

URUG ETZ Uni



SIX BETTER YEARS OF STRUGGLE

On June 27 this year, six years will have passed since the fascist coup d'Etat in Uruguay and the heroic two-week-long general strike with which the working people responded.

When we look back over these six years of struggle by the Uruguayan people, we must recall the objectives set by the forces which installed the dictatorship.

In the early years of the decade, the local oligarchy and imperialism saw their privileges being wittled away by the action of the popular movement. The latter called for national and democratic solutions to the economic, social and political crisis which was holding back the country's development and threatening still further the living standards of the masses. The coup was aimed at halting the advance to power of the democratic and progressive forces. It sought to create a situation which would permit the elimination of democratic rights and freedoms, and the destruction of the people's organizations, including trade unions, political parties, student associations, etc., and in which the people could be intimidated into accepting the dictatorship.

Alongside with this, the dictatorship sought to keep down to the minimum the wages of the working people, thereby creating favourable conditions for the superexploitation of the working class by the transnational monopolies and their local associates. The aim was to reintegrate Uruguay in the international capitalist division of labor, to make it an attractive site for foreign investment, an international financial market, a huge farm supplying cheap meat for the capitalist countries.

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URUGUAYAN UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS FEDERATION
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And the cost of these objectives? Factory closures and the subsequent redundancy of tens of thousands of workers; the hiving off of the public sector to the highest bidder; savage suppression of all manifestations of discontent; mass emigration of Uruguayans in search of livelihood and security; obscurantism in education and culture.

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In answer to the growing need for international solidarity with the Uruguayan people's and students' struggle, our bulletin appears, with this issue, for the first time in English. Our aim is to reach new readers in order to make contact with them and keep them informed about the current situation in Uruguay.

Therefore we hope that all those who read these pages will contribute even more henceforth to the world campaign of protest against the crimes of the fascist dictatorship in power in our country, thereby helping our people to create the conditions for overthrowing it. Thus, we thank our readers as of now for whatever dissemination they may be able to undertake of the documents we shall be publishing, while at the same time asking them to understand the shortcomings of this bulletin. Any suggestions you may wish to make to us should be sent to:

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What has been achieved over the past six years of bloody tyranny by the military and civilian clique hoisted to power by armed force? There has been a brutal redistribution of national wealth in favour of the ruling circle and the monopolies, as well as the starvation of the people and a worsening of the crisis. Hundreds of patriots have been murdered, thousand others imprisoned and tens of thousands tortured. Education has been "purged": hundreds of teachers, professors and students having been expelled from the camuses. The University, formerly the country's pride, has been destroyed. Measures have been taken to produce servile graduates. This has all amounted to an absolute loss of prestige and isolation of the regime both inside Uruguay and abroad. Only the fascist regimes of Latin America, the Southern African racists and the Israeli Zionist give it overt support. What has the dictatorship failed to achieve? It failed to break the people's resistance. It has failed to destroy the National Workers Convention /CNT/ and set up a scab trade union movement. It has failed to wipe out our University Student Federation and the parties making up the Frente Amplio.

On the contrary, despite the severe blows they have suffered, the people continue their underground struggle, fighting unfalteringly for democratic freedoms, in defence of the work interests, for a university serving the country's needs, for the release of political prisoners and a general amnesty.

Six years after the fascist coup, we can declare that the Uruguayan people has not yielded, that it has not accepted the dictatorship and that it is continuing to struggle in the certainty of victory. International solidarity has an important role to play in this struggle. Let us assist Uruguay in overthrowing fascism by redoubling our support for its just cause!

In the prison of Libertad died Miguel Almeida, 42, father of 3 children and former employee of Montevideo Airport. Also Ana Maria Gonzalez, 25, student of law, condemned to years in jail, died the 5th of May in the Military Hospital. She was to be released after paying about U\$1.000. The man was collected by her neighbours when the news on her decease came.

The workers organised many assemblies and meetings of different kinds where reaffirmed their commitment to the ideas of May Day, thereby defying the dictatorship's threats and bans. At the same time, the walls of the capital are once again beginning to be painted with anti-fascist inscriptions and leaflets have started to appear in the streets, expressing the people's true feelings.

Once again the CNT, the FEJU and our entire people have made May Day a day of UNITY, SOLIDARITY AND STRUGGLE !

TORTURES AND CYNICISM

In a recent interview with the French newspaper "Le Monde", vice-admiral Hugo Márquez explained why political prisoners in Uruguay have been held for 6 or 7 years in jail without trial by saying that civil judges were not able to accomplish their mission and that there were less than 10 military judges to deal with more than 4,000 trials.

In connexion with torture, Márquez uttered what "Le Monde" described as a "terrifying sentence": "It is not true, as our enemies say, that everybody has been tortured".

