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JUNE 1980

"Most Sweeping Agrarian Reform in the History of Latin America"

file El Salvador

Land Reform in El Salvador

Roy Prosterman is a professor of law at the University of Washington School of Law in Seattle. In the last 15 years, he has done field research on land tenure problems in over a dozen developing countries. He volunteered his services as a consultant to UCS and AIFLD in El Salvador. His associate, Mary Temple, is executive director of The Land Council, a private group devoted to support for agrarian reform in developing countries.

By ROY PROSTERMAN and MARY TEMPLE

El Salvador has had one of the highest proportions of landless agricultural laborers and tenant farmers found anywhere in Latin America. The grievances of the country's landless have played a crucial role in the political polarization and the growth of revolutionary violence. What has happened on the land issue in the last two months is, therefore, potentially crucial to the development of a broadly supported democratic government in that country.

On March 6, 1980, the ruling Junta of El Salvador decreed a land distribution program which, when fully implemented, will become the most sweeping agrarian reform in the history of Latin America. When its three stages are completed it will have transferred ownership of the land they till to 225,000 of El Salvador's 300,000 campesino families.

At the forefront of this breakthrough is the Union Comunal Salvadoreña (UCS), a peasant farmer pressure group first organized in 1966 with assistance from the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), an AFL-CIO sponsored organization involved in development in Latin America. With most of the campesino sector in El Salvador unorganized or radicalized by extreme leftists the Junta was desperate to identify a moderate, democratic small farmer or-

ganization to serve as the vehicle for the implementation of the reform. The UCS, with strong popular support in the countryside and a politically experienced team of organizers, provided the solution. Rodoilo Viera, president of the UCS, was named by the Junta as president of ISTA, the government's Agrarian Reform Institute. In this position Viera was able to spell out the key land-to-the-tiller measures contained in the law, and to organize its implementation.

El Salvador's land reform has taken place in desperate circumstances, in a country skirting the edge of civil war. It may, indeed, have come too late, as the extreme left and the extreme right continue to compete for power. Each side is convinced that if it can manage to start a civil war, it can win. Their raids and assassinations, aimed at destabilizing the country and bringing down the government, are still taking a steady toll of lives each

month. Some outside observers are convinced that a full-fledged civil war could take 200,000 or more lives in this country of 4.6 million. Moreover, such a conflict would be likely to draw in other countries in the region to support one side or the other, with the probable victory of a far left so extreme the comparison with Pol Pot's reign in Cambodia would not be far-fetched.

How did tiny El Salvador become a prime candidate to be the Western Hemisphere's equivalent of Cambodia, and how does the land reform just carried out in these desperate circumstances affect the likely outcome?

In many ways, El Salvador combines both Asian and Latin American problems. It is small and densely populated, the size of New Jersey, with its population divided approximately along the following lines:

- 2.4 million (around 400,000 families) live in urban areas where some



On Sunday, April 20, UCS leaders and land reform organizers gathered at the Hacienda El Castaion in Santa Tecla, outside San Salvador, for a conference on the progress of the agrarian reform process. A "promotore" brings a problem about credit to the attention of the meeting.

30 percent are unemployed or underemployed. Many have fled to the cities from rural poverty, only to find life there equally bad—a common global pattern, from Bogota to Calcutta to Lagos.

• The remaining 2.2 million people, roughly another 350,000 to 375,000 families, live in the countryside. A minority work outside of agriculture or on their own small farm, but some 300,000 of these families—up until the March 6th land reform law—made their living predominantly as non-landowning campesinos.

• Of the landless, approximately half, or 150,000 families, made their living chiefly on the great coffee, sugarcane and cotton plantations, many working only part time. The other half, on a pattern more commonly Asian than Latin American, made their living chiefly as tenants or sharecroppers, growing a tiny crop of corn on a small farm of 2 or 3 acres, and paying a large part of its value over to the landlord. As in Asia, the local landlord with his fifty acres rented out to twenty tenant families could be just as greedy as the city-dwelling "absentee" landlord with ten times as much land.

The 300,000 landless families represented close to 40 percent of the total population of the country. This proportion of landlessness has signalled grave trouble in a long list of countries in the course of this century—



Rodolfo Viera, President of the UCS, addressed the meeting. Here he confers with Michael Hammer of AFLD.

Mexico and Russia in the early years of this century, China in the 1930's and 1940's, Bolivia and Cuba in the 1950's, Vietnam in the 1960's, Ethiopia and Nicaragua in the 1970's.

In every one of these countries, profound grievances arising out of the inequities of tenancy or plantation labor systems that affected the bulk of the rural population (and one-third or more of the total population) led to massive violence and the overthrow of the existing regime.

There has been an alternative, non-violent resolution of land-based grievances in a series of other countries, ranging from Denmark in the 1870's to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in the years following World War II. U.S. support for this alternative lagged in the 1950's, as fashionable "development" theories emphasizing industrialization and heavy infrastructure like ports and superhighways gained ground.

Almost ignored by the development "experts," the countries where we had first supported large-scale agrarian reform efforts not only avoided Vietnam- or Cuba-type peasant revolutions, but their economies "took off," developing far beyond their Asian neighbors. The reason is not hard to find: land-owning peasants produce far more on the land. A country that is predominantly rural and agrarian, when the farmers own their land, creates a surplus which puts money in the hands of the mass of peasant consumers and fuels the growth of construction, services and industry, as well as further investment in agriculture. Another dramatic example of this phenomenon is the development of U.S. agriculture after the Homestead Act of 1862 established the family farm as the productive unit of American agriculture in the mid-west.

At least for the world's basic crops—



Filling out the forms for a survey gathering data about progress of the reforms.

