



Without Impunity



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VERITAS

JUSTITIA

MEMORIA

Silence in the Nile Egyptian Freedom of Speech under Peril

"There is no censorship [in Egypt]" says Lufti Abdel Kadel, head of the office responsible for reviewing foreign printed media before entering Egypt, to a reporter from the Middle Eastern Times. "We prevent that which goes out of line only this. We see the newspaper and our people read it and when they find anything that is not good for our country, we contact the people responsible and we ask them not to print it again and we release the paper. This is what we do." And they do their job well. The Middle Eastern Times, like other newspapers, submit all of its issues to the official censors prior to publication. Stories that don't pass the censors' muster are eliminated from the final publication, assuring that the whole newspaper will not be banned - which can result in substantial economic losses to the publishers. The Ministry of Information has the right to ban any newspaper printed outside Egypt from entering the country, and it has never given a license to the Middle Eastern Time to publish in Egypt.

Egypt has been living under a state of emergency laws for nearly 30 years. This law confers wide-ranging and arbitrary powers on the President, including the power to censor newspapers and other forms of expression

Continued on page 16

Inside:

From the Editors	p.2
World Cup Bits	p.3
The Disappeared in Sri Lanka	p.4
LIDLIP Webiste	p.5
The Human Rights Library	p.6
The Look	p.7
Encryption	p.8
Working Children	p.9
Germans disappeared in Argentina	p.10
UN Watch	p.12
The Revolution of Dignity	p.14
Letters to the Editor	p.19

MADE IN AMERICA

Vladimiro Montesinos

Behind Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori's rise to power lurks the powerful Vladimiro Montesinos Torres. Montesinos first appeared at Fujimori's side to defend him against charges of real estate fraud when Fujimori was running for president. The paperwork in that case mysteriously disappeared, the charges were dropped, and Fujimori was elected president.



Continued on page 18



Prisoner Corner

Fray Antonio Puigjané - Prisoner of Conscience

Late on June 12, 1998, the day before his 70th birthday, Fray Juan Antonio Puigjané was transferred from prison to house arrest. Argentine law provides for prisoners who are 70 years and older to serve their remainder of their prison sentences under house arrest.

Fray Antonio is serving an unjust 20-year sentence because an Argentine court presumed that he "should have known" about a planned attack on a military base in 1989. After serving nearly nine years in prison, the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights concluded in a November 1997 report that the government of Argentina had tor-

Continued on page 18

From the Editors

On Human Rights Activism Online

In today's world the Internet is nearly ubiquitous. Seldom a day goes by without some television, radio or newspaper headline referring to something happening on-line. Still, the Internet can be a scary place for novices - and human rights activists and organizations who are just getting their feet wet on-line may have a number of concerns that stops them from taking full advantage of all the Internet has to offer. As the Internet offers the potential of making the work of all human rights activists much easier and more effective, it's very important to dispel such concerns.

The Internet allows you to do three basic things: communicate with others, seek information and publish information, but it allows you to do it often more cheaply, quickly and extensively than traditional means. The ability to communicate with people all over the planet, generally at little over the cost of a local phone call, is the most popular feature of the Internet. In addition to electronic mail (e-mail), there are mailing lists where you can discuss any topic in the planet (including human rights) and ask questions or solicit help from others. Real-time "chat" programs, which allow you the words you type to be immediately seen by those you are talking to, and vice-versa, allow you to discuss

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issues easily without the delay of e-mail.

Every day, the Internet becomes a greater resource for human rights information. Web sites of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (discussed last issue), and the University of Minnesota Human Rights Library put human rights materials at your fingertips such as reports and resolutions from international bodies that previously you could only access directly from the source, or through specialized libraries. Similarly, human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Peace Brigades International, Amnesty International and Derechos HR publish in-depth reports, timely press releases and actions about human rights violations all over the world. Academic and legal journals are beginning to publish at least some of their offerings on-line, thus providing you with analytical in addition to factual material, and on-line newspapers and radio stations from throughout the world allow you to follow the human rights situation in practically every region of the world. However, it's important to note that not all material is available on-line. Sites such as the UNHCHR's and the Human Rights Library do not have material older than a few years. Many human rights organizations have been slow or reluctant to publish their information on-line, and the ones that do often stick to publishing material in English. Most academic journals, moreover, are not on-line and word of mouth and conferences continue to be major means for communicating human rights information. Another significant problem is related to how difficult it can often be to find the human rights material you are looking for. In this regard, at least, we hope to be of help, check out the On-line Activist section of this magazine, and the human rights links section of our website (<http://www.derechos.org/human-rights/links>) for tips.

As useful as the communication and research aspects of the Internet are, it is its ability to turn all of us into publishers that is of unique importance to human rights activists. There is a saying that freedom of the press belongs to those who own the presses - the Internet allows all of us to be in that position. Here at last we have the opportunity to share our knowledge and ideas with people all over the world - including important and influential people - at very little cost to us (financially and from a time point of view). And indeed, letting people know about human rights and human rights violations is an intrinsic part of the work of most human rights organizations. Shining a spotlight on human rights abuses is the first and most elemental

Continued on page 15

World Cup Bits



The excitement of the World Cup can be felt from pole to pole; millions of people in countries around the world are glued to their television sets cheering their national teams (or that of their favorite countries) to victory. But while we celebrate the feast of football, people throughout the world continue to be killed, tortured and oppressed - often by the governments of the competing countries. They, at least as much as the football teams, deserve our attention.

