citizens, the Soviet Union has long utilized varied tactics to silence those considered troublesome: leaders of independent trade union movements, Jewish activists, human rights advocates. Amid this repression is an issue particularly disturbing to free trade unionists: loss of employment for expressing one's beliefs. John T. Joyce, President of the Bricklayers International Union and Chairman of the Jewish Labor Committee's Trade Union Council for Soviet Jewry, reports that Jews who apply to emigrate to Israel are nearly always dismissed from their jobs. Then, they are subject to arrest and imprisonment on the charge of "parasitism," for not being employed in "socially useful work."

Use of the "parasitism" charge to persecute Jewish activists is illustrated by the case of Yosif Z. Begun. Mathematician in a research institute, he applied for an exit visa to Israel in 1971. The visa was denied, he was fired from his job, and, unable to find employment during the next six years, was charged with being a "parasite." Sentence: two years in a Siberian labor camp. Although Begun was recently freed from prison for the third time, the threat of arrest as a "parasite" remains for Soviet Jews. As long as that is so, the issue of loss of one's job for expressing one's beliefs will weigh heavily with free trade unionists. ■



SOUTH AFRICA

LABOR FEDERATION RENAMED

In October 1986 the Council of Trade Unions of South Africa (CUSA) and the Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU) announced their merger (*see* The Bulletin, November 1986, page 6). Operating since the merger under the name CUSA/AZACTU, the Federation on May 1 announced the change of its name to the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU). NACTU now represents approximately 440,000 black South African workers. CUSA/AZACTU General Secretary Phiroshaw Camay (*see* Interview, The Bulletin, October 1986, p. 5) continues as General Secretary of NACTU.

NACTU has recently been strengthened by the affiliation of the 20,000-member Electrical and Allied Trades Workers' Union of South Africa, an active participant in the International Metalworkers' Federation and its South African Coordinating Council.

SOWETO ANNIVERSARY

June 16, 1986, marked the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprising. Just four days earlier the Pretoria regime declared South Africa's state of emergency. The Government's move prevented public commemoration of those who died in the 1976 riots. It also managed subsequently to imprison over 25,000 men, women, and children, and to hide much of the truth. But it did not succeed in breaking the spirit of the individual. Most importantly, it has not broken the determination of the independent black trade union movement to fight for democracy and dignity.

This year's June 16 anniversary falls under the shadow of May's whites-only elections, which returned the racist National Party to power and increased the number of seats held by the even-more racist Conservatives. The National Party has interpreted the results as a mandate for abandoning ostensible reform in favor of stricter control. The black trade unions have borne the brunt of this shift.

The AFL-CIO, remembering the victims of Soweto, and of those of the eleven years that have passed since, continues committed to a policy of solidarity with and support for the independent black trade union movement in South Africa—"that country's principal force for peaceful change." ■

TUNISIA

ACHOUR UNDER HOUSE ARREST

After a year and a half in detention, Habib Achour, former General Secretary of the Tunisian labor federation UGTT, has been released from prison, but remains under house arrest. (*See* The Bulletin, January, p. 8, and February, p. 4.) Achour, at 74, is diabetic and losing his sight. The AFL-CIO sent a congratulatory note on his release, as did the ICFTU, which had pressed for his release. ■



SWEDEN

The ICFTU-affiliated Swedish trade union federation, LO, is determined to oppose moves aimed at speeding up the phasing out of use of nuclear energy in the country. The LO says that the original plan approved by Parliament (the Riksdag) to phase out nuclear energy by 2010 should be maintained. The Riksdag's decision has been called into question by some groups following a recent report on the Chernobyl disaster. The LO considers, however, that the Riksdag decision is already a large undertaking, and the federation is making concrete proposals to retain an unchanged rate of employment and level of welfare, which could be seriously affected by too rapid a phaseout.

POLAND

Lech Walesa, leader of the ICFTU-affiliated Solidarnosc trade union has been refused the necessary permission to travel to Rome. He had been invited by Italian trade unions to attend a seminar dealing with union rights, amongst other matters. Leaders from the ICFTU and its other European affiliates were to have attended. In view of Walesa's absence, it was decided to postpone the event.

PARAGUAY

Repression increased in Paraguay on the eve of May Day celebrations. The ICFTU has learned of more arrests of members of Paraguay's Workers' Inter-Trade Union Movement (MIT). These include Marcelino Corazon Medina, leader of the Peasants' Union, and Raquel Aquino, leader of the students' movement, who is detained at the "Buen Pastor" prison. Margarita Capurro de Seiferheld, a lawyer and MIT member, has been dismissed from her teaching post and is being subjected to pressure by pro-Government officials. Conditions in Paraguayan jails are inhuman, according to ICFTU reports. A delegation from the ICFTU and its regional organization, ORIT, headed by ORIT General Secretary Luis Anderson, attended May Day celebrations in Asuncion at the invitation of the MIT.

MAURITIUS

Some 1,800 Mauritian workers will attend a total of 50 trade union training courses organized this year by the ICFTU-affiliated Mauritius Labor Congress (MLC). The MLC education program deals with key national issues and aims at informing workers about their rights. While welcoming the country's economic performance last year (a 6 percent growth in GNP), the MLC is now calling for a fairer distribution of wealth on the island.

(From ICFTU despatches)

THE CORPORATION

KIRKLAND'S SWISS LECTURE

In January of this year AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland was notified that he had received the Freedom Award of the Max Schmidheiny Foundation of the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration at St. Gallen, Switzerland. Previous laureates include Dr. Gaston Thorn, President of the Commission of the European Communities, Stefan Kisielewski, publicist, author, and composer of Warsaw, the former editor of the Neue Zuercher Zeitung, and "Médecins sans Frontières," of Paris and Geneva. The award included an invitation to speak May 18 at the 17th International Management Symposium of the Graduate School on "The future of the corporation." Some extracts:

"... Today's corporate world is volatile and precarious. At least in the United States, its character is being drastically altered by new technologies, by a changing world economic order, by deregulation, and, in recent times, by what can only be described... as an orgy of speculative greed and corporate blood-letting... Great energy and vast resources are exhausted in this internecine struggle... The actual identities of corporations are blurred... as they lose the expertise and specialization that once were their hallmarks... Any and all are the potential targets of financial buccaneers who are ignorant of and indifferent to the tools, technology and talents that create their products..."

When we observe billions of dollars committed without the making or marketing of a single new product, when we see corporations mortgage themselves to the hilt to fight off raiders, we are indeed troubled. In the end, we know that it is working people who pay, and pay dearly, with the loss of their livelihoods and the debasement of their communities...

Does anyone care? The labor movement cares. The lot of its members and their families is inextricably linked to the continuing production of goods and services, on their native soil and in their home towns. If real dependence upon, and hence loyalty to, the survival and health of the corporation is to be found, that is the place to look...

If the new managers display diminishing loyalty to their own corporations, their loyalty to flag and country is

likewise on the wane... For them "no minstrels raptures swell," as their hearts throb in fervor only to the concept of a global economy whose values are defined by arbitrage and denominated by currency... What are the values of this class? A vice president of Citicorp Bank once put it this way: "Who knows what political system works best? All we ask is, can they pay their bills?"... Surely this is a bleak and narrow form of internationalism... It is a troubling time for the Western corporation. But those troubles cannot be laid at the door of the trade union movement... Labor has demonstrated extraordinary willingness to negotiate fairly and honestly...

It was not the unions that created the staggering trade deficit that threatens the American economy... It was not the unions that created the international debt crisis... However, it is the workers of those countries who will bear the burden of debt repayment... And it is American workers whose jobs are imperiled... I take no particular pleasure in the troubles of corporate America, because the price will not be paid by the authors of those troubles. They will take the money and run. I am concerned about the erosion of the stability of the corporation and its decline in prestige, because I don't really think that is good either for labor or the nation...

Freedom is a much abused word in our diverse world... We think a clearer understanding of freedom is available from those who have been denied it... They all have one thing in common. They are denied freedom of association... the most important weapon with which to defend all of their other human rights... Our freedom of association protects the freedom of all Americans—even that of the managerial class...

We want to see strong and effective and free trade unions throughout the world... We don't want to compete with foreign workers earning 75 cents an hour. We want to compete with the products of foreign workers who earn enough to buy more of their own goods as well as more of ours... That is why we, together with all of the trade union centers of the OECD countries, are pressing for the incorporation of a social clause in GATT negotiations and agreements, requiring the observation of internationally recognized minimum labor standards... We know that the struggle to build free unions abroad is simultaneously a struggle for human rights and democracy... That is the basis of Labor's internationalism. There we take our stand. We can do no other. ■



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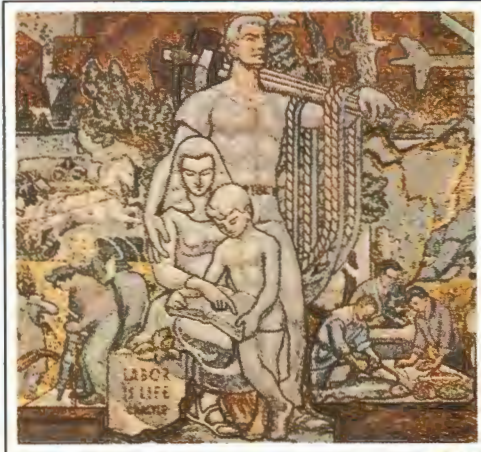
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SOUTH AFRICA

TRADE UNIONS UNDER SIEGE

Union Headquarters Raided

On April 29, in a scene now tragically familiar in South Africa, hundreds of heavily armed police, moving with a speed and precision calculated to be intimidating in themselves, raided the headquarters of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), one of that country's two major anti-apartheid labor federations. As the police did their work within, the union offices were surrounded by a large security detachment with police dogs and whips.

The Mounting Anti-Union Campaign

The April 29 raid was the second in one week. It was part of a mounting campaign of anti-union repression linked to a two-month-long railway strike which has paralyzed transportation and led to the illegal dismissal of 16,000 striking workers. The raids on COSATU resulted in the arrest of hundreds of trade unionists. They were accompanied by violent attacks on railway workers which left six strikers dead.

The Unions' Current Role

In recent months, the increasing toll of arrests, repression and killings has sapped the strength of many anti-apartheid organizations. The trade union movement has endured this wave of attacks. It remains a viable and potent force for democratic change. As the principal force in the current phase of the struggle against apartheid, it is now being singled out to bear the full brunt of the Pretoria regime's campaign to eliminate all opposition.

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Meeting in the wake of this violence and repression, the AFL-CIO Executive Council on May 7 issued the following statement:

The AFL-CIO is outraged at the recent upsurge in repression against the black trade union movement in South Africa. The murder on April 22nd of innocent black railway workers and the massive police raids on the Johannesburg headquarters of the Congress of South African Trade Unions unmask the violence which is at the root of the apartheid system.

The AFL-CIO condemns the brutality of the South African government, which seeks to crush an eight-week-long strike for better conditions by the South African Railway and Harbor Workers Union and to frighten a trade union movement that is at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid.