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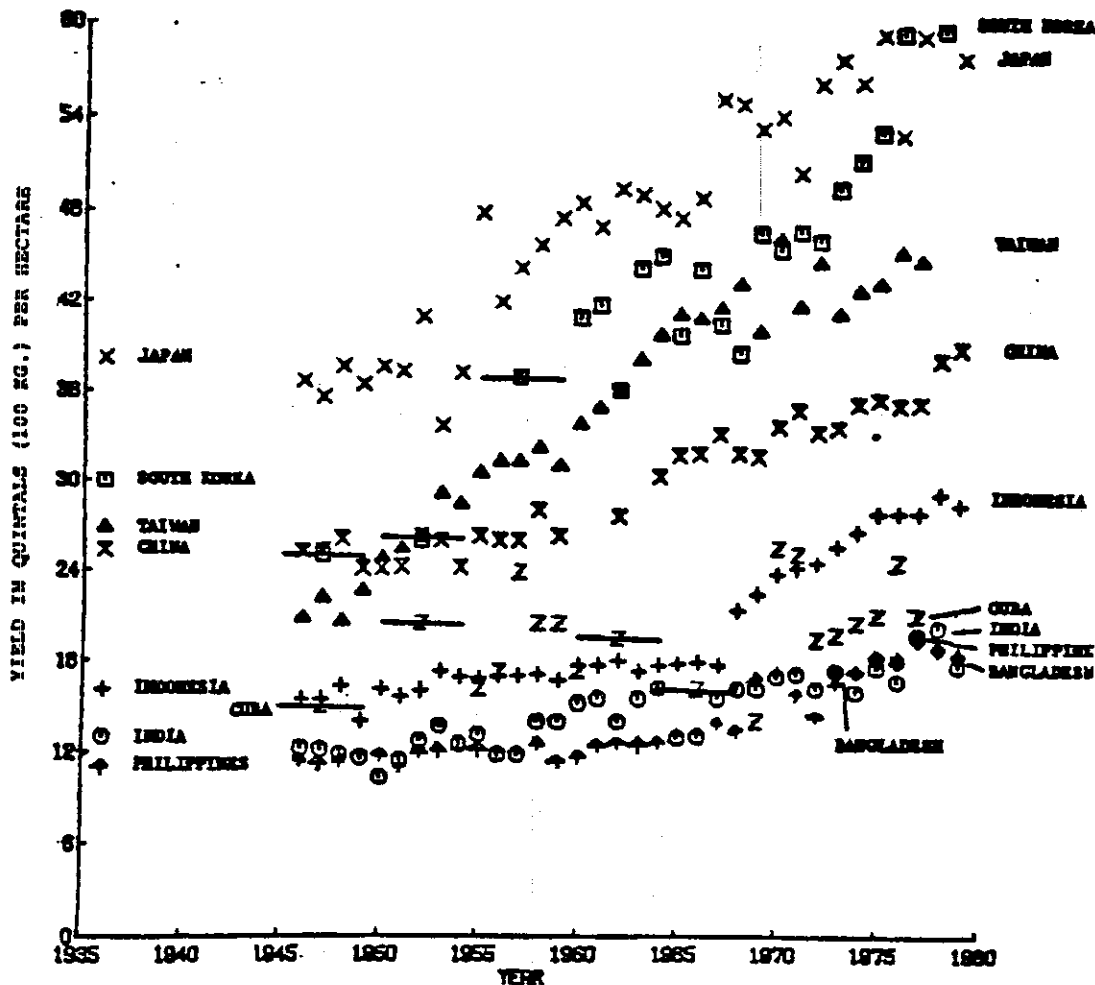
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SELECTED RICE YIELDS PRE-WAR TO 1978 (PRE-WAR IS 1935-39 AVG.)



Notes: ——— Symbol represents multiyear average

Typical farmers in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, after post-WWII land reforms, are small owner-operators; in China (post-1952) and Cuba (post-1959) collectivized or state rice farms prevail; India, the Philippines and Bangladesh represent largely landlord-tenant systems; Indonesia, a mixed system of traditional small owners sharing with landless laborers.

Sources: Primary source is USDA Foreign Agricultural Service reports on rice production; supplemental data is also taken from FAO crop reports and USAID 1970 Spring Review reports.

Ray L. Prustman
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rice, corn and wheat—it is universally the small owner-operator, working on his own land who outperforms not only the archaic system of tenancy, but also the currently fashionable model of collectivization. The figures on rice production on the accompanying chart are repeated for the other basic grains: the small owner-operators of Taiwan, for example, out-produce El Salvador's tenant farmers in corn, per acre, by 2 to 1, and those of Italy out-produce them 4 to 1. Even El Salvador out-produces Cuba.

The political, agricultural and overall development implications of El Sal-

vador's new land reform program are thus clearly intertwined. With a clear sense of what had to be done, and with strong support from the U.S., the ruling Junta has decreed a land reform which, since March 5, has:

1) Transferred ownership of all of the 376 holdings above 1,200 acres to the campesinos who work those farms, forming campesino cooperatives. This phase of the reform covers over 15 percent of all land in farms and a far higher percentage of the best land. Present recipients are 40,000 worker families, to be expanded over time to 60,000 or more.

2) Transferred ownership of the land they cultivate to the tenants and sharecroppers who presently farm it. This covers 150,000 campesino families, and together with the first category of land probably represents at least 50 percent of all cultivated land in the country.

3) Compensated the former owners in combinations of cash and bonds based on their 1976-77 tax valuation, and provided for the new recipients of the land to pay an equivalent amount to the government over a 30-year period;

4) Accepted the principle that all



Rodolfo Viera with two UCS organizers.

other holdings over 250 acres will be transferred to the campesinos, with eventual beneficiaries to be about equal in number to those on the over-1200 acre holdings. Altogether over 250,000 of the total of 300,000 landless families in El Salvador should benefit from the land reform. To date 190,000 of these families, or roughly two-thirds of those who were landless on March 6th, have already received ownership of their land.

While recipients of the large coffee, cotton and sugarcane holdings will actually farm cooperatively on the same scale as the holding has previously been exploited, experiments with subdividing and smaller-scale cultivation will probably get underway in early 1981.

But the most dramatic aspect of the reform, and the one likely to have the most immediate impact on both the political and agricultural spheres is the automatic and universal transfer of ownership to tenants and sharecroppers.

In addition to doing the political groundwork to get the land reform drafted and adopted in the first place, the UCS, with the technical and financial assistance of AIFLD, has taken a leading role in its implementation. Over 300 UCS-trained "promotores," or communicators and organizers have been working out in the field to make sure that the farmworkers and tenants understand their new rights and to help them organize themselves to assert those rights immediately and fully, in practice. With the land-to-the-tenant phase, UCS also launched a massive radio information campaign, blanketing the country with word of the new decree and complementing the work of the organizers.