Not all Brazilians have been celebrating their team's recent victories. At least one man found the time to call Edna and Donizeti Flor and threaten "reprisals" if they didn't leave the city of Araçatuba within the next 15 days. Two hand-made bombs were also thrown in front of their office. The Flors had denounced cases of torture and extrajudicial executions perpetrated by members of the civilian and military police in their town. While Brazil has a stellar record in the World Cup, having become champion four times, its record on human rights is rather poorer, human rights and community leaders are often harassed, torture is rampant, and hundreds of people continue to be killed annually by police and death squads.



Getting to the World Cup for the first time ever was victory enough for Japan. While not making it to the second round disappointed Japanese fans, they were model supporters of their team. Not everyone in Japan could enjoy the games however - three Japanese prisoners were executed on January 25th. As usual, the executions were conducted in secret and the identity of the three men is not known. Human rights organizations have called on Japan to stop executions, but authorities vow to continue the executions for at least a year.



Yugoslavia was able to celebrate football victories against the US, but the same cannot be said of ethnic-Albanians in Kosovo. Several Albanians have been arrested in Kosovo for playing or organizing football matches without official approval. On occasions they were beaten, and their football equipment was confiscated. Albanians have set up their own football league in Kosovo to the chagrin of Serbian authorities.



Nigerians can celebrate even though their team did not make it pass its game against Germany. A number of prisoners of conscience were released by the new president, and more are expected to be released soon. Unfortunately, former president-elect Abiola died short before he was to be released.

Adidas, the official provider of World Cup athletic equipment, has conceded that some of the foot balls used in the World Cup were made by Chinese prisoners at a labor camp near Shanghai. Labor camps, where prisoners work under slave-like conditions and are often physically punished if they don't complete their quotas, have been denounced by human rights organizations worldwide and both FIFA and Adidas have assured they would not use prison labor in the manufacture of the balls used in the Cup.



While the world rejoiced at the enthusiasm of Jaimacans playing their first World Cup, it has been less ready to notice the silent cries of poor teenage boys who are increasingly resorting to prostitution to support themselves. Jamaica's economic crisis and growing unemployment (which stands at 65% for people aged 16-30), has led to teenage boys engaging in prostitution to fill their stomachs, and continue their education.



Despite high hopes, and the support of Latino-Americans everywhere, Colombia failed to make it to the second round of the World Cup. Meanwhile, Colombians elected a new president, Andrés Pastrana, who will start his term in August. The military (and its associated death squads) continues its campaign of terror throughout the country, killing, injuring and threatening human rights activists, community leaders, peasants, and anyone suspected of having sympathies for the guerrilla.



Argentiniens' attention these last weeks has been divided between their team's performance on the field and the arrest of their former president Videla (convicted and pardoned for hundreds of murders and other crimes against humanity) on charges of kidnaping of children during the "Dirty War." Videla remains in prison while the instructing judge decides whether he should be prosecuted. According to other inmates, he does not seem to show much interest in the matches, unlike in 1978 when under his presidency Argentina tried to use the World Cup to draw attention away from the "disappearances."

The Disappeared in Sri Lanka

“Where are they?” is the cry of thousands of families, spoken in dozens of languages, in many areas of the world. Perhaps the cry is nowhere louder than in Sri Lanka, where the forced disappearance of persons is still used systematically by government authorities mostly against members of the Tamil minority. More than 100 people “disappeared” in 1997; these are added to the more than 20,000 people who have “disappeared” since January 1, 1988.

For the past 14 years, the Sri Lankan government has been fighting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a separatist armed group who seeks to establish a separate state for the country’s Tamil minority. This prolonged fight has led to thousands of deaths, including many from extra-judicial executions, as well as the displacement of tens of thousands of people. The hostilities have been mostly concentrated in the north and north-east of the country, where the Tamil minority is concentrated. Between 1987 and 1990, the government also confronted the armed People’s Liberation Front. Both sides resorted to extreme violence, and many people were forcibly disappeared by the government during this period.

Since 1990, disappearances have been most common in the regions of Jaffna (recovered by government forces from LTTE control in 1996), Batticaloa, Mannar and Killinochchi. Victims include young Tamil men, many of them poor farm laborers, fishermen or students who were detained accused or suspected of belonging, collaborating with, or sympathizing with the LTTE. Women and girls suspected of such sympathies have also been systematically disappeared. Many of the disappeared are also people who have been displaced, and have sought shelter in churches or schools.

Disappearances usually occur after detention by police or military forces. A typical method of detentions consists of “cordon and search” operations, in which the army in conjunction with the police or the paramilitary Special Task Forces, goes into a village or rural area and detains dozens of people. Though many are released within a few days, some remain in custody for questioning. These, as well as other detainees, are usually taken to army or police bases, or to undisclosed “secret” locations, where they are tortured and then murdered. The military or police authorities often refuse to give information about their whereabouts to their relatives, thus their status as “disappeared.” It’s alleged that the bodies of those murdered are sometimes discarded into disused wells and lavatories in or near army camps.



