



# Flashes

FROM THE TRADE UNIONS

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## " JUSTICE AND LIBERTY FOR THE CHILEAN PEOPLE "

-the participants

at the All-European Chile Solidarity Conference

The All-European Conference of Solidarity with Chile, organised by the French National Chile Solidarity Committee, was held in Paris on 6th and 7th July 1974. It brought together several hundred delegates representing political parties, trade union and democratic organisations of various outlooks from over 30 European countries. Attending the conference was a Chilean delegation led by Beatrice Allende and Carlos Altamirano.

As stressed in the opening speech by Etienne Fajon (representative of the French Communist Party) the conference had set itself three targets:

- 1) To draw the attention of European public opinion to the situation in Chile,
- 2) To demand an end to "the state of internal war" whose aim is to justify the crimes of the fascist Junta in power,
- 3) To demand the release of political prisoners, the closure of concentration camps, the cancellation of sentences and trumped-up trials against the Chilean democrats, as well as the respect for the workers' fundamental democratic rights.

These aims were subsequently firmly supported in the speeches of the delegates from the organisations represented. This led Carlos Altamirano, General Secretary of the Chilean Socialist Party to stress that the nature, number and importance of the organisations represented as well as the spirit of the their delegates' speeches had given "a his-

toric significance" to the conference. This spirit which can be summed up in the single demand "justice and freedom for the Chilean people" was embodied in "an appeal to international public opinion" (reproduced in this issue) which was adopted and acclaimed by all the participants at the Conference.

The WFTU sent a letter to the Conference organisers in which it stressed the need for a more active commitment to action aimed at ending the vile deeds of the fascist junta in Chile. We should stress that many examples of this commitment and its effectiveness were given by the trade union delegates, many of whom underlined the need for greater united action by the entire world trade union movement not only in relation to the current situation in Chile but also in relation to all problems arising from the domination by multinational companies in various parts of the world.

This domination, exposed and condemned in the most of the speeches, was also mentioned in the closing speech by Francois Mitterand, the French left-wing presidential candidate who pointed out how much the multinational companies fear such examples as that of Chile progressing towards democracy.

In addition to adopting the Appeal already mentioned the participants at the Conference decided on the following:

- to convey to all governments, international organisations etc. the text of the documents adopted,

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- to urge the UN Secretary General to take all necessary steps to put an end to the violations of civil rights in Chile and take action to inquire into the trials which are taking place or are to take place before military courts in Chile.

- to call upon national committees everywhere to make similar inquiries.

It was also decided to send a delegation to the UN Secretary General composed of participants at the conference in order to explain to him the meaning and scope of the recommended measures.

**WORLD TRADE UNION CONFERENCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH CHILE (Lisbon, 11th-15th September 1974)**

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# EUROPEAN CHILE SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE

## WFTU MESSAGE TO THE ALL-EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH CHILE

Dear Brothers and Friends,

The World Federation of Trade Unions warmly greets the All-European Conference of Solidarity with Chile and through it the delegates from trade union, political and democratic organisations of all European countries taking part in this action with such fine and significant aims.

International solidarity and especially the solidarity of the European workers and democrats is an invaluable contribution to the heroic struggle of the Chilean working class and people for the restoration of freedom and democracy and against the wave of terror unleashed by the military junta.

World public opinion has already achieved major successes, isolating the fascist generals still more each time. Nevertheless, the latter continue in their crimes and abuse of power. Solidarity action by the workers and democrats of Europe and the whole world and by all progressive forces is absolutely necessary to save the lives of the leaders of Popular Unity and many Chilean patriots, to win their release and impose respect for human rights.

As part of its solidarity activity, the WFTU has appealed to workers and trade unions throughout the world to organise broad and united mass action in their respective countries on 11th September this year, the tragic anniversary of the murder of President Allende and of the criminal military coup against Chile, so as to demonstrate more firmly

than ever their resolute support for the just cause of the Chilean people.

The WFTU calls upon the Conference to give this proposal its support and urges all delegates to contribute to the organisation and success of this great day of international working class solidarity with Chile.

Several international and national trade union organisations, including the WFTU have called for a Trade Union Conference of Solidarity with the Chilean Workers and People to be held, with the help of the Portuguese "Intersindical" in Lisbon from 11th to 15th September, and open to trade unions of all countries and any affiliation. The WFTU, together with the other organisations signatory to this appeal, fraternally invites all the European trade unions to take part in the Lisbon Conference so as to examine how best to intensify the activity of the international trade union movement in favour of an immediate end to the repression, the release of political prisoners and the restoration of trade union and civil rights in Chile.