These organizers, along with many innocent peasant families, are increasingly threatened by the violence of

both the left and right wing extremists in the countryside. Both extremes oppose the reforms and are attempting to assure their failure. The left-wing guerrillas see the reforms as threatening their base of support, while the right-wing para-military groups continue to operate in the interest of the centuries-old landlord dominated system.

If it has come in time, here is what the land reform could accomplish:

- Broaden the base of the Junta: when a leftist coalition called for massive demonstrations in San Salvador on May 1, it was able to gather fewer than 2,000 people in the streets. The same coalition had drawn in over 100,000 two months earlier. The apparent reason: newly-landowning campesinos had no interest in being trucked in to "demonstrate."

- With less of a threat on the left, the Junta may have a better chance of gaining control over the terrorists of

the far right, though this still looms as a formidable task.

- With such a de-escalation of the appeal and violence of the extremes, El Salvador may finally escape the threat of civil war. There will be a little more time to prevent a Central American catastrophe.

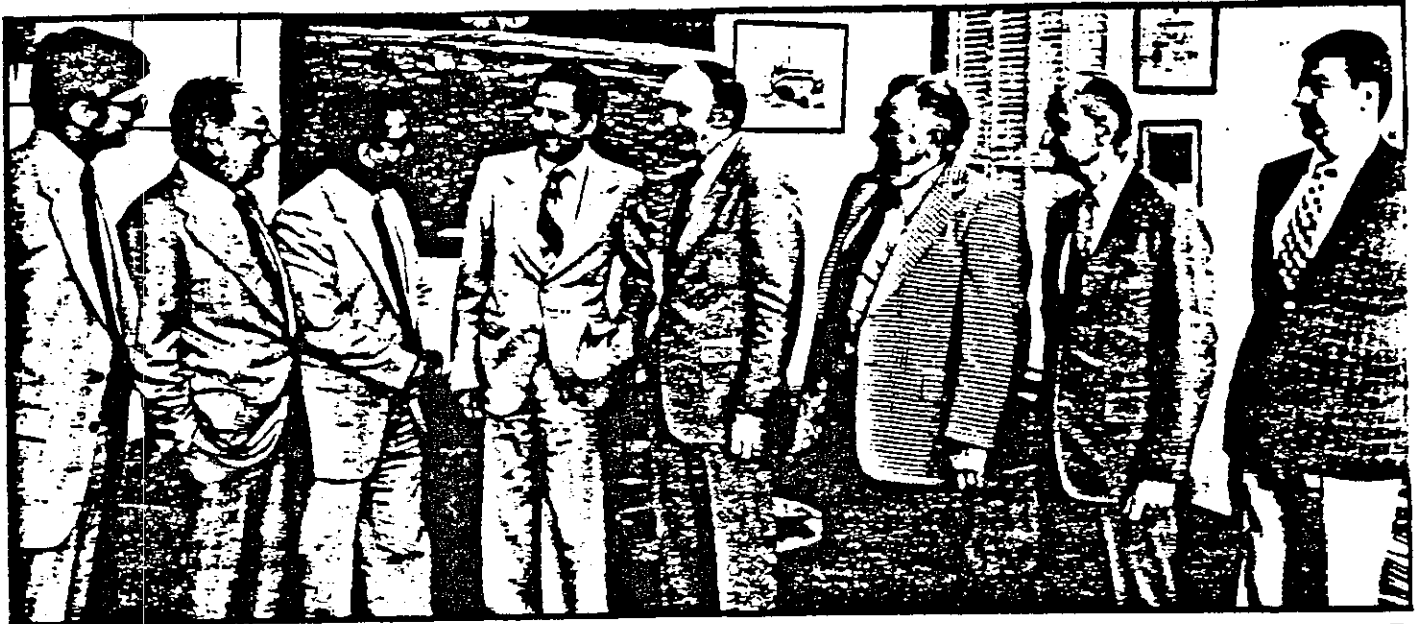
- Not only would there be time, there would be a new model of development with which to work, presenting new opportunities for democratic campesino unions in every country in which land tenure is a vital issue, following the El Salvador model—not only in Latin America but in Asia as well.

- At the same time there could be a renewed focus in United States foreign aid programs—in El Salvador, where support for the new agrarian reform must be a top priority, and then in other countries that follow El Salvador's lead—on assistance to the politically, agriculturally and developmentally key measures of democratic land reform. With new successes in this undertaking—with new Japan-style economic development to point to in years to come—there is every reason to think that the long and potentially disastrous decline in public and Congressional support for foreign aid can be reversed. If it has come in time, and if the violence can be brought under control, the El Salvador land reform could be a textbook demonstration of the viability and importance of the "New Directions" language of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act, in which Congress has both reasserted the need for strong American support of agrarian reform programs and underlined the importance of genuine grass-roots participation in the formulation and implementation of rural development policies within developing countries. □



When the meeting adjourned, UCS leaders gathered on the porch outside the meeting center to visit and listen to music.

News & Notes



Minister of Planning for El Salvador, Otilio Vleytez, meets with AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Thomas R. Donahue to discuss the latest events in that beleaguered Central-American nation. The AFL-CIO has registered its concern at the increasing political violence and polarization in El Salvador. From left to right: Robin Gomez, Agency for International Development; Andrew C. McLellan, Interamerican Representative, AFL-CIO; Minister Vleytez; Michael Hammer, American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD); Secretary-Treasurer Donahue; William C. Doherty, Jr., AIFLD; Dale Good, AFL-CIO and Michael Beggs, AFL-CIO.

LABOR COUNCIL CALLS FOR ACTION AGAINST AIFLD

by
FRANK ARNOLD

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SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA---A resolution calling on the AFL-CIO Executive Council to "disassociate itself from the AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development) program in El Salvador" was adopted without dissent on September 15, 1980 by the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County AFL-CIO.

The resolution points out that the Human Rights Commission of the Archdiocese of San Salvador has documented 3509 assassinations along with hundreds of illegal detentions and disappeared persons in El Salvador from the October 15, 1979 inception of the present Salvadorean regime to June 21, 1980. A majority of these human rights violations have been directed against the working people, according to the resolution; the bombings of the Coca-Cola and the Electrical Workers union halls during the week of June 26-July 3, 1980 are listed as examples of such violations. The AIFLD "has not condemned these violations of human and workers' rights," according to the resolution.