Krishanthi Kumarasamy was disappeared, raped and murdered

Security forces often engage on disappearances as a reprisal for attacks on their members by the LTTE.. While there is no evidence that the disappearances are sanctioned by the Colombo government, the government has not taken the necessary step to prevent them. In 1994, three regional commissions of inquiry were set up to investigate the fate of the disappeared, and they presented their report, documenting 16,742 “disappearances,” to the President last year. While the report is to be made public, and the president has promised prosecutions of those responsible for the disappearances, little has been done so far. A Board of Investigation established by the Ministry of Defense to investigate disappearances in the northern and eastern section of Sri Lanka in 1996 led to the location of 182 people, but again the fate of the rest remains unknown and those responsible for these disappearances remain unpunished.

According to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, those responsible reportedly included all branches of the security forces, Muslim and Sinhalese home guards and armed Tamil groups opposed to the LTTE. There might be an end in sight to impunity of human rights violations, however. On

Continued on page 5

Disappearances...

Continued from page 4

July 3, 1998, five members of the security forces were found guilty of rape, "disappearance" and murder of Krishanthi Kumarasamy, a high school student, and members of her family and were sentenced to death. According to Amnesty International, the government's swift reaction on the Kumarasamy case may have helped curtail the systematic disappearance of people in the Jaffna region.

Disappearances are not limited to state security forces. The LTTE is responsible for the disappearance of an undetermined number of civilians. It also engages in the practice of taking civilian hostages, and trying to exchange them for imprisoned LTTE members. Most of the hundreds of police and security forces personnel captured by the LTTE in battle are believed to be dead. The LTTE controls large sections of the north and the east of the country, where it has established an authoritarian government and commonly violates the fundamental rights of the people under its control.

Where do I find...

...information on human rights violations in Copa Nueva?

Copa Nueva does not exist, but if you are looking for human rights information on a specific country or region, there are a number of websites that can be very useful to you.

Derechos: Human Rights Around the World - compiles information, reports and links on human rights violations in many countries.
<http://www.derechos.org/human-rights/world.html>

US State Department Human Rights Reports - info on both civil and political and economic rights.
http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/

Amnesty International - reports on violations to some civil and political rights in many countries
<http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/countries/>

UNHCHR - reports and resolutions on human rights in different countries by UN bodies.
<http://www.unhchr.ch/>

One World Online News by Countries
<http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/countries/>

Organizations at Derechos

Italian League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples (Milan Section - LIDLIP)

<http://www.derechos.org/lidlip/>

The International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, headed by Nobel Peace Laureate Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, supports struggles against oppression, domination and discrimination all over the world. It works in the political, cultural and information realms for the creation of international law based in the defense of the rights of persons and of peoples. LIDLIP also works against impunity for human rights violators. It has consultive status with the UN, and has been recognized by UNESCO. Derechos has been hosting the Milan branch of the Italian section of LIDLIP for more than two years.

The LIDLIP site at Derechos has information and links about human rights and asylum issues, but it is the section dealing with the trials in Italy against Argentinian military responsible for the disappearances of Italian citizens that is the most developed. LIDLIP has been working on behalf of the Italian disappeared in Argentina for over two decades, and has been trying to bring those responsible to justice for more than 15 years. Through their efforts, criminal proceedings against some of the responsible were started in Italy, and trials against seven Argentinian military are set to start later this year.

The LIDLIP web site contains abundant information about the history and law of these criminal procedures. This includes an article describing the development of the procedures, copies of legal motions filed by both the plaintiffs and the opposing prosecutors, copies of the impunity legislation in Argentina, and information regarding both the Italian disappeared and the accused (even some photos are available at the website!)

While the information offered is mostly in Spanish and Italian; English speakers may try the Altavista translation tool (see WI, June '98, p.11) to read it in English. We invite you to visit the site, and find out how you can help their work!

The University of Minnesota Human Rights Library

<http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/>



The University of Minnesota Human Rights Library has the distinction of being one of the first human rights websites; for years it has been providing researches, students and activists with invaluable human

rights information. It is also one of the most extensive and well organized ones, and one of the ones we consult the most.

The focus of the Human Rights Library is providing reference materials on human rights. It has the most complete list of human rights and international humanitarian law instruments available online, which includes both international as well as regional materials in English, French and Spanish. It includes a section thoroughly covering the work of the UN and Inter-American human rights systems. Here you can find the reports and resolutions issued by the different bodies and their decisions in contentious cases. This is particularly useful as, in the case of the treaty bodies and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the information is not available elsewhere online. Easy to use, and subject-specific search engines, make looking for the information you seek very easy.

Another very useful, and unique, section is the one on US human rights material. Here you can find all sorts of human rights information related to the US, including legislation, the human rights treaties to which the US is a party (and its reservations to them), US reports to the UN Committee on Human Rights, links to other pertinent websites, and even some asylum jurisprudence. Reports on country situations from the INS Asylum Resource Information Center are also available from the asylum and refugee section.

An important part of the site, and an essential tool for all teachers, is the human rights education section. It contains full copies of the Amnesty International USA Fourth R newsletter on human

rights education, which contains both articles discussing the issues and practical suggestions on how to approach different human rights topics in the classroom. This section also contains a pertinent biography, curriculum suggestion and links. More human rights education materials are available from their "Partners in Human Rights Education" section.

A newer part of the site, the Peace Resource Center, provides ample information on humanitarian law, including international humanitarian law and peace instruments, recent peace accords, the statutes of the international criminal tribunals, and links to peace and activist sites.



The Human Rights Library also contains a very complete and well-organized section on links to other human rights web sites. If you are looking for something specific, this is a good place to start your search.