The killing of trade unionists, the dismissal of 16,000 striking workers, the refusal to negotiate with their trade union, and the attacks on trade union headquarters reveal the true intentions of Pretoria: the suppression of independent trade unions and of those who dare to speak out in behalf of human dignity, workers rights, and racial equality.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council demands that the South African government stop its aggression and enter into negotiations with the black-led South African trade union movement. We call for the reinstatement of all dismissed workers.


The AFL-CIO pledges its continued support to the independent black trade union movement in South Africa, that country's principal force for peaceful change. The racist regime's efforts to implicate the trade union movement in acts of violence are preposterous and transparent in their mendacity. Police interference in trade union activities must cease and unions must be allowed to exercise their rights in accordance with internationally recognized labor standards.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council expresses its condolences to the families of those murdered in the struggle for justice, democracy and trade union freedom in South Africa. ■

AFL-CIO AND SENEGALESE UNIONS



Dakar: AFL-CIO International Affairs Director Tom Kahn and AALC Executive Director Patrick J. O'Farrell join with CNTS General Secretary Madia Diop and participants at opening ceremony of AFL-CIO/CNTS Educational Seminar. Story p. 7.



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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

THE JAZZ SECTION

On March 11, five members of the Jazz Section of the Musicians' Union of Czechoslovakia were convicted in Prague of "unauthorized business enterprise." (See *The Bulletin, March, ICFTU Notes, p. 7.*) The "unauthorized business enterprise" of the five defendants was individual cultural expression in a country where the cultural establishment and both cultural and professional expression are strictly controlled by the Communist Party.

The Real Offense

Presumably, had the Jazz Section's activities captured no following, it might have escaped notice. But it became a haven for free cultural expression. Its *Jazz Bulletin* reached 70,000 to 80,000 readers. It published books which had a wide audience. Writers and artists who were interested in expressing themselves freely rallied round.

The Crackdown

The Government for years exerted pressure on the Jazz Section—at one point moving to dissolve and ban the Prague Division of the Czechoslovak Union of Musicians. Then in the fall of 1986, the homes, offices, and workplaces of Jazz Section members were searched by the secret police. Hundreds of books and additional hundreds of periodicals were confiscated. This year's trial of the Jazz Section (a mockery: the main defense witness was not allowed to testify) followed. In the end Karel Srp, the group's leader, was sentenced to 16 months in jail. A colleague received a sentence of 10 months imprisonment. Three other defendants were given suspended sentences and three years' probation.

U.S. Labor Protests

The AFL-CIO Department of Professional Employees took up the cause of the accused Jazz Section leaders. Through the efforts of DPE Director Jack Golodner, the International Secretariat of Entertainment Trade Unions, which represents over 350,000 workers in the arts, issued a strong protest over the harassment of the Jazz Section and called for the immediate release of imprisoned Czechoslovak musicians. ■

U.S.S.R.

FREE TRADE UNIONIST EMIGRATES

Dissident Soviet trade unionist Fyodor Finkel who, with his brother Vadim, waged a nearly two-month-long hunger strike, and whose protest was supported by the AFL-CIO International Department, has been allowed by Soviet authorities to emigrate from the USSR. Mr. Finkel, a member of the Free Interprofessional Association of Workers (SMOT), launched his hunger strike in mid-February to protest Soviet inaction on his family's application for exit visas to Israel—where they hoped for treat-

ment for Mr. Finkel's wife, Svetlana Mayatnikova, who is suffering from cancer.

Public Attention Helps!

After his own release from the Soviet Union Anatoly Shcharansky emphasized that public attention to persecutees in the Soviet Union helps. Thus, when the AFL-CIO's Paris Office was alerted to the Finkel case by exiled representatives of the SMOT trade union, AFL-CIO International Affairs Department representatives requested action by the U.S. State Department's Human Rights Bureau. The case was raised by the U.S. Delegation at the current Vienna Review Meeting on Security and Cooperation in Europe and by the Congressional Helsinki Commission. The Jewish Labor Committee coordinated protests by organizations concerned with the plight of Soviet Jewry, and the U.S. Helsinki Watch also urged quick action. The AFL-CIO's Free Trade Union Institute alerted several U.S. Senators and Representatives. Rep. Bob Mrazek (Dem.-N.J.) intervened with Soviet Ambassador Yuri Dubinin.

The Finkels have arrived in the U. S., and will be settling in the Boston area with the assistance of the International Rescue Committee. ■

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

ON NAZI WAR CRIMES FILES

May 7, 1987

The question of exacting justice for Nazi war crimes continues to haunt our era. As eyewitnesses of the gruesome Nazi atrocities vanish with the passage of time, documentary evidence becomes ever more critical to the tracking down of the guilty. Some experts have pointed to the potential for forged evidence by the Soviet bloc, which derives advantage from dividing American ethnic groups. Yet, ironically, while the debate over untainted evidence rages, a clear, unimpeachable and reliable body of evidence continues to be shielded from public scrutiny. That evidence is to be found in the War Crimes Files of the United Nations. These files were gathered by the Allied War Crimes Commission. They contain information on approximately 40,000 suspected war criminals, of whom 25,000 warranted prosecution. Upon completing its work the Allied Commission turned over its records to the United Nations for safekeeping, intending that these documents contribute to bringing other war criminals to justice.

Inexplicably, U. N. officials have since restricted access to the files, maintaining that permission must be secured from the seventeen nations which comprised the Commission. The AFL-CIO believes that the enormity of Nazi crimes outweighs such narrow procedural arguments. The AFL-CIO urges the U. S. government to reverse its position opposing free access to the files and to press U. N. General Secretary Javier Perez de Cuellar to open the war crimes files. Continued opposition to access to this important source of information acts as an impediment to the punishment of those guilty of crimes against humanity.



NICARAGUA



The January CUS Rally in Managua

CUS

While media reports focus daily on the military conflict between the Sandinistas and their Contra opponents, a quiet but vital struggle for trade union freedom is being waged in Nicaragua. At its center stands the *Confederacion de Unificacion Sindical (CUS)*.

The Growing Federation

In recent months, despite mounting repression by the Sandinistas, the CUS has made remarkable gains in membership. Today CUS has grown to number over 30,000 members, more than two-thirds of them poor and exploited *campesinos*. Other workers organized in this embattled labor federation include garment workers, hotel and restaurant employees, electrical workers and machinists.

Intimidation and Persecution

Under the Sandinista drive for a single state-controlled labor federation, CUS members are automatically subjected to intimidation and persecution, harassment, denunciation, arrest and detention. The union and its members have been denied credit and supplies. The union's magazine has been shut down, its offices have been closed by the authorities, and ransacked by the Government-directed mobs (*turbas*). Still, mirroring the Nicaraguan workers' desire for dignity and freedom, the federation's membership has climbed. The union's growth has placed it at the forefront of the democratic opposition inside Nicaragua.

Challenging Oppression

In addition to challenging the Sandinista Government's outlawing of all strikes, and protesting the suppression of freedom of the press, the CUS has won the respect of many Nicaraguan workers through an impressive program of vocational education, and fishing and agrarian cooperatives.

Seven Thousand March in Protest

A major indication of the growing strength of the CUS was a massive rally held in Managua in January (photo above). Seven thousand CUS members rallied for liberty and against repression. Union members entering the city from outside were able to assemble by blending into groups of Sandinista supporters gathered to hail the new constitution. The presence of large numbers of Western reporters as well as the constitutional ceremonies provided temporary protection for the marchers. (The new constitution "guarantees" freedom of assembly.) After two hours a Sandinista proclamation of a new state of emergency ended the demonstration (and the constitutional "guarantee"). Later, the security services surrounded the CUS headquarters and denied union officials entry. That night, six CUS members were rounded up by police and warned to cease their union activities.

In the face of repression, the democratic Nicaraguan labor movement is an impressive testament to the workers' unquenchable thirst for freedom. ■

ARGENTINA

DEMOCRACY UPHELD

On March 16, the democratic government of Argentina was threatened by a potential *coup d'état*. Junior officers in Cordoba, apparently with the tacit support of general officers, rebelled, demanding an end to the human rights prosecutions against military officers implicated in the thousands of deaths during the "dirty war." But the people of Argentina, the elected officials of both ruling and opposition parties, loyal military forces and—most important—the leadership of the 4-million-member General Workers' Confederation rallied behind President Alfonsín. Saul Ubaldini, General Secretary of the CGT, called for a national general strike to help defeat the military revolt.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland sent the following cable to the CGT: "The AFL-CIO is in total solidarity with its brothers of the CGT in its heroic struggle to maintain democracy in Argentina. We are sure that the members of the CGT will remain firm in face of the current threats against the democratic system and can count on the support of all the peoples of good faith throughout the world." They and democracy's other supporters remained firm. On Easter Sunday the President was able to announce to thousands in Buenos Aires' giant Plaza de Mayo, "Today we can all thank God that the house is in order and there is no blood. Countrymen: Happy Easter!" ■

EL SALVADOR

On April 21 William C. Doherty, Jr., Executive Director of the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development, accompanied by Peggy Taylor, Deputy Director of the AFL-CIO's Legislative Department, and Simon Parada, General Secretary of the Salvadoran Association of Rural Producers' Cooperatives (ACOPAI), an affiliate of the Union Nacional de Obreros y Campesinos (UNOC), the democratic labor federation of El Salvador, testified before the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the U. S. House of Representatives' Committee on Appropriations on current conditions in El Salvador. Following are highlights:

HUMAN RIGHTS

"By almost every standard, the violations of human rights of Salvadoran citizens have decreased under the administration of Jose Napoleon Duarte. This certainly is a result of the disbanding of the intelligence unit of the Treasury Police, administrative orders which have brought military officers under the more complete control of the civilian authorities, and the liberalization of the procedures used in the treatment of prisoners. Notwithstanding improvements in human rights, UNOC leaders believe that all violations, even if reduced in number, must be vigorously protested. The general trend, confirmed by both UNOC leaders and independent news account, such as those...in *The New York Times*, is that Government abuses, including occasional killing of civilians in bomb-

ing raids, are declining, while guerrilla abuses, including indiscriminate use of mines, are increasing. Although Army treatment of captured persons is improving, the practice of holding suspects for fifteen days incommunicado is an abuse of human rights condemned by both the AFL-CIO and UNOC.

JUDICIAL REFORM

"On January 3, 1981, two AIFLD employees, Michael Hammer and Mark Pearlman, and the General Secretary of a large peasant union, Jose Rodolfo Viera, were brutally murdered at the Sheraton Hotel in San Salvador. More than six years later the AFL-CIO and the UCS are still trying to obtain a solution of this case from the judicial system in El Salvador. Despite sincere efforts by the U. S. Government to support judicial reform...success stories are very rare indeed. Improvements have been made in the administration, training, and court facilities; protection of jurors and judges; increased compensation for judges to make them more independent and like measures. The most basic problem remains, however; the judiciary is dominated by supporters of the most reactionary right-wing forces in El Salvador—precisely those forces which consistently have opposed the human rights programs of the current Government. President Duarte does not have the authority under the Constitution to appoint Supreme Court judges...They are appointed for a five-year term by the Assembly. Judges in the lower courts are, in turn, appointed by the Supreme Court. The current judges were appointed just prior to 1984 when the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) won a majority for the first time...The AFL-CIO understands fully President Duarte's current inability to make necessary personnel changes in the Salvadoran judicial system...All who favor a democratic El Salvador...must work together to bring about substantive judicial reform before it is too late..."