This is possibly the first time an AFL-CIO Central Body has made such a strong recommendation on the AIFLD to the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Nevertheless, AIFLD has stirred some controversy within the labor movement generally at least since the 1973 overthrow of the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende in Chile.

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LABOR COUNCIL...Arnold, page 2

It is well known there has been serious discussion of AIFLD within several AFL-CIO unions in recent years due to the development of information on the political use of AIFLD by agencies of the U.S. government and the feeling by some that an agency that has representatives of many of the major multi-nationals with interests in Latin America and the Caribbean on its Board of Directors might not be truly interested in "free trade unionism".

The publication in 1974 of information linking the AIFLD to the CIA and to the overthrow of the Allende government inspired the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County to send a resolution to the AFL-CIO in Washington asking them "to provide information that will enable this Council to reaffirm the integrity and high purpose of the AFL-CIO in foreign, as well as in domestic affairs..." In response to that resolution AIFLD Executive Director William C. Doherty, Jr., and an assistant flew out to San Jose and addressed the Council at a packed meeting in a way many who attended felt was intimidating rather than reaffirming.

Much new information has been developed on AIFLD since 1974 including that contained in the recent 3 hour documentary On Company Business shown on public television. The documentary deals in considerable part with the AIFLD-CIA connection and includes interviews with Victor Reuther and others who had intimate knowledge of that connection.

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With the new documentation and considering the fact that
several international^{unions} have taken, or are considering taking, positions
opposing the political use of AIFLD; the AFL-CIO reaction to the
Santa Clara County Labor Council resolution will be an indicator
of the relative strength of the minority of progressives on the
Executive Council.

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"AGRARIAN REFORM" SERVING U.S. INTERESTS

by

FRANK ARNOLD

"Land reform is part of pacification" stated ^{FRANK}~~former~~ CIA director William Colby during 1971 Congressional hearings. "One of the goals of Phoenix is to make the tiller of the land its owner." The Phoenix program is remembered today, however, for the 20 to 45,000 suspected Vietcong who were assassinated during the "pacification."

The CIA and other agencies are now hoping that variations on the same theme will pacify Central America. In the June issue of The AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News Dr. Roy Prosterman co-authored, along with Mary Temple, a four page article "Land Reform in El Salvador". Prosterman participated in the agrarian pacification program in South Vietnam and also takes credit for having written the land reform law used by Fernando Marcos of the Phillipines in an attempt to pacify poor Philipino peasants living under his martial law regime. The other author is Mary Temple, executive director of The Land Council. Little information is available about this Council or the two anonymous foundations said to be providing funding for Prosterman.

In the article they write of the "breakthrough" in land distribution organized by the Union Communal Salvadoreña (UCS) and the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD). Known for its activities

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to destabilize the economies of such left leaning governments as that of Cheddi Jagan of Guyana and Salvador Allende of Chile, the AIFLD is in El Salvador attempting to pacify the campesinos living under a repressive rightist government. Prosterman ^{AND TEMPLE'S} reforms, much of which ^{PROSTERMAN} may have written himself, will have a similar effect as the reforms in the Philippines which exempt land used for the production of major export crops, crops controlled largely by such U.S. multinationals as Del Monte, Dole and United Brands.

According to a recent publication of the progressive forces within El Salvador the agrarian reform will affect less than 1% of the coffee plantations. Coffee is the major cash crop of the Salvadorean oligarchy and is sold almost completely on the international market. The publication also points out the land will not be turned over to the campesinos as property; they will be required to pay a monthly rental for its use. Also, the land being divided is going in most cases to members of UCS and other "safe" organizations.

AIFLD and UCS have a long history in El Salvador. A major figure in both organizations for a considerable number of years was Roberto "Tito" Castro. Tito Castro was played up by AIFLD and the AFL-CIO in the U.S. as a major labor leader in El Salvador. Yet this

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former school teacher never worked for an organization associated with the trade union movement until he went to work for AIFLD. For a number of years Tito Castro channeled all funds from AIFLD and other organizations to UCS. John Strasma, Professor of Economics at the University of Wisconsin was sent to El Salvador by the Inter-American Foundation to investigate misuse of ^{THESE} funds. His report indicated that "misappropriation of funds was the rule, not the exception, from 1974 through the middle of 1977." Strasma recommended Castro be fired by AIFLD.

However it would now appear Roberto "Tito" Castro's troubles with AIFLD are now a thing of the past. A usually reliable source within the AIFLD in Washington recently reported that Castro is now in Nicaragua organizing ^{WITH} a dual or parallel union to ^{FORMED BY AIFLD} compete with the Sandinista Farmworkers Association (ATC). There the program will probably be destabilization rather than pacification.

Prosterman, also associated with Werner Erhard's Hunger Project which strictly avoids seeking ideological or political solutions to world hunger, is reportedly now in Costa Rica although continuing to consult with the Salvadorean junta. Isn't it about time the AFL-CIO disassociate itself from the AIFLD and other such discredited groups?

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(Frank Arnold is Secretary-Treasurer of the Southwest Labor Studies Association and a member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers AFL-CIO)

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AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

RESOLUTION ON EL SALVADOR

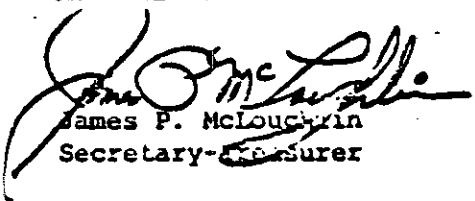
- WHEREAS, the Human Rights Commission of the Archdiocese of San Salvador has documented 3509 assassinations and hundreds of disappeared persons and illegal detentions in El Salvador from October 15, 1979, to June 21, 1980; and
- WHEREAS, said Human Rights commission has reported that 80% of the assassinations have been committed directly by the Salvadorean Armed Forces, and the rest by paramilitary groups supported by the Armed Forces; and
- WHEREAS, a majority of the human rights violations have been directed against the working people of El Salvador; and the bombings of union halls such as the Coca Cola and Electrical Industry locals in the week of June 26-July 3, 1980, have impeded free trade union organizing; and
- WHEREAS, the National Council of Churches, Amnesty International, and the three largest Italian trade union federations have protested these violations of human and workers' rights; and
- WHEREAS, the U. S. government has fully supported the present Salvadorean regime since its October 15 inception, and has authorized more military aid to El Salvador since April of this year than it authorized in the preceding decade; and
- WHEREAS, the American Institute of Free Labor Development, sponsored by the AFL-CIO, operates in El Salvador and has not condemned these violations of human and workers' rights; THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County calls on the AFL-CIO to recommend to the U. S. government to suspend economic and military aid to the present Salvadorean government; and BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County recommends that the AFL-CIO disassociate itself from the AIFLD program in El Salvador, and BE IT FINALLY

