

PEASANTS TORTURED AND MURDERED IN RONDÔNIA, BRAZIL

The National Commission of Poor Peasants League

Poor Peasants League of Rondônia and western Amazon

Jaru, Rondônia, December 10th, 2009

On December 9, at 2 o'clock pm, two coordinators of the Poor Peasants League of Rondônia, northern Brazil (LCP / RO) were kidnapped by paramilitaries in the service of landowners, on the road linking the peasant camp called Rio Alto and the city Buritis, in the state of Rondônia. The coordinators Elcio Machado (called Sabiá) and Gilson Gonçalves were tortured with refinements of cruelty. They had their fingernails torn out and also pieces of skin were torn from their bodies, then both were killed. On the morning of the same day two peasants had been brutalized on the same road.

Gilson had been interviewed in 2008 by a delegation of the International Association of People's Lawyers - IAPL, which held a mission to investigate the facts, abuse and violence of the Brazilian State and landowners against the poor peasants of Rondônia.

The camp Rio Alto is located on lands that were supposed to be reserved for the Settlement Project of peasants from Rio Alto. But by the connivance of officials of the Incra National Institute of Agrarian Reform, an agency of the federal government, those lands were illegally taken by the landowner Edilson Cadalto. Since last year more than 45 families have been camped in that area and have been resisting the attacks of armed gangs of paramilitaries in the service of the landowner.

In July 2008, other peasants were kidnapped and had their hands tied and were beaten. Before this the police went through the camp with the excuse of searching and seizing weapons in order to prepare the attacks of landowners. The peasants recognized that several police officers were working together with the paramilitaries of the landowners.

The police had no legal authorization to make the search for weapons and their action was totally illegal. But they did take action to protect the interests of landowner Edilson Cadalto who negotiated more than 800 thousand dollars for wood through timber management plans with the vice mayor of Buritis, Rondônia.

Márcia Pereira do Nascimento, an agrarian ombudsman of the federal government, openly said that if the families who are in Rio Alto are murdered by paramilitaries she wouldn't mind at all. We of LCP-RO denounce the authorities in Porto Velho for all of these actions. But nothing was done!

At a meeting held on December 3 in the office of Incra in Porto Velho, capital of Rondônia, attended by the commander of the Policie of Buritis, officials of Incra, the landowner Edilson Cadalto and Nacional Agrarian Ombudsman Gercino, the death warrant of the peasants was

signed. Gercino José da Silva Filho warned that peasants will be punished for alleged illegalities, called for police action, and defended the security of property. The commander of the Police of Buritis, Maj. Antônio Matias de Alcantara has false accusations that have been debunked that the LCP uses guerrilla tactics. But he hid the fact that officers under his command train armed groups of landowners and receive money to escort the wood cut by the landowners of the area.

This same meeting was attended by 4 paramilitaries of the landowner. They were at the meeting in order to identify the peasant Sabiá, coordinator of the LCP. This is an old trick used by Inca to play its dirty role as the police servant of the landowners.

Gercino Filho again shows the true role of the National Agrarian Ombudsman and the National Commission for Fighting Violence in the Countryside, which is to criminalize the people's fight for the land while the bandits and murderous landowners are treated as "good people". The murder of the coordinators of the LCP is the responsibility of Ombudsman Gercino and the Inca of Rondônia.

The National Commission of Poor Peasants League denounces the cowardly attitude of Inca and the Nacional Agrarian Ombudsman, demands a full investigation and that all those responsible be punished.

We call on all true democrats, supporters and sympathizers of the peasant struggle in Brazil to denounce this new crime against the peasants of Rondônia.

Punish Dilson Caldato, the landowner and his gangs!

The people want land, not repression!

Death to landlordism!

Long live the Agrarian Revolution!

[Note: The Poor Peasants League is not affiliated with the MST or the PT/Workers Party, and is sharply opposed to the imperialist-backed Luis da Silva government. –BannedThought.net]