More terrifying still, this admission that in Uruguay thousands upon thousands of patriots have been tortured, is swaggering cynicism.



STUDENTS IN THE WORLD

NICARAGUA

In the face of the increasing repression unleashed by the Somoza dictatorship with the complicity of USA imperialism, the Nicaraguan democratic forces, among them the students, responded with a new offensive aimed at doing away with the tyranny of that country.

On behalf of the Uruguayan students, the FEUU extends its solidarity to the fighters for the freedom of the Nicaraguan people at this decisive hour for that country.

LIBERIA

Information from Liberia over the past few weeks suggests very grave developments in that country resulting from the protest of people on the announcement of impending increases in the price of rice, the major staple food.

Following the demonstrations of late April in which thirty people were officially reported killed, it would appear that the government has carried out systematic arrest and detention of members of Liberian National Student Union /LINSU/, among other, who are alleged to have been charged with treason and are being brought to trial on May 14th, 1979.

GHANA

The students of Ghana condemned the act of brutality culminating in the murder of Agyei Barimah, a first year student of the University of Ghana, Legon, and the wounding of three others in a shooting incident that took place on Saturday, 5th May, 1979, in front of the Kantamanto Railway Station, Accra, for no provocation whatsoever and for no other crime than that of doing voluntary work in a clean-up campaign.

EL SALVADOR

On May 8th police corps have crushed a demonstration in San Salvador killing 5 secondary-school students and 5 university students. This was the second mass killing in few days by the repressive dictatorship in El Salvador.

CHILE

During the first days of June, the Chilean military junta found itself obliged to release more than 300 workers detained in Santiago during the May Day demonstrations. The release of detainees was the result of the campaign of solidarity with them waged both in Chile and abroad. In connection with this campaign there were protest actions at the University of Chile, the Catholic University and the State Technical University, which culminated in work stoppages in various faculties. Due to this action, 140 students were expelled or suspended from their studies for three semesters. Among those expelled was the General Secretary of the Student Centre of the Catholic University's Theological Faculty.

It is expected that this repressive measure will provoke a broad response from the Chilean students and workers.

NAMIBIA

FEUU have received information about the recent detention and communication of 52 SWAPO leaders and supporters all over Namibia as a result of the wave of repression unleashed by the racist South-African regime which illegally occupies the country.

We also express our support to the students of Chile, El Salvador, Liberia, Namibia and Ghana with the certainty that solidarity helps those peoples who are fighting for a just cause to win.

Today, almost six years after its initial intervention into the university, the Uruguayan dictatorship is meeting with the ever greater resistance of the students and other sectors of the university community, reaping one failure after another.

Fascism's policy in the university - just like its policies in the other spheres - has consisted of persecuting the democratic students, professors and administrative personnel, expelling them en masse and subjecting the higher educational institution to the interests of finance capital and of the foreign monopolies.



THE DICTATORSHIP'S
POLICY OF
LIMITING ACCESS
TO THE UNIVERSITY

With this purpose in mind, the intervention which did away with the university autonomy that had been so arduously won, changed the curricula and suppressed all the democratic aspects of their content. One of the main elements of the regime's retrograde university policy was the deliberate limiting of access to these higher educational institutions. The first faculties to be affected by this measure were those of Medicine and Dentistry, followed by the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences.

In order to justify this measure, the dictatorship and its various spokesmen stated that the country already had enough professional workers. Nothing could be farther from the truth! On the contrary, during recent years, as a consequence of the large-scale emigration from the country of qualified technicians, Uruguay is being plagued by a

growing shortage of university-trained personnel.

This year, there were 955 applicants for the 500 places available in the Faculty of Medicine, while in the Faculty of Dentistry there were 500 applicants for its 130 places.

Now, the National Security Council, which has also begun to concern itself with the university, is preparing a new change in the study curricula, reducing the length of studies for those who lack the financial means for securing the doctor's degree intended for the children of the oligarchy.

If this does not suffice to reveal the purposes of this policy being applied in the sphere of higher education, we may only point out that the International Bank for Development has stated banally that it is willing to provide loans for the purpose of propping up the slumping Uruguayan university. Of course the IBD then goes on to say that "The University's administrative system should be of the private type - that is, it should be a private enterprise" - and "it ought not to be a part of the public sector. It also wants to apply the principle of productivity, with which both students and professors would be expected to comply.

This whole question is one of training technicians who would serve the multinationals and imperialism, and not educating conscientious citizens who would help to resolve the country's economic, social and health problems.

However, as in the past, the Uruguayan student will be capable of defeating these new plans of fascism and imperialism in the university.

Our Uruguayan University Students' Federation (FEUU), which has recently celebrated its fiftieth year of existence, will continue heading the struggle for a democratic university in the service of progress.