El Salvador Today: An Overview

"The Salvadoran people have developed very greatly the democratic institutions which were almost totally lacking in 1979. In eight years, the country under the leadership of President Jose Napoleon Duarte has developed the electoral mechanisms to transfer power non-violently from political incumbent to challenger. The once horrendous violations of human rights have been essentially controlled by strong executive direction. The most serious land tenure problems have been ameliorated by land reform. The major outstanding problems are judicial reform and the economy. The possibility of economic progress continues to deteriorate under the pressure of a Marxist guerrilla insurgency, obstruction and at times economic sabotage from the extreme right, and by what is euphemistically called an "act of God"—the earthquake of October 1986. The brave and industrious Salvadoran people deserve better. They need and deserve our support. We therefore urge the Congress to live up to our responsibilities as the greatest democracy on the face of the earth. We urge the Congress, in our own long-term interest, to continue and to expand our economic support to El Salvador, a country struggling valiantly to strengthen its democratic foundations against great odds." ■



TURKEY

UNIONS UNDER ATTACK

Turk-Is Campaign

The democratic Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions, Turk-Is, is engaged in a nationwide campaign to publicize the deterioration of trade union rights and working conditions in Turkey. In a number of cities, including Ankara, Izmir, and Eskisehir, Turk-Is leaders have pressed for lifting the severe restrictions on union activities contained in the Turkish Labor Code (See *The Bulletin*, December, 1986, p. 6). A planned march on Parliament to protest the increasingly anti-worker stance of the Government was blocked by riot police (See *The Bulletin*, April 1987, p. 4.) Tension has mounted, and recent weeks have seen an outbreak of strikes by thousands of petroleum workers. To press further its campaign for labor rights, Turk-Is has set up action committees in all 67 provinces of the country, and has delivered to the Turkish Parliament an open letter calling for the restoration of trade union rights and democratic freedoms, and for social and economic reforms. Turk-Is is committed to continuing its campaign, including solidarity demonstrations in localities where striking union members have been locked out.

Labor Leaders Warned

For its strong support of worker rights, several leading Turk-Is activists, including Confederation President Sevket Yilmaz, were held by security police and interrogated for six hours. They have been warned that legal proceedings may be instituted against them in the State Security Court.

ICFTU Call for Solidarity

This deterioration in labor rights in Turkey has not escaped the notice of the world democratic labor community. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has expressed its concern, and has urged its affiliates "to voice their concern in representations to the appropriate authorities, statements in the media, and other channels." ■

ISRAEL

The AFL-CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, on May 7, 1987, issued the following statement on Histadrut and Israel:

In this, the 40th anniversary year of the founding of the state of Israel, the AFL-CIO reaffirms its longstanding and consistent support for the only free and democratic state in the Middle East. We greet Israel's democratic achievement with particular satisfaction, recognizing it as a state built on the pioneering vision of the trade union movement and trade union values. We applaud Israel's staunch commitment to democracy and social justice in the context of a relentless war waged against it by Palestinian terrorists and neighboring Arab dictatorships.

The AFL-CIO restates its solidarity with Histadrut, Israel's Labor Federation, which has played a central role in shaping the social, economic and cultural life of Israel. We salute Histadrut for its defense of the rights of all Israeli workers, irrespective of their race or national origin. Such a spirited commitment to the interests of workers has contributed significantly to the strength of Israel's democracy. The AFL-CIO urges all its affiliated unions to continue their strong support of Israel and to give Histadrut material and moral assistance in its social, economic, educational, cultural, and health initiatives. ■

DEFENSE COMMITTEE

SDI EXAMINED

At the February meeting of the Executive Council, the Federation's Committee on Defense was reconstituted (See *The Bulletin*, March 1987, p. 2). The AFL-CIO International Affairs Department was asked to provide staff assistance. The Committee has convened twice, and has four additional dates scheduled before the August Executive Council meeting, when it intends to issue its report. At the center of the Committee's concern is the Strategic Defense Initiative, and its implications for American defense and national security. The Committee is hearing speakers both for and against SDI, including representatives of the Administration, former Government officials, academics, and both active and retired military leaders.



Lt. Gen. James A. Abrahamson addresses a session of the AFL-CIO Defense Committee, chaired by Bricklayers' President John T. Joyce.

The Committee has already heard from Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Adviser, who projected Soviet military and political strategy into the 21st century. At the April 30 meeting, General James Abrahamson, Director of the Strategic Defense Initiative at the Pentagon, gave the Government's assessment of what is feasible in the area of strategic defenses. Other speakers have included Robert Jastrow, a physicist who supports SDI, and Walter Slocombe, former Defense Department official who does not. The Committee will be briefed in future sessions by Robert MacNamara, former Secretary of Defense, an opponent of SDI, and Dr. Edward Teller, an important proponent. ■



SIX NATIONS

INTERVIEW

Tom Kahn, Director of the AFL-CIO's Department of International Affairs, recently returned from a three-week, six-nation tour of Africa. The Bulletin asked him to discuss his trip and his impressions.

Q. What was the purpose of your trip?

A. This trip, similar to ones made in Asia and South America, was an opportunity to increase my awareness of the trade union situation in the developing world, to learn at first hand the problems unions face there, and to assess their possibilities of functioning as free and democratic institutions. The Executive Director of the AFL-CIO's African-American Labor Center, Patrick O'Farrell, accompanied me on the tour. AALC representatives in Africa arranged meetings with officials of the labor movements and governments. We visited union headquarters, saw workers on the job, toured some of the union projects the AFL-CIO has helped finance, and experienced the varied cultural and political environments that characterize Africa.

Q. Where did you go?

Senegal

A. Our first stop was Senegal, where we met General Secretary Madia Diop and the Executive Board of the Senegalese Workers Federation (CNTS). We were officially welcomed by a senior Minister of the Cabinet, himself a former trade unionist, on behalf of President Diouf, and received by the Minister of Labor. We visited a tuna cannery, observing working conditions, and discussing with the workers their feelings about work and trade unionism. Brother O'Farrell and I also presided at the opening of an AALC-sponsored seminar for the CNTS on the use of statistics in wage and price determination (see photo page 2)

Liberia

Our next stop was Liberia, which included meetings at the headquarters of the Liberia Federation of Labor Unions with General Secretary Amos Gray and the Executive Board. We also met with the newly-appointed Minister of Labor.

Ivory Coast

In the Ivory Coast we were hosted by the Workers' Union of the Ivory Coast (UGTCI). We visited a jute bag factory and spoke with the workers there.

Zaire

General Secretary Kombo of the Workers' Union of Zaire (UNTZA) and its Executive Board were our hosts in Zaire. We toured their educational facilities and union

social service programs, all of which have received some AFL-CIO assistance and are doing much to improve the lives of workers. We were received by the First Vice President of the Central Committee on behalf of the Government. The headquarters of the regional Workers' Organization of Central Africa (OTAC) in Kinshasa was also on our itinerary.

Kenya

In Kenya General Secretary Mugalla of the Congress of Trade Unions (COTU) arranged visits to the federation's headquarters, which the AFL-CIO helped to construct, and to the Tom Mboya Labor College in Kisumu, which COTU financed and built. Brother Mugalla also arranged a visit with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi and the Minister of Labor.

Zambia

In Zambia we heard President Kenneth Kaunda's speech on the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), in which he threatened to dissolve the labor federation if "it persists in misguiding its members," and directed employers to fire workers involved in illegal strikes and to discontinue check-off for unions whose members stage strikes. Again this year, President Kaunda forbade the ZCTU to address workers on May Day. The President would address the nation on April 30; May 1 was reserved for "festivities and not speeches." The ZCTU has been seeking an audience with President Kaunda to discuss the issues between the federation and the Government.

ZCTU General Secretary Newstead Zimba explained to us that the strikes were the result of employers' failures to honor agreements signed with the workers. He said the Government's attitude to strikes showed that both Government and management fail to regard the workers as "decent producers of goods and services worth some responsibility."

This attack on the ZCTU is not new, as the Government has been trying to integrate the federation into the single ruling party. The ZCTU, however, continues to maintain its independence. Over the past years, especially as the economy has deteriorated, the ZCTU has proved a convenient scapegoat. I was particularly impressed by the Zambian labor movement, which is striving to keep its free and democratic nature in the face of threats from the Government.

Q. What were other things you saw that impressed you?

A. I also was deeply impressed by how the various unions carry out their day-to-day operations despite extremely difficult conditions and meager resources. The diversity of the labor movements from one country to another was another notable factor—they run the gamut from being on very good, close terms with their governments to standing in opposition. Despite the differences, each federation was its country's proud example of a free, independent, and democratic institution working to better living and working conditions, and defending the rights of its workers. The AFL-CIO is fortunate as well as proud to have played a minor role in this success. But the job is not over. Their work and ours still continue. ■

HUMAN RIGHTS

LABOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

On April 22 the Jewish Labor Committee National Trade Union Council held a luncheon honoring Larry Dugan, general president of the Operating Engineers, and a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, who was the recipient of the National Trade Union Council's 1986 Labor Human Rights Award. AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue addressed the gathering. After a tribute to Larry Dugan, Brother Donahue spoke on some of the issues involved in the human and labor rights struggle:

“... The battle for human freedom has changed very little over the half-century and more since the Jewish Labor Committee was founded to rescue free men and women from state terrorism in Europe.

“In that battle, we are called upon to do everything in our power to support and assist Jewish captives in Soviet Russia, trade unionists in Poland and Chile, and black victims of apartheid in South Africa. Oppression in those lands is naked and clear-cut.

“And we are required to do battle against the mercantilism that dominates American foreign policy and business.

“Is there any difference between profiting by doing business with political dictators on the one hand and doing business with economic predators selling out American jobs and living standards and destroying America's industrial and economic strength, in the name of profit, on the other?

“We have seen both the Reagan Administration and the business community resist calls for sanctions and disinvestment in South Africa until the protests against apartheid threatened the popular image of one and the profits of the other.

“We have seen both the Administration and the money men fight tooth and nail against any sort of restraint on predatory foreign assaults on American industry until public anger became overwhelming.

“Freedom in this world is not served by bankers who urge Third World countries to dump the products of their exploited people's work into the American marketplace in order to pay interest to the bankers.

“It isn't served by takeover artists who look on industry, not as a means of production for human use, but as a gambling chip to be captured and dissolved into cash.

“It isn't served by those who throw workers and their families and communities on the scrap heap in order to market the products of overseas sweatshops.

“It isn't served by government leaders who accept the loyalty oaths of tyrants at face value, and defend their tyranny as an 'unfortunate necessity' to preserve political stability.

