

Labor's concerns cross borders

by Robert Lothian

Contrary to Reagan administration claims that its Central American policy is bringing democracy and human rights to that war-torn area, a delegation of Central American trade unionists says the repression continues, and is especially vicious against labor activists.

According to Miguel Angel Albizures, general secretary of Guatemala's largest labor organization, the National Committee for Trade Union Unity, over 100 labor leaders have been assassinated in his country in the last three years, and hundreds of rank and file members. Also, he said, 47 nuns have been murdered, 17 priests and 300 teachers during the same period. The words "sindicato" (union), and "huelga" (strike), are outlawed, according to Albizures.

"When you live in a country like Guatemala, there is no choice but to struggle," he told an audience of 100 gathered at the Retail Clerk's Hall Sunday night.

In El Salvador's civil war, according to Marta Alicia Rivera, a leader of ANDES, the El Salvadoran teacher's union, 309 teachers have been assassinated, 4,500 teachers have become internal refugees, and 4,000 are in exile in other Central American countries and the U.S. In addition, she said, U.S.-made helicopters supplied to the El Salvadoran military have bombed and destroyed over 1,000 schools. Educating children under such conditions is nearly impossible, she said.

After 50 years of military dictatorships, repression, assassinations and massacres, said Rivers, "The people have said enough—the people are organizing." But the response of the government, she said, is the machine gun. "No one can call me a liar when I speak out about the barbarian repression of our people."

In May of 1979, Rivera herself was kidnapped, severely tortured and left for dead by the El Salvadoran National Guard. In 1980, while participating in a peaceful protest march, she received a bullet wound to the leg when police fired into the crowd. She now lives in the U.S. and has applied for asylum.

Sebastian Castro, international representative of the Sandinista Worker's Confederation, painted an entirely different picture when he spoke of life in liberated Nicaragua. With the revolution, he said, "our people have found freedom for the first time in our history. Religion is protected, and all the political parties can organize themselves freely."

Conditions have improved immensely for Nicaraguan workers, said Castro. They can now organize themselves freely without fear of repression. They receive full wages when sick, and companies subsidize half the cost of workers' lunches.

Throughout the country, he said, literacy campaigns, health campaigns and reconstruction projects



Gayle High Pine of Portland Central American Solidarity Committee (PCASC); Miguel Angel Albizures of Guatemala; Sebastian Castro of Nicaragua; Marta Alicia Rivera of El Salvador; and Jamie Partridge of PCASC, discuss persecution of trade union activity in Central America. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

are succeeding because of the renewed vitality of the people.

But repression against Nicaragua continues externally, he said, in the form of a "secret war" conducted by remnants of the Somoza National Guard organized and financed by the CIA.

"There is a concrete invasion and intervention in our country," he said, "with the most sophisticated acts carried out by the CIA, including... We will not step back," said Castro. "The freedom of the people is not discussed, it is defended with the arms in your hand."

Albizures dropped out of school in Guatemala City at age 14 to go to work. He worked his way up through the ranks to become a leading organizer of the Guatemalan National Worker's Confederation. In 1976, he led an international campaign to defend the rights of striking Coca Cola workers, who eventually won the right to have a union. But the government and right-wing death squads responded with fierce repression, and three successive Coca Cola union presidents were assassinated.

In Guatemala, he said, "Death is present every minute, every hour. The machine gun has replaced dialogue, the army has destroyed whole towns." 145,000 Guatemalans have been driven to refuge in Mexico.

U.S. economic and military domination of Guatemala is responsible for the repression, said Albizures. Helicopters and planes used to bomb villages come from the U.S., he said, and U.S. advisers train the Guatemalan security forces.

"What we don't want in Guatemala, in El Salvador, in Nicaragua,

is intervention by the U.S. You must transform the foreign policy of the United States to help our people," he told the audience.

Rivers began teaching in 1972. Through ANDES, she organized slum dwellers to demand better living conditions, and by 1975 had become a regional secretary of the union.

Like Albizures, she sees U.S. intervention as the main threat to peace and democracy in the region. "We don't want another Viet Nam in our country," she said. "We hope for solidarity with the North American people. We are struggling for what Nicaragua has."

Sebastian Castro was born into a poor farmworker's family in a small Nicaraguan town. He became a shoemaker and eventually a director of the National Worker's Confederation, which after the revolution became the Sandinista Worker's Confederation now representing over 70% of Nicaraguan workers.

"If it wasn't for the intervention of foreign governments, the problems in these countries would be settled by now," said Castro.

"The revolution is the most sacred thing that we have... we think that with liberty, we have the ability to reconstruct our country. But there is something we cannot reproduce—that is to stop the intervention of the U.S. government. That is your job," he told the audience.

If other governments want to help, "have them send technicians to reconstruct our country like the Cuban people are doing," he said.

The three unionists visited Portland on a tour of 14 West Coast cities sponsored by the West Coast Labor/Central America Solidarity Network, the U.S. Committee in Solidarity with the people of El Salvador, and the National Network in Solidarity with the people of Guatemala. They are meeting with labor leaders, unionists, and the public to bring a deeper understanding of the Central American situation to the U.S. labor movement.

Thousands protest Euromissiles

by Chuck Goodmacher

Calling for a halt to the deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles, several thousand people marched through Portland streets last Saturday before assembling for the area's largest political rally in years. The Jazzmin Marching Band led the way.

The "Euromissile Rally" was just one of 150 events in the U.S. coordinated with actions in Europe and Canada. Over a million people demonstrated throughout Europe: 200,000 to 400,000 in London, 300,000 in Bonn, 500,000 in Rome, and so on.