RESOLVED, that the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County, AFL-CIO, send copies of this resolution to the Director of the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO, to the President of the AFL-CIO, to the U. S. State Department, and to the Central American Solidarity Committee.

APPROVED without dissent in Regular Meeting, Monday, September 15, 1980


James P. McLoughlin
Secretary-Treasurer

opeu#29afl-cio/ls

Labor Education & Research Project

LABOR NOTES

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Santa Clara Labor Council Calls For Action Against AIFLD in El Salvador

A resolution calling on the AFL-CIO Executive Council to "disassociate itself from the AIFLD (American Institute for Free Labor Development) program in El Salvador" was adopted without dissent on September 15 by the Central Labor Council of Santa Clara County, California.

The AIFLD is an agency of the AFL-CIO: it receives funding from the U.S. government's Agency for International Development (AID).

The resolution points out that the Human Rights Commission of the Archdiocese of San Salvador has documented 3,509 assassinations and hundreds of illegal detentions and disappeared persons since the October 15, 1979 inception of the present regime.

A majority of these human rights violations have been directed against the working people, according to the resolution: the bombings of the Coca-Cola and the Electrical Workers union halls during the week of June 26-July 3 are listed as examples. The AIFLD "has not condemned these violations of human and workers' rights," according to the resolution.

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In response, AIFLD Executive Director William C. Doherty, Jr. and an assis-

tant flew out to San Jose and addressed the Council at a packed meeting. Many felt his remarks were intimidating rather than reaffirming.

Much new information has been developed on AIFLD since 1974, including that contained in the recent three-hour documentary *On Company Business* shown on public television. The documentary deals with the AIFLD-CIA connection and includes interviews with Victor Reuther and others who had intimate knowledge of that connection.

—Frank Arnold
Member, International
Association of Machinists

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Personnel files

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said no effort was made to contact the Allende government or discourage the coup. The telegram tipping off the U.S. Embassy that the coup would occur arrived at the Embassy the night before the coup. It was apparently forwarded to the State Department's Chile desk officer, Arnold M. Isaacs, one of the CIA people who had previously been in the U.S. Embassy in Santiago. (New York Times, September 15, 1973).

8. The American Institute for Free Labor Development (see box, below), which has been linked with the CIA in several important studies, invited more and more "free-trade unionists" to participate in training programs in the United States. In fact, the Secretary of the National Command for Gremio Defense, militant right wing coordinating committee for the two strikes, received an invitation in December 1972 to enroll in the advanced course in labor

AIFLD AT WORK

The American Institute for Free Labor Development's back door support of the right-wing opposition against Allende is in fact part of its "labor" policy in Latin America. According to AIFLD president, corporate executive J. Peter Grace, the AIFLD's objectives are to "promote democratic free trade unions; to prevent communist infiltration, and where it already exists to get rid of it." Grace cites the AIFLD record to prove its effectiveness:

"...AIFLD trains Latin Americans in techniques of combatting communist infiltration. This training has paid off handsomely in many situations. For instance, AIFLD trainees have driven communists from port unions which were harassing shipping in Latin America. After several years of effort AIFLD men were able to take over control of the port union in Uruguay which had long been dominated by communists. AIFLD men also helped drive communists from control of British Guiana. They prevented the communists from taking over powerful unions in Honduras and helped to drive the communists from strong "jugular" unions in Brazil."¹

In fact, the AIFLD has been linked directly with the 1964 military coup against Brazilian President Joao Goulart. William C. Doherty of the AIFLD told a Senate subcommittee in 1968:

"As a matter of fact some of them (graduates of the AIFLD school from Brazil) were so active that they became intimately involved in some of the clandestine operations of the revolution before it took place on April 1. What happened in Brazil on April 1 (1964) did not just happen - it was planned - and planned months in advance. Many of the trade union leaders - some of whom were actually trained in our institute - were involved in the revolution, and in the overthrow of the Goulart regime."²

Despite the "union" label and labor participation of George Meany, the AIFLD's main task is protecting U.S. business interests. "The AIFLD urges cooperation between labor and management and an end to class struggle. It teaches workers to help increase their company's business..." (J. Peter Grace). Sponsorship of AIFLD is tri-partite: labor, business, and government. Among corporate supporters are ITT, Kennecott Copper Company, Chase Manhattan Bank, United Fruit Company, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Pan American World Airlines, First National City Bank, and W.R. Grace & Co.

The AIFLD offers training programs at its own institute in Port Royal, Virginia, as well as local seminars. The 1962-72 Special Anniversary Report of the AIFLD estimated that 79 Chileans had studied at Port Royal, 8,837 in seminars conducted in Chile, and 6 graduates returned for the special advanced course in labor economics held at George Washington University.

In a list of graduates from AIFLD, collected by the Institute itself in a special memorandum dated February 28, 1973, there are 108 Chileans representing about 100 professional and trade unions, concentrated in transportation and communications, sectors which led the October, 1972, strike and the subsequent July-August, 1973, strike, opening the way for the coup. According to these figures, from 1972 to 1973, the increase in average yearly enrollment of Chileans at the Institute was 360 percent.

At a time when the U.S. State Department had cut most credits and economic aid to Chile, \$1 million a year was set aside for special "technical assistance" programs; part of these funds were earmarked for AIFLD training programs.