“We in the labor movement value human freedom not as an abstraction to be weighed against other abstractions but as an absolute condition of everyday life in everyday communities. We have no choice about that, because we are a part of every community in this land, and we have strong ties to people like ourselves, who do the work and make the products of every community on earth.

“We defend our right to organize, and our right to decent wages and working conditions, and the rights of workers everywhere to pursue in their own way the things we want for ourselves, because we have no choice.

“We know that if we do not speak up and act in defense of democracy and the hopes and welfare of ordinary people, there is no one else—not on Wall Street, not in the White House, not in the executive suites anywhere—who can be counted on to do what needs to be done...” ■



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STRIKES**



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LEADER ON DEBT**



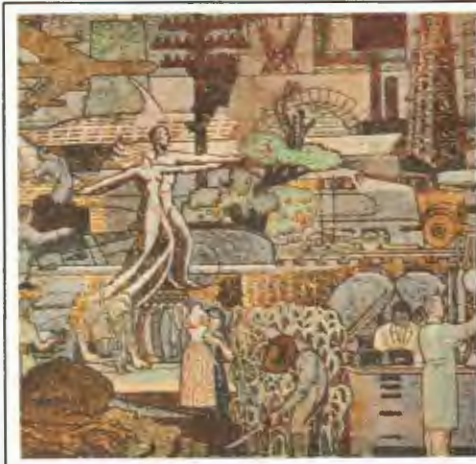
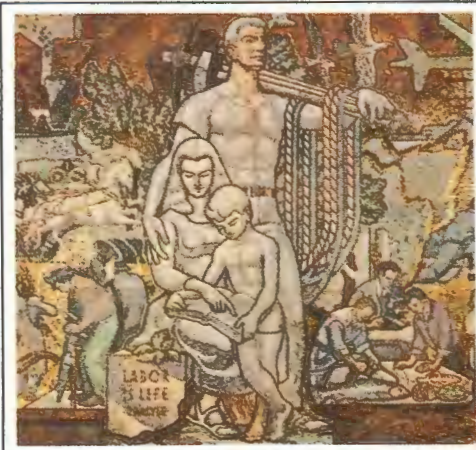
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WORKERS' RIGHTS

YUGOSLAVIA

THE "MANAGERS" STRIKE

Alone among Communist countries, Yugoslavia has been the scene of a steady, sustained rise in the number of strikes. In the last two years, over 1,500 separate strikes have occurred, most of them over wage and workplace issues. During 1986 some 80,000 workers downed their tools. Genuine as these acts of protest are, their average duration appears to be on the order of one day. So far they have not developed into a coordinated national movement such as emerged in Poland in 1980. But they do pose a potential—and acknowledged—threat to the domination by the Yugoslav Communist Party (League of Communists) of the nation's political, economic, and social institutions.

The recent announcement by the Yugoslav authorities of huge price increases (the chronic Achilles' heel of centralized economic direction) resulted in a widespread acceleration of the strike movement. The number and vigor of these occurrences attracted not only the attention of foreign observers, but also that of the Yugoslav Communist leaders. Their response was a March statement by Prime Minister Mikulic that threats to the established order—in the event, domination by the Yugoslav League of Communists of the country's life—from any and all sources would be met by any and all necessary measures. In response to queries, he specifically included deployment of the military.

The Anomalies

The continued workers' protests in Yugoslavia involve two interesting and significant anomalies. The first is that in Yugoslavia strikes are not protected by law. Courage is therefore a basic element in these worker-led stoppages.

The second anomaly reveals a basic doctrinal contradiction. Communist doctrine, as expounded over the years by Leninist publicists, is that since under Communism the means of production belong to the workers, the workers have no interest in striking against themselves. In the 1950s the Yugoslav Communists went a step further (under censure from Moscow) in asserting that mere doctrine was not sufficient to insure the workers' interests, and in therefore evolving their system of worker management. In Yugoslavia all enterprises are, in theory, controlled by workers' councils. How, then, could Yugoslav workers strike against their own control? The answer, of course, is the lack of substance in the workers' councils, and the *de facto* domination by the League of Communists.

Legalize?

Several voices in the Government-controlled media have suggested that strikes are among workers' inalienable rights. But they appear as a distinct minority. The Government's position is clear; and that of the Government-controlled Confederation of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia has been cravenly anti-worker. One prominent leader of the Trade Union Confederation, Stojan Stojcevski, in speak-

ing against the legalization of strikes, asserted, "Workers themselves oppose stoppages as a way of resolving problems and, consequently, are against their legalization." Another leading trade union official warned that it is "an illusion to believe that strikes can solve problems."

Discontent with Unions

The Yugoslav trade unions, as part and parcel of a system of state control of workers, do not represent the workers' interests. One Yugoslav sociologist, in describing worker dissatisfaction with their unions, called them "informal oligarchies" that have created unlimited "privileges and power" for management. There have been instances where hundreds of workers have resigned from the Government-controlled unions to voice their discontent (not least with the high pay of trade union officials). Yugoslav workers recognize their unions for what they are—arms of the Government, acting to suppress the legitimate interests of workers. Their answer has been direct and spontaneous action—confirming the AFL-CIO policy of no contact with the official, Government-controlled unions in Communist countries. ■

HUNGARY

RACZ: VISIT SET

Sandor Racz, leader of the Budapest Workers' Council during the democratic revolution of 1956 in Hungary, has now received permission to travel to the West. As reported in the March issue of *The Bulletin*, Brother Racz, who continues to be active in the democratic movement inside Hungary, was invited to come to the U.S. by the AFL-CIO Department of International Affairs. He was refused a passport by the Hungarian Government, and again on appeal to a Hungarian Court, because of his "criminal record" (i.e., his role in 1956). This development, coming after the decades during which Mr. Racz was denied the elementary right to travel, followed on intervention by the AFL-CIO and the U.S. State Department, including American Ambassador to Hungary Mark Palmer. Brother Racz is expected in May. ■



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THE PHILIPPINES

UNIONISTS UNDER FIRE

Florencia Cabatingan, 41 years of age, heads a union in southern Mindanao, hotbed of the insurgency in the Philippines. She is regional vice president of the Associated Labor Unions, one of the largest affiliates of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP). Mrs. Cabatingan was in the United States as an observer at the Eleanor Roosevelt International Caucus of Women Leaders, sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. The Caucus took place March 12-14, and Mrs. Cabatingan then visited unionists in Washington, D. C., New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Honolulu. In an interview with The Bulletin she spoke of the risks and challenges facing the democratic labor movement in the Philippines.

INTERVIEW

Q. What kind of workers does your union represent? A. In my area of southern Mindanao we have about 8,500 members, mostly working for the plantations—pineapple, banana, and rubber—both in the offices and in the fields. Organizing them is extremely difficult work.

Q. How is that? A. My life has been threatened three times. My predecessor as regional vice president was assassinated. In a recent election campaign our local union president, one of our most effective leaders and a sharp critic of the radical left, was shot and killed. This was the third leader killed in our area since late 1984. I keep a pistol handy.

Q. Who is responsible for these threats and killings? Has anyone been arrested? A. No. They disappear into the underground from which they came. I have no doubt, however, that the killers come from the New People's Army, the NPA, the military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and that they work with the Party's labor front, the Kilusang Mayo Uno, or KMU.

Q. What makes you so sure? A. My union is in direct competition with the KMU for the support of the workers, and we compete regularly in representation elections. Very often, before those elections, armed men make the rounds of workers' homes, and threaten them with violence if they do not promise to vote for the KMU union. By their own words, the NPA and KMU show they rely on fear and terror. In the February 1986 election they put up banners saying, "BULLETS, NOT BALLOTS." People who have defected from their ranks have testified that killing is often a requirement to become a member. Commission of a crime is used as an initiation rite. I know of one plantation worker who was forced to kill a fellow worker and bury him on the plantation. It's incredible, but it's true.

Q. Why did you take this dangerous job? A. I didn't plan to. I was sent to Davao City on a temporary assignment to help Max Nunez, the southern Mindanao regional vice president. I spoke the local language and got along well with the workers, so Max asked me to stay on, but after my temporary assignment was finished, I left. Then one day we got a phone call with the terrible news that Max had been assassinated, just after he won three straight elections against the KMU. Max was most outspoken. He said that the contest was not between two unions, but between communism and democracy. Our national leaders then asked me to take his place. I agreed to do so, but only for six months to fill in the gap created by Max's murder. After going to meeting after meeting and telling the workers not to lose faith in our union, I found I couldn't just turn my back on them. So I stayed and brought my two children down to Davao too.



Florencia Cabatingan

Q. What did you do in the Presidential elections a year ago? A. I was the leader in the National Movement for Free Elections—NAMFREL—the movement most responsible for the departure of Marcos. Before and during the election, we were harassed both by the Marcos forces and by the KMU, which campaigned for the workers to boycott the elections.

Q. Then there was the referendum on the new Constitution on February 2? A. Yes, and then we in the TUCP campaigned hard for a "Yes" vote. The Marcos supporters and the KMU both campaigned for a "No" vote. Once again the workers ignored them and supported the Constitution and Cory Aquino.

Q. Will your enemies, realizing that they misjudged the workers, now decide to work within the democratic system? A. I'm afraid not. They cannot win that way. They will continue to use threats and physical force, including assassinations, to spread fear among the workers and intimidate them, to destabilize the democratic society to which Cory Aquino and we in the free labor movement are dedicated.

Q. Is outside help needed? A. Yes, very much so. The other side gets massive assistance from abroad, both open and covert, including from some unionists in the U.S. They also use the names of some U.S. labor leaders as supporting their cause, and so it is important when we get open statements of support from AFL-CIO leaders, as we got from the New York City Central Labor Council in March. We are also helped enormously by the AFL-CIO's Asian American Free Labor Institute. We need that aid in our struggle. ■



THE THIRD WORLD

TRADE UNIONS: A FORCE FOR DEMOCRACY

AN INTERVIEW WITH C. V. DEVAN NAIR

C. V. Devan Nair, former President of Singapore and once leader of its National Trades Union Congress, has remained a close student of events in his native Singapore and Malaysia during his residence in the United States (where he has served as a consultant to the AFL-CIO's Asian-American Free Labor Institute). On the eve of his April return to Singapore, Mr. Nair gave *The Bulletin* insights into his reflections and views on trade unions in the developing countries.

Independence and Self-Reliance

In many Third World countries, Devan Nair observes, trade unions "don't depend on substantial resources from members' dues." Yet, he believes, unions in such settings must develop financial self reliance and independence, if they are to make contributions to the struggle for democracy and economic justice. "Political parties and governments in the Third World frequently provide financial resources to trade unions. The effect of this support is to make unions politically beholden to such groups," Mr. Nair says.



C. V. Devan Nair

The Example of Israel

One road to such financial independence and self-reliance is to be found in the cooperative movement. "The best model for the developing world is that of Histadrut [Israel's labor confederation]," Devan Nair argues. The kibbutz and moshav movement, as well as the growth of a trade-union supported economic sector in Israel, point the way for greater trade union independence. In this

regard, Mr. Nair is impressed by the projects undertaken by the Philippines TUCP, with assistance from the AFL-CIO's Asian American Free Labor Institute. These projects include cooperation for the development of TUCP-sponsored agricultural cooperatives.