Dear Brothers and Friends,

Allow me to repeat to you our wishes for success in your proceedings. You may fully count on the WFTU's most active support for the decisions to be taken by your Conference.

With the warmest greetings of the WFTU,

Pierre Gensous,  
General Secretary

fundamental trade union and civil rights.  
End the ruthless repression!  
Save the lives threatened in the prisons and concentration camps by torture and trumped-up trials!

Halt this crime!

We who have come from the whole of Europe to meet here in Paris on 6th and 7th July 1974 all solemnly demand:

— and end to the state of "internal war" in Chile;

— an end to the arbitrary arrests, torture and summary trials;

— the release of the leaders of the Government of Popular Unity currently threatened with trumped-up trials which endanger their lives, particularly Luis Corvalan, Clodomiro Almeyda, Carlos Morales, Fernando Flores, Pedro Felipe Ramirez and all other leaders of Popular Unity and members of the armed forces who remained loyal to the constitution;

— information on the whereabouts of activists who have disappeared such as Gustavo Rous and Van Schouwen;

— the release of all members of the resistance and all political prisoners held in prisons, internment camps and deportation islands;

— respect for the right to asylum and the granting of safe-conducts to all those who took refuge in embassies;

— the restoration of fundamental civil, democratic and trade union liberties, as well as human dignity and rights.

We call on world public opinion as a whole and on all justice- and freedom-loving men and women whatever their political opinions, philosophical convictions or religious beliefs to work in every way to advance these demands;

Chile has seen enough mourning, blood and tears,

Justice and freedom for the Chilean people!

Paris, 7th July 1974

\* \* \*

## APPEAL TO WORLD PUBLIC OPINION

On 11th September 1973, in the military coup which led to the setting up of a fascist military regime, the constitutional President of the Chilean Republic, Salvador Allende, died heroically defending the institutions and the government which the Chilean people had freely chosen,

Like him, thousands of Chilean workers, democrats and loyal soldiers who had desired justice, democracy, freedom and national independence for their country and people, met their deaths, victims of internal reaction and imperial-

Since then, the Chilean workers and democrats, the whole Chilean people, including many of those who had opposed the government of Popular Unity have suffered oppression, terror and poverty.

Arbitrary arrests, torture, parodies of justice and summary executions have become the rule. For nearly one year now, the principles and guarantees of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been flouted under the cover of a legal aberration known as the "state of internal war".

The Chilean people are fighting courageously for the restoration of their

## TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE CONFERENCE

FGTB (Belgium), the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions; UGT (Spain); the Workers' Commissions (Spain); USO (Spain); SAK (Finland); CGT (France); CFDT (France); FEN (France); UNEF (France); the Central Council of Hungarian Trade Unions; CGIL (Italy); Intersindical (Portugal); FDGB (GDR); General Federation of Rumanian Trade Unions; San Marino Trade Unions; Czechoslovak Revolutionary Trade Union Movement; Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions; Confederation of Yugoslav Trade Unions.

# CRISIS OF CAPITALIST SYSTEM DEEPENS

Two so-called "anti-inflation" plans which promise nothing more than austerity, have recently been adopted by the Italian and French governments.

These plans, which involve an all-round increase in prices, taxes, public charges etc., seek to make the workers bear the responsibility for the current crisis affecting those countries, while protecting those who are really responsible—the big firms and the multinational trusts whose profits have never stopped rising. In these conditions, since the evil has not been attacked at the root, it can only spread, which means a deepening of the crisis.

Throughout the capitalist system record price increases are being registered: 16.1% in Italy, 15.9% in Great Brit-

ain, 14.2% in Denmark, 13.5% in France and Ireland, 10.7% in the United States and 23.2% in Japan, for the twelve months ending May 1974. A further common denominator in all these countries is the increase in the profits of the big firms.

At the same time, workers' action is growing and there is the emergence of a demand by the workers for greater social justice, beyond mere economic considerations. This was witnessed recently with the strike call by the three main Italian trade union federations against the government's austerity plan and the demonstrations organised in France by the CGT and CFDT federations following the fiscal measures and price increases decided on by the French government.