1. "An Address by J. Peter Grace," printed in booklet form by the AIFLD, September 16, 1965.
2. "Labor Policies and Programs," Subcommittee on American Republic Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, July 15, 1968, p. 4.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE AFL-CIO

BACKGROUND INQUIRIES

The June 1980 article written by Roy Prosterman and Mary Temple for the AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News represents an attempt to confuse American workers on the question of El Salvador through a careful selection of one-sided data and arguments. Not only is the blood on the hands of the Salvadorean junta cleansed and its undemocratic nature absolved by the thrust of the Prosterman-Temple article, but wild insinuations and doubtful representations of facts intersperse the presentation on "Land Reform in El Salvador".

Evidence available at the time of the writing of the Prosterman-Temple article and more evidence accumulated since then suggests that the AFL-CIO should disassociate itself from the AIFLD program in El Salvador.

Why the facade? Shouldn't American workers know that since December 1931, during 49 arduous years for Salvadorean workers, no free elections have been held? Shouldn't American workers know that the present military members of the junta were part of the same armed forces that in 1973 and 1977 committed gross electoral fraud? Shouldn't American workers know that according to the Legal Aid Office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador (whose claims have never been refuted by the junta), 3,425 farmworkers, industrial workers, public employees, teachers, students, small merchants, and unidentified persons were assassinated from Jan. 1 to Aug. 11 of this year, 80% of them directly by the armed forces of the junta and the rest by right-wing paramilitary groups supported by the junta? Shouldn't American workers know that neither the State Department nor the AFL-CIO has protested this massive violation of human rights? Shouldn't American workers know that the British Labour Party, the German Social Democratic Party, and the three largest Italian trade union federations have protested these tactics of terror of the Salvadorean junta? Shouldn't American workers know that at the same time the Prosterman-Temple article was written, Amnesty International (in its June 24 letter to Secretary of State Edmund Muskie) protested that "Since the 3 January 1980 resignation of much of the Salvadorean government--on human rights grounds--at least 2000 Salvadoreans have been killed or 'disappeared' while in the hands of conventional and auxiliary security forces in El Salvador. Many were tortured and savagely mutilated--arms lopped off, flayed, beheaded."? Shouldn't American workers know that (according to Amnesty International) "in the cities, membership of a union, a neighborhood association, a church group or a political party...makes one liable to detention and murder..."? Shouldn't American workers know that on the very day in March that the agrarian reform was decreed by the governing Salvadorean junta, all civil liberties were suspended, and Salvadorean workers continue to live under this State of Siege? Shouldn't American workers know that dozens of trade union halls have been dinamited and destroyed since the junta took power less than a year ago? Shouldn't American workers know that the AIFLD consultant in El Salvador Roy Prosterman is known for his role in the South Vietnamese agrarian pacification program called "The Land of the Tiller"? None of this is mentioned in the Prosterman-Temple article.

Instead, the Prosterman-Temple article leaves American workers with the unambiguous conclusions that the AIFLD rural program in El Salvador is "crucial to the development of a broadly supported democratic government" and without it, we will have "the probable victory of a far left so extreme the comparison with Pol Pot's reign in Cambodia would not be far-fetched."

The ex-Archbishop of San Salvador, ~~Cardinal Oscar Romero~~, who was mysteriously assassinated by members of a right wing paramilitary group while under ~~guard~~ by the Salvadorean armed forces, characterized the agrarian reform promoted by the junta and the AIFLD as one of "reform and repression", since 90 farmworkers were killed in the week following the March 6 announcement of the reform. In the middle of that bloody week, a leading member of the Christian Democratic Party who had been a member of the junta, Hector Dada Hirezi, resigned from the junta, stating, "How is the present process going to be successful if farmworkers are repressed daily for the sole crime of organizing? How is this process going to be possible if the organizations that contain thousands of farmworkers haven't

even been consulted, and if on the contrary, the daily and mounting repression of these organizations makes dialogue impossible with them? How is this process, which the (Christian Democratic) Party conceived as democratic, going to be possible if it is being carried out under a state of siege?" How can the AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News leave American workers with the insinuation that the present government is either "broadly supported" or "democratic", when tens of thousands of organized workers are not consulted but repressed, not free to organize but under a state of siege? And upon what basis can Prosterman and Temple honestly engage in the speculative characterization of the Revolutionary Democratic Front, which unites the overwhelming majority of Salvadorean unions, slum-dweller associations, and political parties, and which according to Roberto Cuellar of the Legal Aid Office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador (in a speech given in San Jose, CA. on July 12) maintains the active support and sympathy of 80% of the Salvadorean people, as "so extreme the comparison with Pol Pot's reign in Cambodia would not be far-fetched...?"

In terms of the agrarian reform itself, the AIFLD material for the Congressional Record (May 12, 1980) states that "...within a year...El Salvador will begin to experience an economic miracle with the potential to become the Japan of Central America". The Prosterman-Temple article also alludes to "new Japan-style economic development" in El Salvador and clearly insinuates that El Salvador's agrarian process can follow the same path as the U.S. Homestead Act of 1862.

Aside from the fact that neither Japan nor the U.S. were strapped with the need to pay a high percentage of debts to the International Monetary Fund in export earnings (in this sense, the Peruvian land reform failure with its present astronomical inflation rate and high indebtedness to the IMF represents a much more likely example of the probable outcome of the Salvadorean reform), the following three sets of quotations should shed some light on the possibility of the "Japanization" of El Salvador:

a) "Phase III (the "Land to the Tiller" phase) presents the most confusing aspect of the reform program, and it could prove especially troublesome for the U.S. because it was decreed without advance discussion, except in very limited government circles, and, we are told, it is considered by key Salvadorean officials as a misguided and U.S. imposed initiative."

"It may not fit the situation in the countryside, where there are many different forms of tenancy and many different kinds of landlords, including some very poor ones; where the land is divided into tiny parcels and shifting field agriculture practices are required because of the quality of the soil; and where there is, in the best of times, serious confusion and conflict over land boundaries and rights."

b) Don Kanel and William Thiesenhusen of the Univ. of Wisconsin's Land Tenure Center warned:

"In some cases owners of small 4 to 5 manzana tracts leave their plots and houses in the hands of other landless people during the dry season so that they can watch it. The owners, in turn, search for dry season employment. Are the lands of these people to be expropriated?"