The Battle in the Philippines

As Mr. Nair sees it: "The real revolution in the Philippines is not being fought in Manila and Cebu. The real battle is taking place in the rural areas. The Philippine Communists understand this. As followers of Mao Zedong's precepts of people's war, the Philippine Communist insurgents realize that when the rural areas fall, Manila and Cebu 'will fall like ripe plums.' "

Trade Unions and Rural Workers

Thus, Mr. Nair emphasizes, "Trade union initiatives in organizing rural projects in such situations are eminently sensible as a means of strengthening the democratic forces." This is particularly true in developing countries where the overwhelming majority of the working population is engaged in agriculture. Mr. Nair feels that unions without links to the peasantry will, in most Third World circumstances, lack sufficient impact on their societies. Often, Western assistance efforts insist that "trade unions should confine themselves to traditional roles." But as Mr. Nair notes, "We are not living in traditional times, but in societies which are on the move." Unless Third World unions are able to "straddle all areas of developing societies" their influence will be confined to privileged urban enclaves, leaving untouched the needs of the vast majority of their workers.

Above all, the former President of Singapore stresses the need for assistance programs which further the independence of trade unions in the Third World. "Trade union rights," he notes, "don't drop from heaven. They have to be fought for. Organized workers in the West were able to win their rights upon establishing their power bases." In this way, Devan Nair suggests, the causes of democracy and the interests of workers will be advanced. ■

TURKEY

POLICE AGAINST UNIONISTS

On March 25, as seven hundred Turkish national and local trade union leaders assembled at the headquarters of the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions, Turk-Is, in preparation for a march on the Parliament, the building was surrounded by hundreds of policemen who prevented the Turk-Is demonstration. The march was called to protest the Turkish Government's refusal to restore basic trade union rights lost during the country's 1980 military coup. Turk-Is has repeatedly called upon the Government of Prime Minister Ozal to respect labor rights guaranteed by ILO Conventions, without success. Instead, as *The Bulletin* has reported (see the December 1986 issue, p. 6), the Government has further restricted the work of trade unions, recently classifying large numbers of workers as ineligible to join unions. The latest police action points to a worsening climate in Turkey for trade union freedoms. ■



NICARAGUA

SEAMEN'S UNION LEADERS FREED

In late February the Sandinista Ministry of Labor ordered a special election in the Seamen's Union at Bluefields, a major port on Nicaragua's Caribbean coast. At the election assembly, Sandinista officials packed the hall and claimed they had "voted out" the democratic leadership which had maintained the union's affiliation with the democratic Confederation of Trade Union Unity (CUS), despite Government pressure to switch to the official Sandinista confederation. In mid-March, as reported briefly in *The Bulletin* for that month, the State Security Police arrested two of the ousted democratic leaders, President Dennis Britton and Organization Secretary David Williams. The charges were "financial corruption," the same pretense used when the Government took over the portworkers' union in Corinto, the major Pacific coast port.

U.S Labor's Protests

In response to the arrests, a number of U.S. union groups protested to the Sandinista Government, including the AFL-CIO State Federations in New York and Alabama; central labor bodies in northwest Oregon, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D. C.; and such national unions as the American Federation of Teachers, the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers, the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, the Airline Employees Association, and the Communications Workers of America. The two jailed leaders have now been released on bail, pending restoration of the supposedly missing funds. "Criminal charges" against the two have been quietly dropped. The CUS Secretary-General, Alvin Guthrie, telephoned the AFL-CIO asking that the Federation convey CUS's appreciation to all who addressed the Nicaraguan Government on behalf of the Bluefields leaders. ■

BRAZIL

LABOR LEADER ON DEBT PROBLEM

Roberto Santiago, a leader of Sao Paulo's metalworkers' unions, recently testified in hearings on the international debt crisis before a U.S. Senate Finance subcommittee chaired by Sen. Bill Bradley (Dem.-N.J.). Brother Santiago's testimony offered a view of the crisis very different from that prevailing in the executive suites of the International Monetary Fund. "The 1980s will be known as a 'lost decade' from the viewpoint of economic development in Latin America," he said. Instead of growth, the continent has seen "prolonged recession, high levels of unemployment, decreasing real wages, and poverty and misery for the majority of the population.

The economic decline in Brazil, Brother Santiago noted, reflects the absorption by debt servicing during the past

two years of 40 per cent of the nation's export earnings, constituting 5 per cent of its GNP, inevitably cutting investment and braking economic growth. He stressed that if Brazil agrees to the latest IMF pressures to meet its current monetary debt, "it will be impossible to honor the country's social debt." The IMF recommendations, he said, would "inflict hunger and misery on the debtor nations." He observed that one doesn't see the IMF putting any pressure on the international banks to reject deposits resulting from illegal flights of capital from developing nations, or to refrain from piling on new commissions and fees when restructuring debt.

Brazil's Central Workers' Union—the CGT—agrees, said Brother Santiago, "with the halting of payments on the foreign debt until the nation reaffirms its sovereignty." The economic pressure of the debt crisis, he said, comes just as "we are in the process of consolidating our democracy, and no democracy can survive hunger, misery, poor health, and lack of housing." Only political action among the democratic nations, he concluded, can solve the economic crisis. ■

CHILE

AFL-CIO PROTESTS BRUTALITY

On March 25 Chile's democratic National Workers' Command (CNT) staged a protest demonstration demanding economic and social gains and the restoration of democracy in Chile. The Pinochet regime's riot police used tear gas and water cannon to disperse the marchers. CNT Secretary General Rodolfo Seguel was injured by a tear-gas canister propelled into his face, and Manuel Bustos, CNT President, was beaten. (Both Seguel and Bustos were among the democratic Chilean labor leaders who were in Washington in October 1986 as guests of the AFL-CIO: see *The Bulletin* November 1986, p. 5.) AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland cabled General Pinochet protesting the "brutal police treatment of Rodolfo Seguel and Manuel Bustos." Kirkland forcefully reaffirmed the AFL-CIO's support of its brother confederations—the CNT and CDT—in their campaign for a restoration of democracy in Chile. ■

EL SALVADOR

THE SHERATON MURDERS

A new procedural step has been taken by the Salvadoran courts in the case against Army Captain Eduardo Avila for his role in the January 1981 murders at San Salvador's Sheraton Hotel of AIFLD's Michael Hammer and Mark Pearlman. In October 1986 three new witnesses came forward to testify to Avila's participation in the murders. In December, before they could present their testimony, the Salvadoran Supreme Court took the file on the case from the 5th Penal Court "to review a habeas corpus petition" filed by Avila's lawyers. The law limits such a review to twenty days. The Supreme Court kept the file for over three months. On March 25 the file was returned to the 5th Penal Court, which can now begin taking testimony from the new witnesses. The law allows this procedure 120 days. Question: Will the 5th Penal Court be less glacial and more lawful than the Supreme Court? ■



SOUTH AFRICA

LABOR IN A "HOMELAND"

The black "homeland" of Bophuthatswana, site of Sun City, a major South African hotel development, has achieved notoriety as an entertainment and resort center. South Africa asserts that Bophuthatswana is independent—though its radio and television are subject to South African censorship, and its police are trained by South Africans. Now its labor relations have come to show South African characteristics.

The Transport and Allied Workers Union, an affiliate of CUSA/AZACTU, the black-led South African democratic labor federation, seeking to negotiate a strike against Bophuthatswana Transport Holdings, has been refused negotiations because, the company claims, the union has no legal status in Bophuthatswana. The support of some 1,000 transport workers for the strike and for TAWU's role as bargaining agent seems not to matter. Late in February, management sought to break the strike by employing white bus drivers. When in response 200 TAWU members working at five BTH bus depots downed their tools, they were arrested.

The striking workers appealed to the community for recognition of TAWU as their union, the unconditional reinstatement of fired workers, the release of imprisoned trade unionists and strikers, and an end to harassment of workers. Their call was for dialogue: "We say our demands can never be met by the police and soldiers. Our demands need management and workers to negotiate." ■

CCAWUSA STRIKE ENDS

The ten-week strike called by the Commercial and Catering Workers' Union of South Africa against a major supermarket chain, OK Bazaars, (*See The Bulletin, February 1987, p. 5*), has been settled. The agreement provides for a 100 Rand (approx. \$49) across-the-board increase to be paid in two equal installments in April and November, a R400 (approx. \$196) minimum wage to be implemented in November, and an increase in employee discounts from ten to twelve percent. OK Bazaars agreed to hold open the jobs of workers in detention or in prison awaiting trial. The cases of the 258 employees dismissed because of the strike go to arbitration. Over 10,000 union members returned to work March 2. CCAWUSA praised other unions as well as religious and political groups for their solidarity and support. ■

OATUU

In February the new Secretariat of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity, resulting from decisions reached at the October 1986 General Council meeting in Addis Ababa (*See The Bulletin December 1986, p. 3*), resumed the Organization's work in Accra. The elected Secretary General, Hasan Sunmonu of Nigeria, is seconded by five Assistant Secretaries General, as follows: Ad-

ministration: Assih Abide (Togo); Education: Assan Diop (Senegal); Organization: Demba Diop (Mali); External Relations: Ali Ibrahim (Somalia); Information and Press: Lellouma Dialo (Guinea). The new Executive Council met February 10-11 in Abidjan. A major item on the agenda was the election of Adiko Niamkey (Ivory Coast) as President, in succession to his recently deceased Libyan predecessor. Adiko Niamkey will be in an Acting capacity until the next General Council meeting, tentatively scheduled for May 12-15 in Cairo, subject to resolution of a disagreement between the Egyptians and the Libyans over the site. ■

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

In our March issue we reported on the foreign policy statements issued by the AFL-CIO Executive Council during its February 16-20 meeting. We complete our coverage with these extracts from the Council's February 16 statement

ON TRADE

For the good of the country, and for the good of the international trading community, the 100th Congress must pass trade legislation that is based on a strong and effective trade deficit reduction provision. Such a provision must require any major trading partner that maintains excessive surpluses with the United States, and is found to engage in unfair trading practices, to reduce those surpluses.

The U.S. merchandise trade deficit amounted to \$170 billion in 1986, a four-fold increase from the 1980 level. Millions of jobs have been lost. No sector of the economy is untouched. Mines and factories are closing, communities are devastated, and more and more farm families are being driven off their land. The dramatic increase in imports has been accompanied by massive inflows of foreign capital. America's future is mortgaged to the hilt. More than 70 percent of the trade deficit is accounted for by imbalances with just five countries—Japan, \$59 billion; Canada, \$23 billion; Germany, \$16 billion; Taiwan, \$16 billion; and South Korea, \$7 billion. Some of these countries have refused to open their markets and abolish their unfair trading practices as a step toward reducing their huge surpluses. Where their focus has been on mercantilist policies that depend upon export-led growth, that focus must be changed to policies that increase the purchasing power of their own people. . .