The Human Rights Library is very well-organized, and you can easily find your way to any document you seek from the menu in its main page. The only caveats worth mentioning are that decisions from international bodies are not always immediately posted to the Library (for example the last contentious cases from the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights available are from 1996), so for recent materials you may have to resort to getting paper copies from the bodies themselves. While most documents are available on HTML, and thus you can easily access them with your web browser, some are only available in PDF format - which means that you must download a free Acrobat Reader to read them.

All in all, the University of Minnesota Human Rights library is a clear example of what a wonderful tool the web can be for human rights activist and researchers alike.

The Look

He would go on and carry out his mission. Sometimes his job was hard, but he was a hard man and he knew God was on his side. The job was not pleasant but someone had to do it.

The group would get together some hours before to give each other courage; sometimes they'd spend the night together insulting vehemently their future victims so when the moment would come, they could treat them as dangerous criminals even when they were frail women or fragile, smooth-faced pubescents. After the attack, they stayed together still for some more hours, drinking and congratulating each other in the success of the operation. They felt no guilt, no worries.

Then he would go home and fall asleep. He almost never lost his sleep. Sometimes, some desperate mother was able to become a slight nightmare that he would then talk about with the guys, but it never amounted to a sin, it was never a matter for confession. Only once something made him go to the chaplain to procure solace. There was only one threat that was able to provoke him a shudder, not the weight of conscience: fear.



It was a night as many others; everything seemed to be as usual. As they went up the staircase of the building, they could hear a small child cry. Often there were children, but they seldom looked at them. There was no shooting, no need for it. They pulled out the man from his bed and the woman left the child on the cradle and offered no resistance, just a few drowned cries, the usual. They searched untidily for some evidence, without much enthusiasm, they all knew it wasn't necessary. Then a girl, about six-year-old, came out of a room. She seemed oblivious to what was happening around her. She took the baby, who had never stopped crying, from the cradle and sang very close to his ear, or perhaps she said something to him. When the baby calmed down, she looked up and walked slowly on her small, bare feet towards him. She looked at him. Tense and coldly, she looked at him. He vociferated some orders and hurried the procedure and pushed his victims to the elevator, a decrepit elevator of forged iron. The girl went out into the hall in silence, she did not cry, she did not scream, she did not look at her parents one last time. No. The girl embraced her brother in her naked arms and looked at him, at his eyes, with the same look than before, iron-like, metallic; not a look of fear, not the terrorized look that he knew so well. No. It was a different look, difficult to describe with words. A look that would be with the girl all her life, that would wait all her life to face him again.

My name is Raquel Robles, I am the daughter of two "disappeared" and I belong to HIJOS (Children for Identity and Justice, against Forgetting and Silence). I have never been a violent person, I am afraid of street fights. I don't know what I would do if I met Astiz or Bergez or another agent of death (to call a torturer an "angel of death" is too painful a poetic (...) for me), perhaps a blow could overcome all the obstacles of self-control and rationality. It would be the first time in my 24 years of life. And surely the Argentinian justice would choose to punish me with the whole weight of the law. In principle, and not by choice but because I've never been in a similar situation, the blow is still saved. Meanwhile I continue constructing my humble vengeance: I remain alive and dreaming a better world.

This article was sent as a letter to newspaper Página 12, after declarations by President Menem condemning a man who had stricken Alfredo Astiz. Astiz has been implicated in many disappearances. Bergez was a doctor attending pregnant women at a secret concentration camp in Argentina.



Benito's School

Several years ago the Nuremberg Human Rights Center chose this picture of Benito Mendoza protecting the knowledge accumulated in his book with his hat as their logo, as it symbolized their commitment to protect the truth about human rights violations in Latin America. Benito was a teacher at the Guatemalan village of Todos Santos which was raided by the military in Guatemala and had over 80 villagers killed. Until recently, the Nuremberg center did not know whether Benito had survived. Fortunately, not only he is alive, but he is running a language school in Todos Santos. If you are looking to learn Spanish or Maya, we can't imagine a better place to do it - check out their website at <http://www.stetson.edu/~rsitler/>

Encryption: Protecting your Privacy Online

If you do human rights work in most countries, you are used to being watched. You know that your phone calls are probably intercepted, your faxes are read before you get them (if you get them), and perhaps you are even followed when you go to meetings. You also have to assume that all your e-mail and other electronic communications are intercepted. The fact is, it's very easy for anyone with a modicum of technical knowledge and bad intentions to intercept your e-mail as it travels from computer to computer on its way to its destination. Anyone who can gain access to any of the computers that your e-mail goes through can intercept it, and as many of these systems are not very secure, it's not hard to gain access to them. High school kids can do it, and you can bet that technicians with the intelligence services can as well. In some countries, this is made even easier by the fact that the government controls the pipeline through which all communications going in and out of the country.

There is very little you can do to stop agents from tapping into your phone lines (for the time being, at least), but it is rather easy to make sure that no-one can read your e-mail messages, even if they intercept them: encrypt them! Encryption is simply a method of scrambling information into a jumbled mess and that needs a "secret code" to be read. One might also think of encryption as a way of "locking" information such that only a certain key could "unlock" the information. That information could be an electronic mail message, a file, picture, or any other type of electronic information.

In the past, people had to agree on a secret key to encrypt and decrypt messages - which meant that they probably had to meet face to face to avoid anyone from getting their hands on it. Things have changed, and a relatively new method called "Public Key Encryption" allows you to send encrypted messages without revealing the sender or receiver's secret key. In public key encryption, each person has two keys: a public key and a private (or secret) key. The public key can be distributed widely while the secret key is kept in your computer or on a floppy disk and is only accessible through a pass phrase of your choice.