The purpose of the massive rally, according to organizer Margot Beutler, was "to educate the people of Oregon on the issues surrounding the current nuclear arms build-up, and to join in an international expression of opposition to the deployment of U.S. Cruise and Pershing II missiles and Soviet SS-20 missiles in Europe."

Master of Ceremonies Herb Cawthorne emphasized the immediateness of the issue for people of all races and classes. Cawthorne told the crowd that the Euromissiles will force the Soviets to decide within a six-minute period whether or not to launch a "counterattack" once any indication that a Cruise or Pershing II has been launched.

Both the American and Soviet

armed forces have gone to "alert" status in the past because of human or computer errors showing attacks in progress. Since the Cruise and Pershing IIs will be only six minutes from their targets, the margin of error is drastically reduced. Thus, said Cawthorne, these missiles pose a grave, immediate threat to us all.

Ada Sanchez, of the People's Test Ban National Clearinghouse, reminded the crowd of our individual and collective responsibilities to use every means available to stop our government's preparations for genocide and planning for aggressive war. Citing the Nuremberg Principles, Sanchez noted that when a government engages in acts against humanity, then it is the good citizen's duty to oppose his government, even if a lesser law must be violated.

"It moves us from balance of terror to terror without balance, or stability—from perceiving war as unwinnable to perceiving it as winnable—if one strikes first," said Jess Frost, representative to the National Freeze Campaign for the Northwest.

British film maker Peter Watkins spoke of how propaganda put forth by the government and repeated by the mass media makes war seemingly inevitable. Constantly, we are told of the militant stance of the Soviet Union and its allies. Watkins, whose film, *The War Game*, was banned for years, is now working on

a film to show the affects of nuclear war on "typical" families around the globe.

Speaking on a more sombre note was Johann Galtung of the Norwegian International Peace Research Institute of Oslo. Galtung depressed the crowd with his assessment that nuclear war between the two superpowers is now inevitable. The only question, said Galtung, is when it will occur. Besides escalation of the arms race itself, Galtung claims the increasing deterioration of social structures in the U.S. and the Soviet Union bring us closer to war.

Entertainment was provided by a diverse assortment of musicians and actors. Billy Rancher, Sheila, and a number of performers with PAND (Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament), were all there.

As tired as the rally organizers seemed, it was clear that the many hours of hard work had paid off.

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Energy Conservation, Health and You

"BPA will not ignore the potential health effects of its programs. Neither should you."

So stated Peter T. Johnson, BPA Administrator. BPA is taking a long hard look at the effects of expanding its home weatherization program, the most extensive in the U.S., to provide "lightening" measures for more electrically heated homes.

But these measures (storm windows and doors, weatherstripping, etc.) could lower a home's indoor air quality, by retaining existing pollutants inside the house.

Will the additional energy savings realized be offset by the adverse public health impacts? To help answer that question, BPA has written a draft environmental impact statement, and is soliciting public comment on how to expand the program and on the draft EIS itself.

Your comments can be given in person at any of the meetings listed, or in writing or by telephone until Nov 14, 1983. Write: Anthony R. Morrell, Environmental Manager, BPA, P.O. Box 3621-SJ, Portland, OR 97208. Or, call: Public Involvement Office, Portland 230-3478; elsewhere in Oregon 1-800-452-8429; Northwest states 1-800-547-6048.

MEETING SCHEDULE

REGISTRATION: 7 P.M.
MEETINGS: 7:30 P.M.

- Richland — Monday, Oct. 24
Federal Bldg. Auditorium
825 Jadin
- Spokane — Tuesday, Oct. 25
Cavanaugh Inn, Clearwater Room
N. 700 Division
- Missoula — Wednesday, Oct. 26
Village Red Lion, Blackfoot Room
700 W. Broadway
- Burley — Thursday, Oct. 27
Burley Inn, Patio Room
800 N. Overland
- Eugene — Tuesday, Nov. 1
Eugene Hilton, Joplin Room
66 E. Sixth
- Portland — Wednesday, Nov. 2
BPA Headquarters Bldg.
BPA Auditorium
1002 N.E. Holladay
- Seattle — Thursday, Nov. 3
Seattle Center, Center House
Conf. Center
Rm. A, Mezzanine Level North

Remember, we're listening.
What you say counts.

Bonneville Power Administration

Good news for Kaiser members.

Our Bess Kaiser Medical Center renovation is now complete.



An inside look at the new Bess Kaiser Medical Center.

It's taken close to five years to complete a two-phase, multimillion-dollar improvement program at Bess Kaiser Medical Center — another example of our ongoing commitment to provide quality health care to the community.

The results of our efforts.

You'll notice we've kept exterior cosmetic changes to a minimum, putting our renovation budget where it really counts — inside.

Efficient as well as comfortable, the Center has

been remodeled to accommodate today's sophisticated technologies. Computerized diagnostic and treatment equipment such as a CT scanner and angiography suite. Increased support services. And more.

In the midst of all the new, however, you'll find that one thing hasn't

changed. The commitment of our staff. They're caring people looking back with pride, and forward with renewed dedication.

Ready to care for you. An invitation to members and friends.

As part of our Bess Kaiser "Rededication to Excellence" celebration, we're

inviting the community to a "Health Happening" on Sunday, November 20 at Kaiser-Permanente's Regional Office.

From noon 'til 4 p.m., you'll enjoy all kinds of exhibits, mini-workshops and health screenings, with entertainment provided for kids. Check the box to the left for details, and come join the fun — there's no charge!

We'll be more than happy to send you our special booklet



on the new Bess Kaiser Medical Center. From Portland, call 280-2999; from Vancouver, call 694-8445 and ask for our Information Center.

KAISER PERMANENTE
HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

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