In addition to deficit reduction, the AFL-CIO supports legislation that will:

- Make the denial of internationally recognized worker rights an actionable practice under U.S. trade law. The U.S. should not permit free entry of goods produced in countries which refuse to respect basic worker rights. . .
- Deal with the problems of specific industries such as textile and apparel, shoes, telecommunications, printing, maritime and steel.
- Begin addressing the problem of less-developed country debt by requiring partial forgiveness by the lending banks of the principal owed, as well as reductions in interest rates. . . ■



U.S.S.R.

INTERVIEW

IRINA RATUSHINSKAYA

Irina Ratushinskaya, a 33-year-old poet from Odessa, was released from incarceration in October, 1986, after a long campaign waged in her behalf by human rights groups, writers' organizations, and trade unions, including the AFL-CIO. Regarded by many as one of the foremost Russian poets of her generation, Mrs. Ratushinskaya was sentenced in 1982 to seven years imprisonment and five years exile—for her poetry and for articles which she wrote for an underground trade union publication. She spent four years in a forced labor camp.

Trade Union Solidarity

The Bulletin asked Mrs. Ratushinskaya, who recently left the Soviet Union, how she came to be involved with the Free Interprofessional Association of Workers (SMOT). "I was not formally a member of SMOT, although I supported the group's independent activities," she explained. "I wrote for SMOT's *Information Bulletin* because it was an important *samizdat* publication which devoted many of its pages to accounts of Soviet human rights violations." The poet's solidarity with democratic trade union movements extended to other countries in the Soviet Empire. When Soviet troops in 1981 were poised to invade Poland, to aid in the suppression of Solidarnosc, Mrs. Ratushinskaya and a leader of SMOT planned a counter-demonstration in Red Square.



Irina Ratushinskaya

Secret Writings

Four years of imprisonment in a forced labor camp for women political prisoners have not broken the poet's spirit. She recounts how she wrote her poetry while under strict observation by guards: "I would write with the burnt end of a matchstick on a bar of soap. I would commit my poem to memory. And then I would wash my hands with the soap, washing away any evidence that I had been secretly writing."

The New "Openness"

Mrs. Ratushinskaya is skeptical about the Gorbachev policy of *glasnost*. "There are some 4-5,000 prisoners of conscience in the USSR. So far about one and a half percent of them have been released," she notes. "Thus, you could say Gorbachev is 98.5 percent a Brezhnev." She points out a similar situation in the arts: "Although the ban on perhaps twenty or so books has been lifted, thousands more still cannot be published." Her final submission of poems to the Soviet Writers' Union's *Literary Gazette*, regarded as a strong supporter of greater "openness," was, she recalls, "rejected as 'inappropriate.'"

In one of her poems, Ms. Ratushinskaya movingly condenses her motivation:

I will write about the despondent
Who stayed behind on the shore.
Of those sentenced to be silent
I will write.

It is about those victims of Soviet oppression that Mrs. Ratushinskaya will write next: a memoir of her participation in the human rights movement, and an account of the harsh Soviet treatment of women political prisoners. ■

ICFTU NOTES



CZECHOSLAVAKIA

March 12: The ICFTU lodged a formal complaint with the ILO charging the Government of Czechoslovakia with breach of key Conventions of the ILO. The ICFTU said the dissolution of the Jazz Section of the Musician's Union of Czechoslovakia and the sentencing of five of its leaders to prison terms is in violation of ILO Conventions 87 and 98 on Freedom of Association, the Right to Organize, and Protection of Collective Bargaining (both Conventions freely ratified by Czechoslovakia in 1964). A Prague court on March 11 sentenced two of the group's leaders to terms of sixteen and ten months detention, and suspended the prison terms of three others.

SWITZERLAND

The ICFTU-affiliated Swiss Trade Union Confederation has rejected a new Government proposal for regulating the use of asbestos. The draft regulation does not meet the standards set in an ILO Convention adopted last year, following an ICFTU initiative.

DENMARK

Danish workers in the ICFTU-affiliated LO have accepted national agreements that will cut the working week to 37 hours over the next four years and raise basic pay by an average of 16 percent over the next ten years.

From ICFTU despatches

THE APRIL RALLIES

KIRKLAND LETTER

On March 23 AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, in response to numerous inquiries, wrote all State and Local Central Bodies, explaining why the AFL-CIO is not supporting rallies scheduled for April 25 to protest U.S. policies in Central America and South Africa, as follows:

The AFL-CIO's criticisms of the Reagan Administration's policies in Central America and South Africa are well known. They have been spelled out in our 1985 Convention resolutions, in Executive Council statements, in Congressional testimony, in the trade union press, and in demonstrations around the country.

We have gone beyond speeches and demonstrations condemning the Administration's policy of "constructive engagement" in South Africa and its pursuit of military solutions in Central America. Through our assistance to the democratic trade union movements in both regions, we have worked for social, economic and political reforms as the alternatives to violence and war in South Africa and Central America...

Our record of opposition to Administration policies does not mean, however, that we are prepared to join with any and all critics of Administration policies, regardless of the policies they espouse and the organizations they embrace.

With respect to the April 25th rallies, the AFL-CIO is withholding support for the following reasons:

1) The rallies will call for a cut-off of U.S. aid to the democratically-elected governments of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

By contrast, the AFL-CIO Convention called for massive economic aid to the impoverished nations of Central

America to attack the deeply rooted problems of inequality, illiteracy, and social injustice. We urged that such aid be administered through a Central American Development Organization, in which the trade unions of the region would be represented, and thus strengthened in their dealings with their governments and employers, and that such aid be conditioned on each nation's compliance with internationally recognized standards of human rights and workers rights...

2) The rallies will feature speakers who are not committed to genuine trade union rights.

Among the invited speakers are representatives of organizations supporting the guerrilla forces seeking to overthrow the democratically-elected Duarte government in El Salvador, as well as representatives of the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, which has not been democratically elected. The Sandinistas have repressed independent trade unionism since the very beginning of their rule, using intimidation, harassment, and violence to force workers to join government-created unions.

It is possible to criticize the Reagan Administration's policies toward Nicaragua without embracing the Sandinista regime; it is possible to criticize the Administration's policies toward El Salvador without supporting the guerrilla movement. That is the AFL-CIO's position; it is not the position of a number of the organizations that constitute the Steering Committee for the April 25th rallies, some of which openly support the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas in El Salvador and support the Sandinista government of Nicaragua...

In the ongoing public debate over American foreign policy, labor's voice should be heard clearly, especially where vital trade union issues like freedom of association and workers rights are at stake. Our voice should not be garbled, confused, or drowned out in demonstrations with others who have different views on these issues, however well-intentioned they may be... ■



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**PHILIPPINE
CONSTITUTION
APPROVED**



**GORBACHEV
AND SOVIET
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**LANE KIRKLAND
ON THE
TRADE DEFICIT**



THE TRADE DEFICIT

KIRKLAND'S TESTIMONY

On January 20, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, Auto Workers President Owen Bieber, and Steelworkers President Lynn R. Williams appeared before the Senate Finance Committee to testify on the dangers to the nation of the trade deficit and on the requirements for a policy which would restore balance in our international trade. Summarizing the extensive testimony he submitted to the Committee, President Kirkland made the following points:

Failed Nostrums

"... There is now general agreement that America's massive trade deficit presents a clear and present danger to the domestic economy... The figures are stark. No sector of the economy is immune from the damage... The deficit has not yielded to the prescriptions of the Administration or the predictions of economists..."

"The dollar has fallen for two years, but the trade deficit has shown no sign of abating. November saw a new all-time record. The call for expansionary policies by our major trading partners, particularly Germany and Japan, is conceptually similar. But the facts do not support the assumption that they would satisfy any increase in their domestic demand with American exports... Selling more insurance to Korea or tobacco to Japan will not erase our trade deficit. We have yet to pry open the Brazilian computer market. While we applaud the effort to open the European agricultural market, we believe the manufacturing sector, where our productive capacity and employment is concentrated and being devastated, deserves equal treatment."

"The final approach that has been tried and found wanting is the start of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations. We do not oppose negotiations, or, for that matter, any of the other steps mentioned, in and of themselves. But even the most optimistic hopes for successful negotiations are years away. The damage is being wrought right now... The issue at hand is the trade deficit."

"... Without the prospect of some ultimate penalty, all of these other actions are doomed to failure. We have been negotiating with Japan for six years. Our exports to that market are not substantially higher than they were six years ago. Germany to date has been unwilling to expand their economy or, for example, open their market to American telecommunication products. Taiwan asserts it needs special privileges because it is a developing country."

Consequences

"Domestic demand has been satisfied by imports financed by borrowing from abroad. America's trade deficit, coupled with these capital inflows, has recently bestowed another distinction on the United States. We have surpassed Brazil as the world's largest debtor nation... From 1982 to 1985 we went from a \$150 billion creditor to a \$107 billion debtor... That trend continued in 1986, and projections of \$800 billion in net debt by 1990 are common..."

"The impact on employment has already been devastating. 1986 was one of only ten post-World War II years with an unemployment rate above 7 percent, yet six of those years were... 1981 through 1986, when America's international trade position nosedived..."

Necessary Responses

"The Government's previous response to these problems has been one of benign neglect... Changes in trade law and policy are urgently needed to immediately begin the reduction of the U.S. trade deficit and to provide predictable and timely relief to industries and workers injured by imports. Within the international trading system it has long been agreed that certain practices such as dumping and subsidies convey unfair advantages, distort trade, and should be minimized or eliminated. But the list of unfair practices is concentrated on the capital or financial side of the production equation. Little, if any, attention is devoted to labor..."

"Our living standard today is under seige... American workers cannot, and should not be asked to, compete with foreign workers making a buck-and-a-half a day. Those who say that American workers have priced themselves out of the world market are saying... that the American standard of living is too high. Their logic, that we will somehow get richer by getting poorer, escapes me..."

"American workers are not too well paid, and the American standard of living is not too high. Foreign workers are too often poorly paid, and their standards of living are too low. If developing economies are not to be dependent on... export, they must develop domestic markets... That means expanding consumer purchasing power... On sure way to do that is by recognizing the legitimate rights of labor, and including violations of those rights in our law governing unfair trading practices..." ■



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THE PHILIPPINES

THE MEANING OF A STEP FORWARD

The February 2 vote in the Philippines has done more than give President Aquino an overwhelming popular mandate and the country its new Constitution. The results of the vote have reaffirmed the credentials of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) as the authentic voice of Filipino working men and women.

The TUCP Role

With zeal reminiscent of its activities prior to last year's Presidential election, the TUCP carried out a nationwide campaign in favor of a "Yes" vote for the new Constitution. Ernesto F. Herrera, TUCP General Secretary had acknowledged that the document is not perfect. He cited its provision on land reform as being especially inadequate, but pointed out that such shortcomings could be corrected later. (See Herrera's article in *The Bulletin for January 1987, page 7.*) Adoption of the new national charter, the TUCP General Secretary urged, "will mean restoration of constitutional democracy and a more stable situation."

