

## JAPAN

## Narita airport may never be finished

By Charles Douglas Lummis

T O K Y O

**I**N A TREMENDOUS DISPLAY OF state power, and with a chilling disregard for the safety of passengers, the Japanese government on May 20 managed to pry open the New Tokyo International Airport at Narita.

To accomplish this opening—postponed 12 times over 12 years by the fierce opposition of local farmers—the government rammed through a new law that virtually suspends the Constitution in the Narita area. It also had steel plates driven into the ground around the airport to prevent tunneling in, brought in 13,000 riot police with a rifle company and attack dogs, forbade all but actual passengers with tickets from entering the terminal, and put in a request to Interpol to watch for suspicious passengers headed for Narita from anywhere in the world.

No one was surprised that the airport could be opened under these martial law conditions. The question now is, how long can it be kept open? An airport is a public place, not a fortress, and there is no way that the public can be permanently kept out. There is no way that it can continue to operate in the midst of a bitterly hostile community. And there is no reason to expect the opposition of the farmers and their radical supporters to lessen now that the airport is open.

On the day of the opening, of the many violent attacks on the gates of the airport and on nearby radar and power facilities, one was particularly noteworthy. A secret underground coaxial cable for the Tokyo Air Control Center was cut in three places, blacking out the entire air control system in the Tokyo area for nine hours and causing the cancellation of 119 flights at Haneda Airport. Police and communications officials suspect an inside job, and point out that radical groups claim 3,000 sympathizers working for government enterprises and public corporations.

Despite the virtually limitless potential for this kind of sabotage the government—which had earlier stated that the “prestige of the state” was at issue—went ahead with the opening, and at this writing, planeload after planeload of unsuspecting passengers is being brought in from all over the world.

**Japan Inc.**

Narita embodies a host of key issues in Japan today. In 1966, when the government suddenly announced that it had chosen Sanrizuka, in Narita, as the site for the new international airport, the farmers there angrily formed the Sanrizuka-Shibayama Opposition League, and vowed that they would never allow the airport to be built. Their initial desire was to hold on to their property, and they were angry that they had not been consulted.

When the government offered flattery and big money for their land, many took it and dropped out of the League. Those who refused found themselves standing directly in the path of an advancing juggernaut—the great economic, political and military apparatus called Japan, Inc.

Since then they have broadened their attack against the airport. Studying the airport, they claim it has deep connections with Japan-U.S. military policy: much of the initial “overcrowding” at the International Airport at Haneda was due to its use for American troop movements during the war in Vietnam; the distant Narita site was chosen because most of the airspace over Tokyo is controlled by the U.S. Air Force and Japan Air Self Defense Force. Narita itself will have military uses.

They also speak of the airport’s connections with Japan’s growing economic domination of other Asian countries: much of the air traffic will be businessmen and tourists flying to South Korea, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, as well as



May 20 demonstrator sets afire a power supply distributor for airport police.

the popular all-male tours through the brothels of poorer countries.

**“Mussolini modern.”**

But perhaps most important of all, some of the farmers see the airport struggles as a clash between two different modes of economic development.

They see displacing their farm village with an international airport as part of a larger strategy by Japan’s rulers virtually to do away with the agricultural sector and transform the nation into an industrial park. Between 1960 and 1975 the agricultural population was reduced from 12 to 5.9 million. In the same period 2.72 million acres of farm land were transformed into industrial parks or recreational areas for city people. By 1975 only 12 percent of all farm families lived exclusively by agriculture. Typically, the women do the farming while the men go to the city as day laborers.

During the same period Japan’s food self-sufficiency dropped from 90 percent to 74 percent, and its grain self-sufficiency from 83 percent to 43 percent.

Historically Japan has been an agricultural country; its best and most promising cultural traditions find their roots in the agricultural countryside.

Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the dreary futurism of the airport (the style Norman Mailer called Mussolini Modern) and the rich, fertile, infinitely varied environment produced through generations of labor by the farmers of the surrounding countryside. In their proud and graceful old houses, their marvellously tailored and terraced fields, their carefully trained hedges, their flower and vegetable gardens, one can see an intricate interweaving of tradition and mechanization, craft and science.

If the farmers lose, they believe their culture will be destroyed.

**Airport’s future dim.**

But even if overwhelming police power manages to keep the airport operating, its future is dim. The airport itself is nowhere near completion. No dependable way has been found yet to get jet fuel in:

the pipeline was stopped by local opposition and the plan to ship it in by rail is threatened by the opposition of the local railway workers’ union. No solution has been found to the problem of transportation into Tokyo: it is predicted that during crowded periods the trip may take as much as four hours.

But most important, only one of the three runways planned is now completed, which means that whenever there are crosswinds—which there sometimes are at Narita—the airport will have to be shut down. At its present incomplete stage, pilots describe Narita as a “local airport, not an international one.”

The cost of Phase I of the construction has been tremendous: an estimated \$4 billion, 7,000 wounded, 3,000 arrested, and five killed. Phase II is still on the drawing boards; not all of the 1,272 acres needed for it has been obtained. And on that very land, cultivating their farms, are 21 families who are members of the Opposition League.

Charles Douglas Lummis teaches at Tsuda College in Tokyo.

## World Cup protests

Continued from page 9.

time earlier when a group calling itself the “AAA,” after the notorious Argentine death squad, tried to prevent the Anarchist Federation from holding a meeting on Argentina in Bordeaux, attacking and wounding the Federation’s secretary in the street and breaking into his apartment and wrecking it. The ultra-right Nationalist Front used the absurd May 23 incident to demand police protection for French soccer players “against ultra-left terrorists.”

The impact of the campaign showed up in a small way when two porters at the Meurice Hotel in Paris got fired for refusing to carry the suitcases of a group of Argentine Army officers who had come to town to shop for their favorite French luxury goods—that is, weapons. The porters were praised by Francois Mitterrand and other political leaders.

The porters’ spur-of-the-moment and costly act (they lost \$14,000-a-year jobs) helped publicize the fact that France is the junta’s second-biggest arms supplier after the U.S., and apparently ready to try for first place since the U.S. cut off arms sales because of human rights violations. This fact suggests a future focus

for a COBA boycott campaign on a tougher issue than football.

But the thorniest issue of all, still largely neglected, is the enthusiastic support accorded the Videla regime by the international business community. The International Monetary Fund has lavished credits on Argentina. Chase Manhattan Bank president David Rockefeller recently extolled the regime’s economic “miracle” at a premiere showing in New York’s Metropolitan Club last November of an 80-minute film, *Images of Argentina*, largely financed by Bunge and Born, the big transnational grain dealers that dominate Argentine agriculture.

Rockefeller scarcely exaggerated in describing as a “miracle” an economic policy that sacrifices almost all of Argentina’s national interests—its domestic industry, its workers’ wages and job security, its welfare state measures—to the limited but powerful interests of the grain-exporting oligarchy and the multinational corporations and banks. Argentina is an IMF and Rockefeller favorite because it is going farthest fastest in restructuring its entire economy to suit a “new international division of labor” that virtually eliminates the nation as a decision-

making unit on major economic questions. It is a leading paradox of the ‘70s that “ultra-nationalist” military dictatorships are being installed to police drastic economic overhauls determined by foreign interests.

The “miracle’s” architect, Economy Minister Jose Martinez de Hoz, forthrightly told a Business International seminar in Buenos Aires last April that only a military regime could enforce the economic policies they all love so well.

The Argentine press reported that some 100 top business leaders from “trilateral” countries were promised by Labor Minister Gen. Horacio Tomas Liendo, in the course of their ten-day hush-hush “roundtable with the Argentine government,” that “politicization of union life is a thing of the past that will be wiped out.”