To send an encrypted message to someone, you would use the intended recipient's public key. Through a complex mathematical relationship, the message you encrypted using the recipient's public key can only be decrypted by the recipient's secret key. In

other words, you have locked a message in such a way that only the recipient can unlock it.

The most common program that allows you to do this is called PGP - Pretty Good Privacy. It's available both commercially and for free on the Internet (go to <http://www.pgpi.com/>) for Macintosh, Unix, Windows95/98/NT, DOS, and other operating systems. The newest versions integrate easily with e-mail programs such as Eudora and Microsoft Outlook, making encrypting a message as easy as clicking a couple of times and typing your pass phrase.

Why should you use encryption?

The answer is easy: to prevent others from reading your messages. It's the same reason why you send important letters inside envelopes rather than on the backs of postcards: to protect the privacy of your words. Whether you write to a friend to tell him about the latest movie you've seen, or to a colleague to report death threats your friends are getting - the contents of your messages are nobody's business but your own and the intended recipient's. There is no reason why anyone, not a mischievous kid who is trying his cracker skills, or a member of the intelligence forces, should know what you are saying.

Sometimes human rights activists are afraid that governments will think they have something to hide if they take precautions to encrypt their communications. But the right to privacy in communications is a human right, and activists should not forgo it just because governments may want to point an accusing finger at them. In addition, you do have things to hide, at least if you are doing your job well. The names of your clients or the people who have reported human rights violations to you should be kept private, unless the victim authorizes that it should be made public. Plans for future actions, strategies that you are planning to implement, coordinations with support groups abroad, details of upcoming campaigns - these are all things that governments should not be forewarned about - but that's what you are doing when you don't use encrypted communications.

Human rights activists also argue sometimes that the intelligence services already know everything about you and your plans, so there is no point in hiding anything from them. This will surely be a self-fulfilling prophecy if you do nothing to safeguard your informa-

Continued on page 9



Working Children

There are children all over the world who don't have the chance to an education. They have to work. What should come first, children's education or work? Children need to be educated, they need to go to school, if they don't, their families poverty will continue in a cycle of working as children and then having low paying jobs as adults.

Many children in third world countries work 10 to 12 hours a day, or even longer hours. They work in factories where they are forced to make match sticks, cigarettes, carpets, footballs and cloth. They dig coal, haul bricks and worst of all, they are made to handle hot glass and metal without any gloves, helmets or goggles.

In Nepal, women and children carry bricks on their heads; they are paid twenty-five (\$0.25) every one-hundred (100) trips. In Cholomlo, Honduras, boys are responsible for making soft balls, for other children to play with. Children are also forced to work on the streets, which might be the worst kind of child labor. They shine shoes in front of hotels, they carry luggage, wash and guard cars. They are exposed to the risk of getting involved in crimes, drugs and worst of all in prostitution.

Children are also forced to work in private homes, as servants. Children that work in homes wash clothing and carry it, they cook, they clean and mind their employers children. In Burkina Faso, women carry children on their backs while they sweep and clean as well as do other household chores and farm work.

In many countries children live in fear of making enough money to avoid being beaten, or even molested, by their parents or guardians. They should not have to ever feel afraid. Children should have safety at home, they should want to go home not stay in the street. I think that it is so very sad that some kids feel safer on the street than at home

I do not believe that children deserve to have to do this kind of work. They should be able to enjoy their childhood and grow up to be healthy adults.

Carolyn Taylor is an editor of the incoming Derechos Kids website. She is 13 years-old and lives in the United States. Her column on children's rights will appear periodically in this newsletter. Derechos encourages all children to send us articles, stories and art to include in this publication or in the Derechos Kids site.

Encryption...

Continued from page 8

tion and communications. And even if the intelligence services have the means to find out what you are doing through other means, why should you make it easy for them? If you make it harder, and have them commit resources trying to open your encrypted messages, their attention may be diverted from other activities. It is a very good idea to encrypt as many of your communications as you can, both sensitive, important messages and non-important ones alike. That way, those trying to intercept them will never know which one is important and which one is not.

How secure is encrypted information?

The security of encrypted information depends on the method of encryption and the complexity of the pass phrase. The strength of a particular method of encryption is often measured by the number of bits in the key. A higher number indicates stronger encryption for a given method. For example, a 1024 bit key is stronger than a 128 bit key. Any encrypted information can be decrypted with enough time and computer resources, but using strong encryption can make it very costly for someone to decrypt your information. At current technological standards, it may take hundreds of years (and lots of computer power) to "break" a 1024 bit key.

So what now?

Get a copy of PGP and begin encrypting your correspondence. You can find a copy of Derechos' public key at <http://www.derechos.org/pgp.html>

Will There Be Justice for the Germans Disappeared in Argentina?

The Argentine Savagery

Betina Ehrenhaus is German and lives in Buenos Aires. In the 1940s, her grandfather, the Regisseur of the Dresden Opera, emigrated to flee the war. He was seeking a country in peace, and he chose Argentina. He never imagined that history would repeat itself there.