"In some cases school teachers or other members of the lower middle class have accumulated several manzanas in the countryside as a type of social security. Are the lands of these people to be expropriated?"

"In some cases 1-2 manzana milpas are being rented in these admittedly non-viable units. They may well find it difficult to join a land reform cooperative. Should ownership to these lands be granted?"

"The point...is that the losers in this process may well be simply others in the very poor sector of the economy. In this sense El Salvador is very different from Japan and other parts of Southeast Asia and, indeed, quite different from other Latin American countries that do not have the extreme pressure on the land that exists there."

c) In July, well informed U.S. observers in El Salvador reported that "The creation of an impossibly complex land registry snarl as perhaps 200,000 or more parcels suddenly need definition, registry,

and mortgage management is a real possibility. Similarly, credit, input delivery, and especially marketing systems must be created for the beneficiaries who formerly, in many cases, depended on their patronos for such services."

These quotes from a United States Government Memorandum dated August 8, 1980, two months following the Prosterman-Temple article, throw grave doubts upon the viability of the "Japan-style" agrarian reform process. Why should the AFL-CIO be sponsoring an AIFLD program in El Salvador which is considered a "misguided and U.S. imposed initiative", one which "was decreed without advance discussion"? Why should the AFL-CIO sponsor an AIFLD program in which "the losers... may well be simply others in the very poor sector of the economy"? Why should the AFL-CIO sponsor an AIFLD program which would tie small landowners to the land (for 30 years) and not provide them with cheap and adequate credit, tools, seed, fertilizer, and distribution methods?

According to the same U.S. Government Memorandum, the first phase of the agrarian reform (expropriating holdings above 500 hectares) covers "about 240 holdings". This August U.S. Government Memorandum contradicts the June Prosterman-Temple article, which states that the March 5 decreed land reform has "transferred ownership of all of the 376 holdings above 1200 acres (500 hectares)..." To what is this difference attributable?

The U.S. Government Memorandum, printed after the Prosterman-Temple report, points to the real possibility of "the creation of an impossibly complex land registry snarl." How does this coincide with the Prosterman-Temple statement that the reform has "transferred ownership of the land they cultivate to...150,000 campesino families...?"

Whereas the June Prosterman-Temple article states that all expropriations of land above 500 hectares were completed at that time, the August U.S. Government Memorandum states that this process "is almost finished". Why this discrepancy?

Finally, the conclusion of the Prosterman-Temple article points to "the importance of genuine grass roots participation in the formulation and implementation of rural development policies." Aside from the fact that El Salvador is under a State of Siege since the day the March 6 land reform was decreed, aside from the fact that (as the U.S. Government Memorandum admits) the Land to the Tiller program was "decreed without advance discussion", other evidence casts clouds of doubt upon the Prosterman-Temple statement. First of all, the same Memorandum states that Phase One "has been carried out with military help..." Secondly, when Jorge Villacorta, Under Secretary of Agriculture, resigned from the junta the week following the agrarian reform decree, he stated that

"It is impossible to work in that situation because there is no possibility of (MAG and ISTA, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Institute of Agrarian Reform) participating in the decision-making process. The result is that the government is losing the minimal support it once had and the leadership of the reform is falling completely under the control of the right."

Third, according to the United States Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA) report entitled History and Motivations of U.S. Involvement in the Control of the Peasant Movement in El Salvador,

"The military and para-military forces are carrying out this reform with a ruthlessness that makes the repression of the past latifundistas and the Romero government (1977-1979) appear moderate and restrained by comparison. It is important for North Americans to understand that this is an imposed reform, forced upon the Salvadorean military and upon the people by U.S. fiat..."

Fourth, EPICA sites internal sources as stating that only well-known members of the UCS (Union Comunal Salvadoreña, funded and founded by the AIFLD) and ORDEN (the right-wing paramilitary group, now called the Nationalist Democratic Front, responsible for hundreds of assassinations) are receiving land from the junta reform. Amnesty International also makes reference to this UCS-ORDEN-Junta alliance. Fifth, the May EPICA report states that "Roy Prosterman... has a direct phone connection with the Supreme Command (of the Sal-

vadorean Armed Forces)", and concludes that the agrarian reform is "another U.S. pacification program aimed at forcing some North American version of progress upon the Salvadorean people through force." How do these reports, which need be answered one at a time, coincide with "genuine grass roots participation in the formulation and implementation of rural development policies...?"

One other agrarian reform-related item needs further explanation. In 1977, when John Strasma, Prof. of Economics at the University of Wisconsin, performed an independent audit-investigation of the UCS, he stated that the AIFLD was aware of the misappropriation of funds by UCS leader (and AIFLD field representative) Tito Castro and did nothing about it. In fact, Michael Hammer, AIFLD's regional director for Central America, defended Castro. Strasma's findings included the following statements:

"Tito Castro has falsified far more documents, and has pocketed substantial amounts of Foundation (the Inter-American Foundation, also a supporter of UCS) money. Rodolfo Viera, in close alliance with Tito, appears to have pocketed even more funds..."

"Neither Tito Castro nor Rodolfo Viera should be financed in any way by U.S. tax payer funds until restitution has been made; AIFLD should terminate them as quickly as possible."

Three questions arise: a) Shouldn't the AFL-CIO disassociate itself from these misappropriators of American tax dollars? b) Can Rodolfo Viera, named by the junta as the head of ISTA, the Agrarian Reform Institute, be considered an honest and reliable AFL-CIO/AIFLD inspiration to American workers? c) Michael Hammer of the AIFLD appears in a photograph as an advisor to Viera in an April 20 meeting in El Salvador on the agrarian reform, the photo appearing in the Free Trade Union News Prosterman-Temple article. Doesn't this graphically illustrate what the U.S. Government Memorandum refers to as a perceived "U.S. inspired initiative"?

According to the May Congressional Record article, reprinted as a courtesy by the AIFLD, the U.S. Agency for International Development has granted \$1 million to the AIFLD for the UCS during this year. The EPICA report states that the top two floors of the Hotel Sheraton in San Salvador were occupied after the coup "in droves" by "large numbers of AIFLD personnel". And yet when I spoke to Jack Heberle, Head of Information Services of the AIFLD in Washington, D.C., on July 8, he stated that AID was funding only one AIFLD position in El Salvador. Can you explain this apparent paradox?