The KMU Opposition

In contrast, the leftist urban group known as the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (KMU) campaigned for a "No" vote. The unions in the KMU, an alliance dominated by far left political movements, thought that the alliance should promote a "critical Yes" position. At its December Convention, however, the KMU majority decided to oppose the Constitution, claiming that it "is not reflective of the interests and demands of the workers." This was not the first time that the KMU found itself in conflict with the people's will. In last year's Presidential campaign the KMU, like the Communist Party of the Philippines, vigorously promoted a boycott of the election and attacked the TUCP for its nationwide "get-out-the-vote" activities that helped swing the election to Aquino. If the Philippine people had followed the KMU's advice, Marcos would still be in office.

The Bedfellows

Thus, now as a year earlier, the KMU became bedfellows with the pro-Marcos forces, headed in the present case by former Defense Minister Enrile, who also opposed ratification of the Constitution because it confirms President Aquino in office until January 1992. In the weeks before the February 2 vote, both the far right and the far left aggressively challenged the Government. Marcos supporters in the military promoted an unsuccessful coup. The rural counterpart of the KMU promoted a confrontation which ended in violence, including the death of 18 demonstrators.

In 1986, after Aquino's "people power" caused Marcos to flee the country, the KMU admitted only to a "tactical" error. But its action, then and now, was in fact one

strand in a consistent political strategy to undermine the democratic center, destabilize the Government, and gain power for the totalitarian left.

The TUCP's efforts to achieve a stable democracy based on social justice stand in sharp contrast. The ratification of the new Constitution by an overwhelming majority of the voters is an important step towards those aims. ■

JAPAN

JOINT AFL-CIO—DOMEI STATEMENT

The AFL-CIO fraternal delegation to the 23rd National Convention of the Japanese Confederation of Labor (DOMEI) in Tokyo in January was headed by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue. Other members of the delegation were Tom Kahn, Director, AFL-CIO Department of International Affairs; Charles D. Gray, Executive Director, Asian-American Free Labor Institute; and Rachele Horowitz, COPE Director, American Federation of Teachers. (See page 8, this issue of The Bulletin, for Donahue's address to the DOMEI Convention.) After the Convention, the delegation met with Domei representatives for the 18th annual meeting between the two organizations. The meeting, January 23-24, brought a joint statement in the names of Lane Kirkland, Donahue, and Tadanobu Usami, President of DOMEI, covering a number of mutual issues, plus announcement of a change in Japanese trade union organization. Following are major points:

"... The purpose of the annual meeting between AFL-CIO and DOMEI is to strengthen and promote solidarity and exchange between the two organizations and to cooperate in international organizations such as ICFTU, TUAC, and ILO.

The Economy

"The serious condition of the world economy shows no signs of improvement, and employment problems are getting worse. Particularly, in the case of the U.S. and Japan, we especially reject the reliance of both Governments on purely market policies..."

"Confronted with such a crisis, the trade unions must face both government and employers with a constructive, common strategy for restoring a balanced international economy, stabilizing currency and exchange rates, harmonizing international labor standards and curbing the irresponsible behavior of multinational corporations. This means that the trade unions must propound a sound industrial policy... this is the way... to create jobs, which is our major target, through sustained economic growth both in developed and developing countries.

The Japanese Market

"Japan must further open its market to foreign goods and services as well as to boost domestic demands. In this case, what is strongly needed is to improve its national welfare through wage increases, shorter working hours, the correction of unfair taxation system, and improving the social infrastructure. The U.S.'s efforts to find

(Continued on page 7)



SOUTH AFRICA

STRIKERS DISMISSED

On January 6 seventy-six members of the Commercial, Catering, and Allied Workers' Union of South Africa (CCAWUSA) were arrested while on a picket line at the OK Bazaars supermarket in Durban. OK Bazaars is one of the largest supermarket chains in South Africa. In December 425 OK Bazaars workers were placed in detention for involvement in strikes. During their detention 325 of them were dismissed by management in what the ICFTU denounced as collusion between employers and the South African police.

AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland on January 6 sent the following telex to the Managing Director of OK Bazaars in Johannesburg:

"The AFL-CIO is concerned to learn of the mass dismissal of 325 of your striking employees, who apparently were involved in a legal strike in your Durban branch. The AFL-CIO protests these dismissals and joins with the ICFTU in demanding the immediate reinstatement of the dismissed employees and urges the management of OK Bazaars to open immediate good faith negotiations with representatives of the striking workers of the Commercial, Catering, and Allied Workers Union of South Africa." ■

AFL-CIO ASSISTANCE

Since its inception, the AFL-CIO's Program of Action in Support of Black Trade Unions in South Africa has been carried out by the African-American Labor Center. Over the past four years a wide range of assistance has been extended to over thirty black South African trade unions. One aspect of this assistance has been specialized training in the United States. During February the AALC is sponsoring a four-week course of organizing techniques for twenty South African trade unionists which includes a week-long internship with counterpart American unions. ■

TUNISIA

UGTT TRANSFORMED

Following the additional prison sentence inflicted on Habib Achour, former General Secretary of the *Union Generale des Travailleurs Tunisiens* (UGTT), (See The Bulletin, January 1987, page 8) the Tunisian Government has moved to bring the UGTT under its control. The mechanism was an extraordinary Congress of the UGTT held in Tunis January 20-22, which elected Abdelaziz Boursoui General Secretary. The tone of the affair was set in an address to the Congress by Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba, who described the "return of the UGTT to the bosom of the nation" as in "the line of true patriotism," and by the Congress's response with a "message of loyalty" to Bourguiba, in which the Congress engaged the UGTT to execute the President's "wise directives" and avoid "demands and disputes." ■

ICFTU NOTES

TURKEY

The DISK trade union federation has appealed the Istanbul Military Tribunal's December condemnation of 264 DISK activists (out of 1,500 defendants) to prison sentences ranging from 1 to 15 years, and ordering other steps in effect wiping out DISK. Sevet Yilmaz, Chairman of the ICFTU-affiliated Turkish union confederation, TURK-IS, has voiced his concern and Emin Kul, General Secretary of TURK-IS, said the sentences "were aimed at humiliating the trade union movement." The ICFTU has condemned the court decisions, and in late January, ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken accepted the invitation of Abdullah Basturk, condemned President of DISK, to visit Istanbul on February 13 for celebrations of DISK's twentieth anniversary. A number of ICFTU affiliates have also accepted the DISK invitation.

PARAGUAY

The Paraguayan Inter-Trade Union Movement (MIT) is preparing alternatives to the "economic adjustment plan" of Dictator Stroessner. The MIT intends to press for salary increases for lower-paid workers. At present the legal "minimum wage" is hardly enough to survive. The MIT, though forced to operate underground, will also press for respect of trade union rights and freedoms.

GREAT BRITAIN

Speaking at a British TUC rally in Cheltenham, England, January 24, following on the decision of the European Commission on Human Rights rejecting the TUC's case on freedom of association for workers at the Government Communication Headquarters at Cheltenham, ICFTU General Secretary John Vanderveken said the ICFTU would press for further action by the ILO to follow up that agency's condemnation of the U. K. Government.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The ICFTU is inviting affiliates to approach their governments on behalf of the ICFTU proposals for the new round of negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The ICFTU wants inclusion in GATT of a "social clause" providing for full observance by contracting parties of minimum labor standards.

SWAZILAND

The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) is seeking membership in the ICFTU "in order to make a positive contribution to . . . workers' unity." The SFTU, with eleven federations and deeply involved in organization and training, has emerged as an important organized labor force in the country. Swaziland, surrounded by South Africa except for its eastern border with Mozambique, is one of the "Frontline" states.

From ICFTU dispatches

INTERVIEW

PORTUGAL'S DEMOCRATIC UNIONS

Elisa Damiao, National Secretary of the Portuguese Government Workers' Union and Director of the Women's Program for the million-member Uniao Geral de Trabalhadores (UGT) labor federation, is a key leader in Portugal's democratic trade union movement. In addition to her two posts, she plays a central role in local organizing for the UGT federation and is active in Portugal's Socialist Party. In the United States for a month-long study tour, Ms. Damiao shared some of her thoughts with The Bulletin on trade unionism and politics in Portugal today.

Dictatorship's Legacy

In Ms. Damiao's view, trade unions in Portugal still suffer from the legacy of the decades-long right-wing dictatorship which fell in 1974. One dominant fact of this legacy is the strong presence of the pro-Soviet Portuguese Communist Party in trade union life. Its influence in the trade unions is explained by Ms. Damiao: "During the dictatorship unionism was forbidden and only small numbers of democratic trade unionists were active. The Communists, though even fewer in number, were much better organized." After the dictatorship's overthrow, the democratic unions "had no mass organizations. And the democratic parties," in contrast to the Communist Party, "were too inexperienced to support and assist the trade union movement."

Communist Intimidation

Ms. Damiao described another source of Communist success as their use of intimidation—and worse. "They stole members by violence. And when the dictatorship fell, they took over the old, pro-dictatorship unions' property." In the period of great peril for Portugal's fragile democracy, 1974-76, a harsh conflict emerged within the trade unions. Ms. Damiao described the unequal struggle of that time: "The Communist unions commanded vast financial resources. Some of this support came directly from management, which gave money to the Communists to buy 'labor peace.'" Then, and now, the major problem for the UGT has been to develop a functioning organization that provides membership services at the grassroots level. Such activity, however, is hindered by intimidation from the rival Communist federation, *Intersindical*. "We have many members," Ms. Damiao notes, "but often they are afraid to function as organized groups inside the factories." According to Ms. Damiao, Portugal's recent democratic governments have been reluctant to challenge the powerful and intimidating Communist unions. "The Communist unions organize boycotts, call political strikes, and otherwise intimidate."

UGT Progress

Despite the odds they face, the democratic unions of the UGT are making important headway in their efforts to organize workers. Today, they have a membership of one million, equal to that of the Communist *Intersindical*. One area of opportunity for the UGT, says Ms. Damiao,

is the South, where 'the Communists ruined agriculture, just as they have ruined the workers. They destroyed natural reserves in the South. They divided the land into cooperatives, promising the workers a paradise. But today, the workers in the Communist cooperatives are much poorer than before. They are now joining the UGT in ever greater numbers, and demanding fair pay for their labor.'" Even so, Ms. Damiao remains concerned about the Communist threat to Portuguese democracy: "They don't really change. They change their propaganda. But when the time comes, they'll be as they've always been."



"At the forefront of change"

Ms. Damiao foresees continued growth for the UGT, which she regards as at the forefront of change. She predicts further successes in the federation's organizing efforts. Another area of opportunity, she believes, results from the decentralization of collective bargaining. The UGT has pressed for and won a process of negotiations in which basic industry-wide national agreements are supplemented by local negotiations. Such negotiations allow for addressing local problems and concerns. The UGT's successful advocacy of such bargaining has won it increased support among workers. Such decentralized bargaining had been opposed by both management and the Communists.

The Economy: A Positive View

Despite serious difficulties confronting heavy industry, including steel and shipbuilding, Ms. Damiao believes the overall trend in Portugal's economy is positive. "The economy is improving," she observes. "Our balance of trade is much better. We have reached a good wage and benefits agreement with the Government. It is good for us. It is good for the country. And it is good for the economy." ■



U.S.S.R.