In 1979 Betina was only 21 years old. One Sunday she and Pablo, her boyfriend, were on the way to her parent's home when they were stopped by three cars. Half a dozen heavily armed individuals came out from them, and proceeded to beat them, blindfold them and finally throw them to the floor of one of the cars. They were taken to the Naval Mechanics School (ESMA), a secret detention center. There, Betina was hooded, interrogated and tortured with an electric "picana" (a kind of cattle-prod), which they applied to her breasts, belly, legs and mouth until she passed out. They asked her to "sing" (i.e. to confess and give information); she had no idea what they were talking about. Two days later they put her back in a car and soon after set her free, threatening to kill her if she told what she had seen and heard. Her last memory of Pablo are his screams when he was being tortured. She never saw him again.

Marcelo Weisz, his wife Susana González and their three-month-old baby were kidnaped on a public street in Buenos Aires on February 16th, 1978. The baby was later returned to Susana's mother by the kidnapers, who informed her of the "detention" of the couple. Numerous witnesses saw Marcelo and Susana in the clandestine detention centers "El Banco" and "El Olimpico", situated in the city of Buenos Aires and run by the First Army Corps, commanded by Carlos Guillermo Suárez Mason. One year after his disappearance Marcelo was able to "visit" his family accompanied by his torturers. According to his mother: "... his repressors, people such as the famous "Turco Julián", "Colores" del Cerro and a person called "The Uncle," would bring him to my home... they would arrive there, eat, drink and remain for a while, generally on Saturdays and for about two hours; Marcelo would tell me he was all right and that he was doing "office work" together with others..." The visits stopped in 1979, and nothing else was known about Marcelo or his wife until 1995 when his mother saw on a TV program the former Federal Police Officer

Hector Julio Simón, whom she recognized as "Turco Julián", one of the men who accompanied her son to her home for that one year. Accused of human rights violations by dozens of survivors, but free thanks to the laws of due obedience and "punto final", "Turco Julián" justified what was done by the military dictatorship in front of the cameras, acknowledged that "the general order was to kill everyone" and mentioned the Weisz couple as two of the "disappeared" who were later murdered.

The Road to Impunity

Before leaving power, the Military Junta in Argentina issued documents assuming total responsibility for the planning, supervision and execution of the "war against subversion", as they called the "Dirty War." The Junta acknowledged its use of "non-conventional methods" in the fight, and declared that the "actions" of the members of the Armed Forces in the operations related to the "war" constituted "acts of service." They also stated that there were no "disappeared alive" but had all been "killed in confrontations." In addition, the Junta issued the so called "self-amnesty law" (1) wherein it declared as extinguished all criminal actions for crimes committed by the security forces in the fight against subversion between May 1973 and June 1982.

Democracy returned to Argentina in 1983, and with it the clamor for justice. The new Congress declared the "self-amnesty law" unconstitutional, null and without juridical effect (2), thus leaving the way open for the prosecution of those responsible for so many atrocities. Hundreds of criminal actions against repressors from all ranks were started and President Raúl Alfonsín ordered the trial of the members of the first three military juntas. The search for justice, however, met its end some time later when the Punto Final (3) and "Due Obedience"(4) laws were passed, eliminating almost all possibilities of prosecuting the crimes committed during the dictatorship. Finally, through a series of presidential pardons issued by President Menem, the few members of the military that were still in prison, were freed.

With no hope of obtaining justice in the national courts, the families of the victims had no other alternative than to resort to foreign courts. In 1983, the families of a hundred Italians disappeared during the

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

last dictatorship in Argentina presented a denunciation before the office of the prosecutor of Rome. In October 1989, Captain Alfredo Astiz was sentenced by the Appellate Court of Paris to life in prison for the deaths of two French nuns. In mid-1996, Court No.5 of the Spanish National Audience started an investigation of the crimes of terrorism and genocide against Spaniards during the last dictatorship in Argentina.

But they were not the only foreigners “disappeared” in Argentina. At least seventy Germans or people of German descent lost their lives during the military dictatorship. In 1983, a group of family members presented a joint habeas corpus for the disappearance of 48 Germans and people of German descent. They had no answer. The German embassy in Buenos Aires did not do much for its citizens either. Idalina de Tatter, whose husband was disappeared in 1976, came to Germany to present a denunciation against the Minister of Foreign Affairs and other members of his ministry for denial of help. The case was closed.

Despite frustration and the years that went by, the families continued meeting periodically; finally a few months ago, in the context of the criminal procedures started in Spain and Italy, the possibility of starting a criminal procedure in Germany was set forth. To this end, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, a Nobel Peace Laureate and a victim of the repression in Argentina, contacted the Human Rights Center in Nuremberg and asked through them for the support for the German organizations.

The Coalition Against Impunity: truth and justice for the German disappeared during the military dictatorship in Argentina 1976-83

In March 1998, after several months of consultations and preparatory work, the “Coalition Against Impunity” (5) was created as an alliance of Human Rights NGOs and the Evangelical and Catholic Churches united with the common purpose of pursuing a trial in the German courts for the disappearance of German citizens and people of German descent during the military dictatorship in Argentina. On May 7, the charges were officially filed with the German Ministry of Justice. These include the cases of Betina and Federico Tatter, the husband of Idalina, and of Marcelo Weisz and Alfredo Coltzau. The accused are 41 retired and active members of the Argentine armed and security forces, including the members of the military juntas that ruled Argentina between 1976 and 1983. As there are no clear jurisdictional rules in this type of cases, the Ministry of Justice must derive

the charges to the Federal Supreme Court (Bundesgerichtshof) which will determine in the next few weeks which prosecution office has jurisdiction.