## ITALY STRIKES AGAINST AUSTERITY PLAN

Following the announcement of the government's planned austerity measures, the three leading trade union centres—the CGIL, CISL and UIL—have decided to organise a series of rotating protest strikes throughout Italy.

Basically, what the plan envisages are increases in public charges, especially electricity charges, higher taxes (with VAT going up from 18% to 30%) and higher prices for petrol.

The Finance Minister has declared that these are "sacrifices which will enable Italy to overcome the grave economic crisis it is presently labouring under". However, the three trade union

centres do not share this view and have made known that the austerity programme "does not meet up adequately to the needs of the country and is directed mainly against the working class".

Finance experts have estimated the cost to each Italian household as from 100 to 400 thousand lira annually.

The trade unions have therefore decided to pursue their programme of strikes throughout Italy in protest against the tax increases and in support of demands for guarantees of buying power and job security. The three federations will hold a special consultative meeting on 13th July to decide on their future position.

## FRANCE LOBBY AGAINST PRICE INCREASES

The day following the government's decisions on new tax measures and price increases, two hundred workers' delegations lobbied the Ministry of Finance in response to a call from the CGT-affiliated unions of the Paris region.

Among them there were delegations from several centres of the French electricity generating board, EDF and from posts and telecommunications.

Many resolutions and petitions were handed in to the principal private secretary to the Minister and other ministry staff.

## ISRAEL COST OF LIVING BONUS GOES

On 7th July, the executive committee of the Israeli Trade Union Confederation (Histadruth) unanimously rejected the government's decision to abolish the monthly cost of living bonuses. The next bonus was due to be paid on 1st August. The decision forms part of the austerity plan adopted by the government.

Since January prices have risen by an average of 31%.

## CANADA RECORD PRICE RISES

The general election just held in Canada was dominated throughout by the issue of inflation, which according to official statistics reached 7.6% in 1973 and 10% this year,—the highest figures for the last 20 years.

### A THAW

We compare the proceedings of the June 1974 conference with those of the conferences of the past two or three years, we can express satisfaction with the marked progress which has been registered. I would even go so far as to say that there has been a thaw in an institution which showed all signs of freezing solid".

### AN EXCEPTIONAL EXAMPLE

"In particular, we must stress the progress and strengthening of unity within the workers' group and this is felt far beyond the decisions taken and the recommendations tabled for the working groups". (The Conference is made up of three party groups representing the workers, governments and employers—ed). "This progress within the organisation is the reflection of what is happening throughout the world, with the advance of the progressive forces, despite the attempts by the AFL—CIO to

### EVIDENCE OF A CHANGE

REMARKS ON THE  
59th INTERNATIONAL LABOUR  
CONFERENCE BY RENE DUHAMEL,  
SECRETARY OF THE FRENCH CGT AND  
MEMBER OF THE WFTU BUREAU

René Duhamel, who represented the CGT at the recent ILO Conference stressed the importance of the conference as giving marked evidence, as he stated, of the profound changes taking place almost everywhere in the world.

provoke anew a cold-war atmosphere".

This unity trend was particularly seen in the agreement reached in the workers' group on insisting on the presence of the representatives of the Chilean CUT, as well as in the resolution condemning the violation of human rights and trade union liberties in Chile, tabled jointly by the representatives of the WFTU, WCL and ICFTU. This event constitutes, as Brother Duhamel said, "an exceptional

example of the common position of the three international federations".

### A CONFERENCE OF TRANSITION

Finally, and this was a positive decision", René Duhamel went on to say, "it was decided to set up a working commission to work out proposals to be submitted to the next conference, for improving the structures of the ILO in order to bring them into line with today's realities. Most of the members of the commission will be national unions affiliated to the WFTU, ICFTU or WCL.

"In my view, we have taken part in an important conference of transition.

"In addition I can add that the conference provided the setting for a certain number of very useful bilateral contacts which leads to think that the European trade union conference, which was decided on in principle in January, will take place in Geneva in January 1975. And that the conference will certainly be a historic moment for the international trade union movement".

## PORTUGAL

# 1,200,000 workers now organised in free TUs

In an interview given to the Associated French Press Agency, Francisco Canais Rocha, one of the main leaders of the Portuguese Intersindical has expressed his views on the perspectives for the trade union movement in Portugal, following the overthrow of the fascist regime.

Canais Rocha considered that the strikes which occurred in the days following 25th April came as no surprise, in view of the fact that **"due to the fascist regime, the workers living conditions were and still are difficult, particularly in comparison with those of the workers in Western Europe"**.