The Minister of the Interior, Gen. Albano Harguindeguy, assured them that the promised “dialogue” with civilians “did not mean restoration of political activity.”

“Stability” was the watchword. Argentina is being made safe for foreign investment. A spokesman for business leaders at the forum expressed appreciation that “the military reorganization process that began on March 24, 1976, opens up investment and business opportunities for international firms that will not be wasted.”



# "WE 'VE HEARD THE VOICES AND SEEN THE BLOOD"

By John Judis

**T**O ROCK'N'ROLL FANS, TUPELO IS known as Elvis Presley's birthplace. The two-room shack he grew up in is preserved next to Elvis Presley Park, right off Elvis Presley Drive. On nice weekends hundreds of tourists pass through its portals at 50¢ a visit.

To corporate heads and labor union officials, Tupelo means something else. Located in northeastern Mississippi, Tupelo is nourished by the TVA, the potential of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and by a low-wage, non-unionized labor force that has grown rapidly in the last ten years. Multinationals like Rockwell International and FMC have set up shop there. The AFL-CIO has made Tupelo the headquarters of its Deep South organizing drive. Bright new shopping malls have sprung up along Main Street, which runs the length of Tupelo. The population, 20,000 in 1970, is now an estimated 28,000.

On Saturday, June 10, however, Tupelo was confrontation central for a new phase of the civil rights movement in the South. The United League, a black civil rights organization that has been fighting against police brutality and for a black share in Tupelo's newfound prosperity, called a rally for the same time and place as the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan.

Before the day was over, a cross had been burnt, three people had been arrested, a minister had been roughed up by the police, and a black Justice Department official had thrown his tape recorder and several well-aimed punches at a local racist. Also, the United League had emerged as a wave of the future, while the Klan appeared as a troublesome ripple from the past.

\* \* \*

Like other urban black movements, the one in Tupelo was sparked by police brutality. In July 1976 a black man, Eugene Pasto, was arrested on a check forgery charge while driving with a white woman.

Over a weekend, Pasto signed six confessions and six waivers of his rights. Sent to prison in Atlanta, Pasto claimed that two Tupelo police captains, Dale Cruber and Roy Sandefer, extracted the confessions through a merciless beating. Pasto sued them in civil court, and in January 1978 the court held that they were guilty and fined them each \$2,500. (In the two policemen's defense, the city had maintained that Pasto had poured salt in his own eyes.)

Sandefer and Cruber were suspended from the police force for two weeks while a police committee investigated their conduct. It found that they had done nothing criminal, and they were reinstated. At this point, the United League, headquartered in neighboring Holly Springs, stepped in to organize a protest in Tupelo.

The United League demanded that, in addition to firing the two policemen, the city and local businessmen enact an affirmative action program that would raise the percentage of blacks in Tupelo's workforce to their percentage in Tupelo's population. (The League estimates this as 30 percent.) They also demanded that Tupelo's schools hire black teachers and administrators, and that the police and fire departments be fully integrated, including the supervisory level.

On March 23, in response to the League's protests, the city demoted Cruber and Sandefer to lieutenants and transferred them to the fire department. Seeing this as no concession the League called the next day for a boycott of downtown businesses.

**"THE CHURCH IS HERE,"  
ROBINSON TOLD THE  
PARISHONERS, POUNDING  
HIS HEART WITH HIS FIST.**

**I**N MID-APRIL THE CITY FORCED Cruber and Sandefer to resign from the police department. The Klan then came to Tupelo, reputedly at the request of local followers, to fight the League and to force the city to reinstate the policemen. They held local rallies in April and early May and announced a major "national rally" for June 10.

The League then called a rally of its own for that day.

On May 9 the city banned public demonstrations by either organization, but a judge overruled the order.

The city also requested a federal investigation of the federally-funded Northern Mississippi Rural Legal Services, one of whose lawyers, Lewis Myers, was the League's chief counsel. The League responded by adding the withdrawal of the request to its list of demands.