That same day, the Coalition carried out a “public hearing against impunity” in one of the rooms of the German Parliament. Betina Ehrenhaus and Idalina Tatter gave their testimonies and expressed their trust in German justice. Representatives of the Max Planck Institute and of the German Justice Ministry talked about the legal aspects of the charges, and their possibilities in Germany while Tino Thun, a German lawyer, talked about human rights and German foreign policy concerning Argentina between 1976 and 1983.

The criminal charges were filed under Article 7, section 1 of the German Penal Code which incorporates the principle of passive personality and allows for the application of German criminal law against foreigners for acts committed abroad against German citizens, when these acts are also criminal in the place where they were committed. The alleged crimes are murder, unlawful imprisonment and injuries, which are penalized by both the German and the Argentine penal codes.

According to a study carried out by the Max Planck Institute (6) the abovementioned Argentine impunity laws are irrelevant to prosecutions under Article 7, section 1 of the German penal code. German jurisprudence has previously established that foreign norms of penal prosecutions do not hindrance penal prosecutions in Germany (7). Furthermore German doctrine agrees with the jurisprudence, and considers procedural obstacles to prosecution, such as amnesties, as irrelevant to prosecutions under art. 7, section 1 (8). The studies has also found that the impunity laws are illegal under international law, as international law establishes the obligation to prosecute and punish grave human rights violations such as forced disappearances, extra-judicial executions and torture and sets limits to amnesties and pardons.

Most of the facts that will be at issued in these German prosecutions have already been established by other courts. For example, the court that judged the Military Junta in Argentina found that there had been a power structure bent on fighting subversion by “...capturing those who could be suspected of having links to subversion ... interrogating them under torture... subjecting them to inhumane living conditions... carrying out everything previously described in the most absolute clandestineness... with broad liberty

Continued on page 12

Germans...

Continued from page 11

for the lower cadres to determine the fate of those apprehended who could be later freed, put in the hands of the National Executive power, subjected to a military or civilian trial, or physically annihilated..."(9)

The cards are on the table. We are now waiting the determination of what prosecuting office will have jurisdiction. We will then start working towards the next stage, where we will surely find many obstacles that we hope to overcome. We trust that Germany, the site of the Nazi savagery of the Holocaust, will rise to the height of its European neighbors and that this time will seek justice for its citizens as it did not do 20 years ago. Or will it be true, as an officer of the German embassy in Buenos Aires told Betina Ehrenhaus 19 years ago, that to see a Mercedes Benz is more important than searching for a "disappeared" person?

Katya Salazar is a lawyer working with the Coalition Against Impunity. She is the representative in Germany of Derechos Human Rights.

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Notes

(1) Law 22.924 of 22.9.83

(2) Law 23.040 of 22.12.89

(3) Law 23.492 of 23.12.86

(4) Law 23.521 of 5.6.87

(5) For more information see

(6) Max-Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law, Freiburg, 1998.

Pronouncement on the following juridical problem: Is there a possibility in the Federal Republic of Germany for a penal prosecution of members of Argentine state organizations for the crimes of "disappearance" committed in that country during the period of the military dictatorship (1976-1983) despite national dispositions of exclusion of punishment (impunity laws)?

(7) Idem.

(8) Idem.

(9) La Sentencia, Tomo II. Imprenta de la Nacion, Buenos Aires.

UN WATCH



UN Committee issues report on Cyprus

The UN Committee on Human Rights issued its report on Cyprus' compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and

Political Rights on April 6, 1998. Among other things, the Committee expressed concern that conscientious objectors are discriminated in Cyprus, and can be subject to repeated punishment, including long prison terms for their refusal to fulfill their military service. The Committee also found continued de-facto and de-jure inequalities between men and women, specially in the laws related to marriage, nationality, immigration, employment and education. Homosexuals are also legally discriminated against in Cyprus, and homosexual acts are criminalized; Cyprus was urged to revoke these laws.

Holland continues to violate social and economic rights

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued a draft report on Holland's compliance with the treaty last May 15. In the report, it expresses concern about the "continuing discrimination against women at work. Their higher rate of unemployment, their lower position on the wage scale, their disproportionate representation in part time work, reveal that the principle of equality established by the law is not effectively enforced." The Committee also found racial and age discrimination in employment, which it linked to the higher unemployment rates of both immigrants and people over 55 years old. The Committee also expressed concerns about a number of different issues, including the reform of the social security system (which it found may have certain adverse consequences for the most underprivileged sectors of society), the living conditions of asylum seekers in some reception centres, and the effects of the Tuition Fees Act (which has led to a constant increase in the cost of education and is contrary to equality of opportunities between the children of rich families and poor families).

Special Rapporteur Finds Widespread Sexual Misconduct in US Women's Prisons

The Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women reports widespread sexual misconduct by prison staff in US women's prison. Sexual misconduct seems to be particularly pervasive in Michigan, where, on the eve of her scheduled visit, the Governor prohibited the Special Rapporteur from visiting US prisons or meet with State representatives. The Special Rapporteur also received serious allegations of sexual misconduct occurring in the security housing unit of the Valley State Prison for Women in Chowchilla, California. Some states such as Georgia and Minnesota have instituted comprehensive programs to combat sexual misconduct in women's prisons that could serve as models for the rest of the country. The Special Rapporteur visited US state, federal and immigration prisons from June 1 to 18, 1998. Her report will be published at the end of this year and discussed at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in March/April 1999.