LABOR AND GORBACHEV'S REFORMS

In recent months the Western press has been preoccupied by the policy and statements of Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev summarized in the frequently cited Russian word, *glasnost*. Usually mistranslated as "openness," its true meaning is "publicity."

In his two years as Party General Secretary, Gorbachev has indeed worked mightily to modernize the Soviet Union's stolid image. Frank assessments of the difficulties facing the Soviet economy have begun to appear in the Party-controlled press. In a speech to Party leaders on January 27th, Gorbachev spoke of the "social corrosion" which has "had a negative effect on society's morale." He also spoke of "callousness and skepticism" emerging among the Soviet citizenry. But there are obstacles to Gorbachev's ability to go further, to the root of the Soviet Union's problems, and to his ability to provide solutions to those problems.

The Obstacles

For the average Soviet worker, the very policies being imposed by Gorbachev are likely to be greeted with suspicion and resistance. An illustrative case in point is a strike by workers at the KamAZ truck factory in the Russian Republic. There, according to a report in the Soviet press, "stormy protests" by workers erupted in response to the introduction of a new system of quality control imposed by the Gorbachev regime throughout Soviet industry. The KamAZ truck factory is one of the largest industrial enterprises in the USSR. That its workers should decisively reject an economic reform is one indication that "restructuring" of the Soviet economy is meeting with resistance from Soviet workers.

The reasons for this resistance are easily divined. Soviet workers resent (as we would) the imposition of new work rules and a new system of controls without consultation. The wellspring of the resentment—and resistance—is the fact that the Government-controlled All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions is in reality a tool for state control and coercion of Soviet workers. There is no voice defending the interests of workers—such as those at the KamAZ truck factory. In the absence of free association, of genuine union representation, the Soviet workers are undefended against exploitation, and without a voice in their future.

The Prospects for Reform

We can therefore expect further opposition from Soviet workers (without speaking of the Party and Ministerial bureaucracies) to such reforms as Gorbachev may have in mind. As a report in the Government newspaper *Izvestia* indicated, the purported reform process "cannot be said to be taking place smoothly." For democratic trade

unionists this offers little surprise. No system which denies self-expression to its working people can ever function smoothly.

Soviet workers will continue to seek ways of resisting control and coercion from above. It is clear that Gorbachev must take account of the bureaucracy, if he is genuinely seeking reform and the welfare of the Soviet peoples. But his aims, whatever they may be, will founder if he cannot bring the workers along with him. ■

NED

FUNDING FOR LABOR

At its recent annual meeting, the National Endowment for Democracy awarded a grant of \$4.8 million to the Free Trade Union Institute to finance a wide range of labor-related international programs in 1987.

Distribution of Funds

Most of the funds will be disbursed by FTUI to the AFL-CIO's three regional institutes (AALC, AAFLI, AIFLD) for use in their respective geographic areas. Financial support will also go to AFL-CIO affiliates that are engaged in union-to-union programs with their counterparts abroad in efforts to build democratic societies. FTUI also provides support directly to ICFTU partners in Portugal and Spain, to be used in their education and organization programs. As in previous years, funds provided by the Endowment will also be used to support the Polish free trade union *Solidarnosc*.

The Political Dimension

The Endowment's assistance to the programs of the AFL-CIO international institutes since 1984 has enabled democratic labor organizations in scores of countries to become more effectively engaged in democratic political processes—as other sectors of society, including business associations and political parties, have also done. This dimension of "political" participation differentiates NED support from that provided by Government agencies such as AID, which generally is directed towards the economic aspects of trade union development.

The Rationale

In 1983 AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland wrote in *Commonsense* about the NED contribution to labor's international work: "At its core, the Endowment affirms that the promotion of democracy should be an essential ingredient of American foreign policy and that private, non-government organizations have an important role to play in the process. It recognizes . . . that democracy is not simply a model of government organization but a means of ensuring that plain people can effectively express their needs and views in all aspects of social life . . . Experience teaches us . . . that free and strong trade unions are the most effective instrument for improving wages and working conditions. Experience also has taught us that such unions cannot flourish except in a climate of respect for human rights—freedom of association, of assembly, of expression." In short, unions can function most effectively in a democratic polity, and a polity without freedom of association is not democratic. ■



JAPAN

Continued from page 3:

solutions regarding the problem of fiscal deficit will also contribute to restoring a balanced world economy.

“Full Employment and Growth”

“AFL-CIO and DOMEI, taking into consideration the forthcoming Venice summit of major industrialized nations, will strive to implement TUAC’s policy on the basis of the joint statement between TUAC and BIAC entitled ‘Full Employment and Growth.’ [See The Bulletin, October 1986, page 8.]

Arms Control, Foreign Aid

“AFL-CIO and DOMEI will continue to support the quest for verifiable arms control with the goal of radically reducing and ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons. . . The industrial democracies must expand their assistance to the developing countries in the interest of justice and of expanding the world economy. . .

The APRO Region

“In Asia, the continued erosion of trade union rights requires constant monitoring. . . the Communists are seeking to increase their influence throughout the South Pacific region. . . We will support the fostering and strengthening of free and democratic trade unions in the APRO (Asian and Pacific Regional Organization of the ICFTU) region by reinforcing the functions of ICFTU-APRO.

Dissolution of DOMEI

“DOMEI decided at its 23rd national Convention to dissolve itself and fully join the Japanese Confederation of Private Trade Unions (RENGO), which is to start on November 20, 1987. The intent of DOMEI doing this is to realize the unity of free and democratic trade unions in Japan and transfer the tradition of DOMEI to RENGO in both spiritual and practical terms and further to develop it. AFL-CIO applauds this decision of DOMEI, and DOMEI thanks AFL-CIO for its historical contribution to the development of free and democratic trade union movements in Japan. We hope that the tradition of both organizations will be incorporated into the activities of the new labor organization. In this spirit, we look forward to continued cooperation and the maintenance of close fraternal relations in the future.” ■

SOUTH KOREA

NEW LABOR LAWS

The Bulletin reported last month that a new law on minimum wages had passed the South Korean National Assembly. It formalizes existing tripartite procedures for

setting them industry by industry. Under increasing pressure from the Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU), however, additional labor legislation revising two laws on trade unions and labor disputes also passed.

The impact of the new laws will depend, of course, on the enacting Presidential decrees, and on whether they will be enforced. Nonetheless, a potential step forward gives unions a greater, but still limited, autonomy. One revision permits a local union to have an industrial trade union federation of the FKTU handle its collective bargaining. Another could allow unions to decide how to use their dues without Government interference.

These recent revisions have **not** afforded South Korean workers the right to determine the structure of their own organizations. The FKTU remains the only recognized trade union center, and the FKTU and its affiliates are not permitted to form a union representing workers in more than one workplace in the same locality. The FKTU and its members are lobbying to have this crippling restriction lifted. ■

A CENTURY AGO

American labor’s concern for workers in foreign lands extends back to the origins of the movement. In November 1881 in Pittsburgh, 107 delegates from fourteen states convened the first national meeting of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada—to become five years later, of course, the American Federation of Labor.

The principal items of business in 1881 were organizational, including the establishment of a Legislative Committee, to urge Congressional adoption of laws to protect the health and safety of workers. Yet there was time to consider the plight of oppressed families in far-off places. On November 17, James W. Crozier of Pittsburgh, speaking for a five man Special Committee, proposed a resolution:

“WHEREAS, We greatly deplore the unjust land laws that have been enforced against the Irish people in the past; and

“WHEREAS, Hundreds of Ireland’s honest spirits now suffer an unjust imprisonment in consequence of their heroic attempts to ameliorate the condition of her oppressed people, therefore be it

“RESOLVED, that we extend to these champions, battling in the cause of human liberty, our hearty sympathy, and that we also extend to the oppressed of all nations, struggling for liberty and right, the same encouraging words of sympathy.”

Resolution adopted. Today, of course, we can make our “sympathy” for oppressed workers worldwide more tangible.

FRATERNAL NEWS

AFL-CIO TO DOMEI

Following are extracts from AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue's January 22 address at Tokyo to the 23rd National Convention of the Japanese Confederation of Labor (DOMEI):

"...Labor federation conventions are...instruments of unity, of solidarity...Labor solidarity is just as important today as it was in the early years of the labor movement. I know that my brothers and sisters of DOMEI recognize this fact, as you work for the unification of Japan's labor federations. In the AFL-CIO, we were able to create a great measure of unification when our federation was formed, but we continue to strive every day for even greater unity.

"...It is not surprising that when we seek labor solidarity across political borders, practical results are sometimes elusive. For example, it is one thing to agree on the need to speak out or take action on some question of morality or human rights...It is quite another matter for national trade union centers to speak with one voice on matters of international trade policy and competition...The problems of employment and unemployment are national problems...because we have not yet developed the mechanisms for rationalization of employment at an international level.

"...The special historic and economic relationships that have developed between countries or labor movements sometimes call for a closer examination of issues of common concern, and a special effort to maintain solidarity. The relationship between the AFL-CIO and DOMEI is one example...Our talks with the DOMEI leadership cover a broad range of topics...In those talks, the AFL-CIO has expressed its views on international trade in forceful, fraternal terms...I know that my brothers and sisters in the American labor movement would want me to use this forum to summarize [those views] once more:

"The United States faces a national crisis resulting from our enormous trade deficits, which have increased steadily over the past six years to reach \$173 billion in 1986. No nation can accept such deficits, and the international system of trade will be threatened by it. No other nation in the world would have allowed this situation to reach these serious proportions. No other nation in the world would have left its markets as open as we have, to our detriment and at the expense of U. S. workers' jobs.

"...Of our total trade deficit of \$173 billion, the largest single piece—one-third, or \$58 billion—is with Japan...Our deficit with Japan has grown from \$12 billion to \$58 billion in six years. Some strong and definitive action must be taken to cut that deficit importantly in 1987.

"I know well that many problems have developed in Japan during the past year or more which represent grave dangers to the workers you represent...I am delighted to see that you and your Government are about to begin a serious effort to reduce the standard workweek to 40 hours. In the United States there is now discussion of the need to reduce [it] to 35 or 32 hours if we are ever to provide full employment.

"American workers have no desire to make things harder for Japanese workers or for themselves, but we must insist that our movements and our Governments work to find rational solutions to these problems immediately. A failure to take prompt action will make the eventual solution even more painful for all. American workers simply seek a fair deal...

"For all of us, in the long term, there is no alternative to economic expansion. Unless the world economy can sustain greater economic growth, the crisis will worsen and trade relations will further deteriorate. It is only in growth and economic expansion that the workers will receive a more equitable share and be able to improve their living standards...The current trend, in which both Japanese and American employers seek to exploit the cheapest labor force they can find anywhere in the world, is no answer for anyone. We seek collective international answers to economic problems in those international labor bodies dedicated to preserving international labor solidarity and advancing the rights of workers everywhere..." ■



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