\* \* \*

The United League was formed in 1968, inspired by police brutality in Holly Springs. In recent years, its main cause has been affirmative action for blacks in

the booming towns of northeast Mississippi and southwest Tennessee. In Holly Springs and Corinth, Miss., and in Ripley, Tenn., it is involved in struggles similar to that in Tupelo. Its founder and president, Alfred "Skip" Robinson, a Holly Springs contractor, claims 60,000 members in Mississippi and 5,000 in Tennessee.

Robinson is a man of unusual intensity. Like other southern civil rights leaders, it's difficult to tell where his religion ends and his politics begin. I went to Tupelo a week before the planned confrontation to meet Robinson. As we stood in front of the League's Holly Springs office on a quiet, sunny Sunday morning, Robinson explained the League's purpose.

"We're talking about going beyond integration," he said. "We're talking about justice for all. Integration has failed. We move into the white neighborhoods, they move into the suburbs, and we're left with the costs. They integrate the schools, and we lose all our black teachers and principals. We lose our black identity and pride."

Robinson does not want to abandon integration, but to obtain integration with justice. "Justice for all" is the League's slogan. He wants the workforce of Tupelo and other towns to reflect the proportion of town blacks not only in the number of workers, but in levels of authority and responsibility. He wants black principals, store managers, police captains and bankers, as well as black janitors and laborers.

Later that morning, I accompanied Robinson as he visited black churches to obtain their parishoners' support for the next week's march. Robinson is highly critical of most black ministers. "Most ministers have nothing but shout to offer," he said. "You go around black neighborhoods, and see women walking the streets, crime everywhere, nobody with a job, and you see a church steeple at every corner. You know something is wrong with the church."

Robinson put it a different way when he talked to the congregation at a Tupelo Baptist church. "This church is just an old building. The church is here," he told the parishoners, pounding his heart with his fist. "And the church is on the streets of Tupelo."

\* \* \*

Some Tennessee Confederate soldiers established the Klan in 1865. Over the years, it has ebbed, only to revive during new periods of racial conflict.

It appeared to be dead by the 1880s,

but in 1915, William Joseph Simmons revived it. By 1925 it had claimed five million members throughout the country and was a major political force in the South and several northern states. Simmons described it as a "high-class, mystic, social patriotic society."

It was, above all, anti-black, continually pressing for American blacks to return to Africa; but it was also anti-semitic, anti-Catholic, and anti-immigrant. A secret organization, it got its way through lynchings, tar-and-featherings, crossburnings and other forms of extralegal intimidation.

The Klan declined in the '30s and was formally disbanded in 1944 to avoid federal tax charges. But in the wake of white resistance to the civil rights movement, it was revived in the late '50s, albeit in several different forms: the United Klan, the Knights of the Klan, the Invisible Empire of the Klan. By 1965 total Klan membership was estimated at 40,000, and during the '60s the Klan was credited with numerous bombings and murders.

But in the '70s, with Southern acquiescence in integration, the Klan entered a new decline. Its membership was recently estimated at 2,000. The Klan has seized upon Tupelo in hopes of reviving itself.

In the May issue of the *Klansman*, Imperial Wizard Bill Wilkinson called on Klan members to come for a showdown with the United League on June 10. The day before the march Klan officials predicted 500 Klan members would show up.

**"WE SHOULD HAVE HAD A  
SECOND CIVIL WAR A FEW  
MONTHS AGO AND KILLED  
SOME OF THEM."**

**C**ONFRONTATION SATURDAY WAS bright, clear and hot—a day to parch the skin of a pale Northerner. On Tupelo's Main Street, merchants stood expectantly in front of their stores, while hooded men handed out *The Klansman* to white passersby.

A report in the *Lee County News*, Tupelo's principal weekly, had challenged the effectiveness of the downtown boycott, but the storeowners indicated otherwise. "We're known not to tell the truth when it hurts," D.M. Plowmale, the owner of the Debs Dollar Store, told me. With a business dependent on black customers,