To conclude this set of inquiries, it is reported that the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, the First National City Bank, the Standard Fruit Company, and Crown Zellerbach have co-sponsored the American Institute of Free Labor Development and have helped it financially and organizationally. These four corporations, operating in El Salvador at the present time, would appear to have little interest in protecting free labor development. Do we ask their Board of Directors to serve as advisors to union negotiators when we U.S. trade unionists are negotiating a contract? Do our unions seek their financial and organizational backing? This is the question which must be asked in El Salvador, when AIFLD-backed organizations such as the UCS seek to protect truly independent and free trade union objectives. Is this not a clear conflict of interest in El Salvador?

According to the International Labor Organization and Organization of American States charters, workers have the right to associate, organize, confederate, publish, and administer their own activities freely. All of this, and even the right to life, have been denied Salvadorean workers, except for small U.S. and junta-backed organizations. On Aug. 22 the Secretary General of the union of electrical workers (STECEL) and the Secretary General of the National Federation of Salvadorean Workers (FENASTRAS) were arrested, and the following day a junta decree militarized all public state services, including the Subministry of Water (ANDA), Communications (ANTEL), Electrical Energy (CEL), and the ports (CEPA), and drafted all employees of these

services into the Armed Forces. The bombings of union halls continue. The assassinations of workers continues. The State of Siege continues.

Excuse the polemical and at times rhetorical style used in this set of inquiries, to which I hope you will respond. I am upset by what is happening in El Salvador and I feel our trade union dues and taxpayer money should in no way back up what is occurring in the little country of El Salvador. The simplest of trade union principles require that we break relations with the AIFLD program in El Salvador, as the National Council of Churches has called for, and that we condemn the anti-union, anti-life strategies of the current Salvadorean regime.

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exporters, and two — Brazil and Argentina — were non-oil-exporting countries. The foreign debt of the oil-exporting nations has been growing almost as quickly as that of the non-oil-exporting countries.

Oil imports by the seven nations increased from 1.5 per cent of their combined gross national product in 1976 to 3.2 per cent in 1980. The outlay on debt servicing grew at a significantly faster rate, increasing from 3.6 per cent to 9.7 per cent during the same period.

Partly as a result of the rapid rise in interest rates on the world market during the period, the debt servicing bill grew much more quickly than the

foreign debt itself. Nonetheless, in terms of combined GDP, the debt increased from 21 per cent to 36 per cent. This development is perhaps not as worrying as may at first appear, for the countries' capacity to service their debt also increased. The share of GDP represented by the seven countries' combined exports rose from 10 per cent in 1976 to 20 per cent in 1980.

Predictably enough, the three oil-exporting nations had a better performance. Their exports rose by 193 per cent, against a 101 per cent increase in their debt. The four non-oil-exporting countries managed to increase their exports by 104 per cent, against a 118 per cent rise in the debt. □

EL SALVADOR

Reform imposed from above

The supporters of El Salvador's civilian-military junta claim that the country's agrarian reform is central to the socio-economic changes currently taking place. But a recent study by two North American aid workers says that the programme has been misconceived and poorly planned, and that it will fail to achieve its goals.*

The authors of the study argue that the reform was imposed by US bureaucrats who had made no serious study of existing land tenure systems in El Salvador and were ignorant of key aspects of the crisis in the countryside. Even if it were assumed that the government had the political will to carry through the reform, 65 per cent of the rural population would still have remained unaffected, they say.

The reform, announced by the government in March 1980, initially consisted of two stages. In the first, farms of more than 500 hectares, generally on land given over to pasture, cotton and sugar, were to be expropriated. In the second, farms of 150-500 ha were to be taken over. On 28 April, a third stage, the 'land for the tiller' programme, was announced, which aimed to convert tenant farmers into small landowners.

The government compensated expropriated landowners and, through the Instituto Salvadoreño de la Transformación Agraria, aimed to set up cooperatives to run the farms. But resistance from the landowners was enormous. The new cooperatives were immediately hampered by efforts to decapitalise the farms and by army repression of newly elected cooperative leaders.

But, for the authors of the report, it is the third stage, the 'land for the tiller' programme, which most fully demonstrates the bureaucratic incompetence of the American advisers who devised the reform. The key adviser, Roy Prosterman, had previously worked on land reform projects in South-East Asia, and saw them as weapons to be used against the left. By making the tenant farmer the owner of his land, Prosterman hoped to end the insecurity which he identified as the major reason for the peasantry's support of the guerrillas.

But in El Salvador, the radicalisation of the peasantry cannot be explained so simply. Most tenant farmers have insufficient land to support themselves,

bigger estates. The rural economy is substantially more complex than the delta regions of South-East Asia. The majority of small peasants, whose numbers have increased dramatically in recent years, work plots of a hectare or less of marginal land. Because of the poor quality of the land, plots cannot be cultivated for more than two years in succession.

A change in land ownership, the authors argue, is more than inadequate; by locking more than 100,000 tenant farmers in tiny unproductive plots, the programme has even intensified the problem. Even in cases where peasants have sought a change in ownership, the government has as yet provided no legal machinery. Tenants who have made claims have often been evicted by landowners, or killed by the army or National Guard. The departments where poor small farms are most common — Chalatenango, Cuscutlán, Morazán, and Cabañas — have been the scenes of some of the fiercest repression.

The most significant fact of El Salvador's agrarian crisis — the rapidly increasing numbers of landless peasants — is ignored, the report says. In 1961, 11.8 per cent of the rural population were landless; in 1980, according to the authors' estimates, 65 per cent of the population were landless labourers. The agrarian reform would not have affected them.

Where peasants were to benefit from the agrarian reform they were not consulted about the measures to be taken. Independent peasant organisations were never approached before the reform and were repressed after it. While on paper, the government has sought to encourage peasant participation in the cooperatives, in practice the work of ISTA in this respect has been hampered all along the way by the security forces. The study is further evidence that points to the agrarian reform being imposed from above with an arrogant lack of concern for reality. □

* *El Salvador's Land Reform, 1980-81, Impact Audit*