

international

VIEWPOINT

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Eddie Mauder

Germany :

Neo-nazis up the ante

Brazil :

An historic conference

United States

6/1/89



EAST TIMOR

SINCE 1976, Indonesia has enforced its brutal annexation of East Timor, implementing a policy of extermination in a territory from which foreign visitors are barred. Nonetheless, while it has killed one third of the population, the Indonesian army has not managed to crush the population nor defeat the armed resistance.

Xanana Gusmão, leader of the National Council of the Maubere Resistance (CNRM), was arrested on November 20, 1992. His jailers extracted a statement from him renouncing the struggle — with the aim of discrediting the resistance, by giving the impression of a big upsurge in defections.

Gusmão's replacement was arrested on the day of the arrival in the Timorese capital Dili of the United Nations general secretary. According to the Jakarta government, he was "spontaneously denounced by villagers".

After a trial conducted in complete contempt of Indonesian law and previous commitments made by the government, Gusmão was handed a verdict of life imprisonment. Foreign observers, including the International Committee of Jurists and Amnesty International, were not allowed to attend. Gusmão was prevented from reading his defense, which he was nevertheless able to send abroad, and which declares that his "renunciation" had been obtained through force.

Many of the witnesses for the prosecution were Timorese who had previously been sentenced by the Indonesian authorities. On the day of the verdict, Gusmão announced that he was beginning a hunger strike.

Since 1976, the "international community" has practically remained silent in the face of the genocide of the people of East Timor, and has maintained its relations with the Indonesian government. Australia has even recognised the annexation of East Timor, something the UN has refused to do.

Some 20 oil companies have signed contracts with Indonesia and Australia for oil extraction in the Timor Sea, and the arms industries of several Western countries continue to profit handsomely from sales to the Jakarta regime. ★

MEXICO

ON June 5, the workers of the Cuautitlan (36 kilometres from Mexico City) plant of the Ford Motor Company suffered another attack on their union and the process of internal democratisation, at the hands of the government-run Mexican Workers



Confederation (CTM). On that day, the main leader of the CTM, Fidel Velazquez, organised a bogus meeting with the objective of dismissing the legitimate Local Executive Committee (CES) and taking control of this militant section of the National Union of Ford Workers.

In early 1990, a struggle was brutally put down by CTM gangsters, leading to the murder of one of the workers and the installation of a local leadership which in no way represented the rank and file. Two years later, large-scale mobilisations led to the overthrow of this committee and the revival of democratisation in the union local.

This upset the plans of the employer and the union bureaucracy who had hoped to keep the workers under control while they went ahead with their plans to reorganize the workplace — making way for a flexible workforce — and implement wage austerity.

Nevertheless, pressures on the workers have continued to grow. In recent months, the speed of the assembly line has increased, producing a 12% increase in daily production — without any compensation for the workers. At the same time, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of firings and suspensions of the most militant unionists. Moreover, there are plans to fire about 1,000 workers who, in 1990, voted against granting the CTM the right to represent them in contract negotiations.

The workers of Ford Cuautitlan are asking for solidarity. Letters of protest can be sent to: the president's residence at Los Pinos, Mexico DF; to the Labour and Social Security Secretary, Periférico Sur 4271, Col. Fuentes del Pedregal, Delegación Tlapan, DF; and to the Ford Motor Company, Paseo de la Reforma 333, Col. Cuauhtémoc, Mexico DF. ★

BOSNIA

A NEW campaign, Workers Aid for Bosnia, has been launched in Britain. An initiative of the London-based Campaign Against Fascism in Europe, Workers Aid is looking for concrete offers of help from across Europe for its aid convoy to Bosnia.

The humanitarian convoy, carrying medical supplies and other urgently needed goods will begin in Scotland on August 7, travel south, cross over into France and probably travel through Belgium, Germany, Italy and elsewhere, to the large mining communities around Tuzla in Bosnia.

The campaign has issued the following call for solidarity: "Being squashed out of existence by the expansionist Serbia and Croatia, multi-ethnic Bosnia must not be transformed into a few ghettos as the United Nations would have it.

The UN and EEC, far from helping Bosnians, is complicit in mass murder. The UN arms embargo is only effective against Bosnia, not imposed against Croatia, and laughed at by a Serbia already armed to the teeth. The EC has closed its doors to asylum seekers from the war-stricken area [...]

The European workers movement must stand up and be counted! We urgently appeal to working people in Europe to support this convey, raise donations in their workplaces and communities, and join the convey with their own aid."

For more information and to send donations, contact "Workers Aid" at PO Box 30, London SE15, Britain or phone (081) 694 9799. ★

BRITAIN

THE third Socialist Outlook Summer School will take place from Saturday, August 28 to Friday, September 3.

Take a step back from the class struggle. Enjoy six days of education, debate and fun in scenic North Wales. The mountains of Snowdonia and the beaches of Ynys Mon are nearby.

This year's main theme is women's liberation with many different workshops on such issues as the family, socialist alternatives to the family, domestic violence, child abuse, women's revolutionary history, women and the revolutionary party, classic texts and much, much more...

The cost is £95/855FF wage £35/315FF unwaged. For registration and further information, contact Socialist Outlook Summer School c/o 39 Cresswell London, N15 3BB Britain. ★