However, Canais Rocha considered that **"many of these strikes were used by the reactionaries, who provoked them or played them up so as to stifle the economy and create social anarchy"**.

He did not consider that in the present situation, strike action was the best form of action possible. For example, the postal workers' strike soon became unpopular and almost provoked intervention by the armed forces.

Commenting on the prices and incomes policy pursued by the provisional government, Canais Rocha stated that the national minimum wage of 3,300 escudos was inadequate but considered that the claim for a minimum wage of 6,000 escudos being put forward by certain unions was not compatible in the short term with the country's financial situation.

He defined the attitude of the Intersindical to the new regime as one of **"constructive criticism"** and it reserved the right to condemn any measure coming from the government or the parties which **"might run counter to the legitimate aspirations of the working class"**.

As far as legal matters were concerned, the Intersindical, like the political parties, only enjoyed formal recognition, and Brother Canais Rocha hoped that the law on the trade unions would **"guarantee full trade union freedom"**, which would imply at the same time, the drafting of legislation covering collective bargaining, the right to strike, dismissals, social security and industrial tribunals.

The Intersindical now numbers 191 unions with a total of one million two hundred thousand members. Canais Rocha, who has been active since the age of 19 and spent six years in prison under the previous regime spoke of its origins: **"The Caetano government felt the need to reconstitute its social basis while seeking to channel the labour movement so as to control it"**.

This led to the formation of some twenty representative unions, which came together in 1970 to form the Intersindical, subsequently declared illegal. It was this **"forerunner of the trade union movement"** that was to constitute the nucleus of the Intersindical in the days following 25th April and which would eventually result in a future **"General Labour Confederation"**.

improved social benefits and education. The meeting considered that the unity of the banana workers was the main condition for improving their living and working conditions and promoting their common interests. It was decided to set up an international body uniting all banana workers, regardless of international affiliation, whose headquarters would be in Panama.

This meeting of banana workers reflected the movement of emancipation which is growing in Latin America. It bears witness to the firm resolution to face up to the neo-colonialist policies of the multinational companies which monopolise banana production and trade to the detriment of the workers and peoples of the banana producing countries, and interfere, in the manner of a colonial power, in their economic and political affairs.

The meeting expressed unanimous support for the decision to raise the price of bananas sold to the multinational companies, a step it considered an integral part of the struggle of the Latin American countries to win back their national resources in favour of social and economic development to the benefit of the people. This increased revenue should help the national producers and improve the economic and social conditions of workers in this agricultural sector.

## Preparation for 7th International Metalworkers' Conference

The main item on the agenda of the 24th session of the Administrative Committee of the Metalworkers' TUI (Prague, 25th-27th June 1974) concerned preparations for the 7th International Trade Conference of Metalworkers which is to be held in France at the end of this year.

The 25th anniversary of the setting up of the TUI was also celebrated at the meeting.

In a resolution adopted on this occasion the participants condemned the attacks on democratic forces in Chile.

## AROUND THE WORLD...

### LATIN AMERICA

## Banana workers stand up to multinational companies

The first meeting of Latin American banana workers was held recently in Panama. The proposal for holding the meeting came from unions in two big multinational firms: the Chiriqui Land Company and the United Brand Company as well as from the unions of the national banana firms of Panama. It was attended by delegates from banana workers' unions from Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Ecuador and Panama. The national federations of Panama and Costa Rica, CNTP and CGTC, were also represented.

The main aim of the meeting was to decide on what position the workers should adopt in relation to the recent measures taken by the governments of these countries for increasing the price

of bananas on the world market, which we reported in Flashes N° 23 this year. The agenda also dealt with problems of the workers' living and working conditions and the strengthening of unity as a fundamental condition for winning their aspirations and achieving further victories.

The meeting called for the setting up of technical research institutes and merchant fleets, as well as other measures for ending the multinational companies' domination of the production, trade and transport of bananas.

As regards the living and working conditions of the workers, the meeting called for wage increases, the establishment of national housing policies, and

### CONGRATULATIONS

The WFTU has sent a message of congratulations to Brother Misho Mishev on his election as Chairman of the Central Council of Bulgarian Trade Unions, voicing the hope that the bonds of cooperation between both organisations would be strengthened in their common action for international trade union unity.

Congratulations have also been sent by the WFTU to Brother Miko Spilpak, newly elected Chairman of the Yugoslav Trade Union Council.