UN Human Rights Prize

The UN is seeking nominations from Member States, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations in consultative status and other sources for the UN Prize in the Field of Human Rights, an award given to individual and organizations for outstanding contributions to the promotion and the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in other United Nations human rights instruments. The Prize was set up by the UN in 1968 and is given every few years. It is honorary in nature. Prior winners include Eleanor Roosevelt (posthumously), Nelson and Winnie Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King (posthumously), as well as human rights organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International and the Vicaria de la Solidaridad in Chile.

The prize will be awarded on 10 December 1998; nominations are due by August 15, 1998. Visit the UNHCHR website (<http://www.unhchr.ch/>) for the nomination form.

Australia tolerant towards religious minorities

The Special Rapporteur on the question of religious intolerance visited Australia in February and March, 1997, and presented his report to the UN Commission meeting in March 1998. The Special Rapporteur found that in general the situation in Australia with regard to tolerance and non-discrimination based on religion was very satisfactory. Australia's model of integration rather than the assimilation of all components of society, and the government's approach to secularity which favors not the rejection of religions and new religious movements, but equality for all under the prevailing law, greatly contributes to religious tolerance in the country. There were some exceptions and signs of religious discrimination, however. "Obstacles to the construction of places of worship or religious training centres for Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist minorities have at times been observed; this is mostly due to opposition by one sector of the population founded on ignorance, which encourages manifestations of racism. For instance, in the case of Muslims, the 1991 Gulf War led to incidents involving Muslim women wearing the head scarf (see para. 44) and more generally to the expression of opinions where Islam was associated with Saddam Hussein and terrorism with Arabs and Muslims. There have also been outbreaks of anti-Semitism, in the form of acts of vandalism against synagogues and Jewish cemeteries, and verbal attacks. The intolerance which is manifested is not religious, however, but racial, founded on ignorance and encouraged by extremist political speeches". The Special Rapporteur recommends that education be used to prevent intolerance by disseminating a culture of tolerance among the masses.



Welcome CEDHU!

The Ecumenical Commission of Human Rights has inaugurated its new web site, located at <http://www.derechos.org/cedhu/>. The site contains information about the organization, and news and articles about the human rights situation in Ecuador. Given the general dearth of information regarding human rights violations in that country, and the persistent violations to fundamental rights that occur there, the CEDHU site is very welcome. The site is available only in Spanish.

The Revolution of Dignity

Fifty years ago, the American nations planted the fertile promise of international protection of human rights. Meeting in 1948 in Bogotá on the occasion of the Ninth Inter-American Conference, their representatives adopted what constituted the first international juridical instrument consecrating the concept of human rights: the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man. It was approved seven months before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Of even greater significance is that its pioneering character and its content inspired the process of adoption of the Universal Declaration.

The American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man was not born as a binding instrument with the purpose of setting forth legal obligations. And probably few of those who took place in its formation foresaw the very important historical significance that it would acquire. At the same time, there is no doubt about the sense of urgency that surrounded the discussion and approval of the text: humanity was beginning to recover from the self-inflicted lacerations of the world wars and the urgent task of founding an international order that made the coexistence of all the peoples of the orb viable was set forth as never before. We were finally starting to realize that wars were not sudden episodes of animadversion between countries, but that their gestation begins with the oppression of citizens by their rulers, with the absolute exercise of power, with the deprivation of the most elementary dimensions of personal dignity. This explains why the internationalization of human rights and the dissemination of democracy became the fundamental pillars of the new world order.

The American Declaration introduced into the international agenda the first normative list of human rights. Its broad content is not exhausted in the plain of civil and political rights, but also incorporates economic, social and cultural rights. No less important is its clear conceptualization about the correlation that must exist between rights and duties, as this is an essential requirement to achieve a social climate that guarantees the efficient rule of all human rights.

The germinal resolution adopted in Bogotá in 1948 has generated transformations of revolutionary magnitude thanks to which the world's people have recovered hope. The American Declaration and the Universal Declaration of human rights have stopped being mere good will charters and have progressively acquired imperative meanings within international law. At the same time, both within the frameworks of the OAS and the UN, new normative instruments and procedural mechanisms have been put into work as expression of the growing international commitment to bring efficient protection to every person. The argument of state sovereignty as a justification for authoritarian abuses has been delegitimized before the recognition to an essential solidarity among human beings. Thus, the cause of human rights, plagued as it is by lack of understanding and political manipulation, has greatly contributed to the democratic development of nations and the recognition of the dignity inherent in each person.



Today the Inter-American system provides a sophisticated operative framework for the protection of human rights, which greatly relativizes the dogma of *res judicata* within national jurisdictions. The synchronic interaction of the Inter-American Commission and Court is a recent achievement. During the decades of authoritarian poundings of the seventies and eighties the system lacked the necessary political will to assume the serious challenges that it was given. But, now, within a regional scenario of progressive democratic development, the institutional responses of both institutions have acquired a significant quality. Within their procedural agendas, the traditional and heartrendering themes of forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions and torture, are giving way as the mechanisms and democratic conducts of the member countries mature. New themes, such as those of non-discrimination, freedom of expression, and patrimonial defense, are at the same time acquiring importance, while the qualitative and quantitative sediment of the jurisprudence issued by both institutions broadens.

Continued on page 15

Revolution...

Continued from page 14

But the task of protecting personal dignity and promoting democratic development does not cease. In this manner, as a manifestation of its commitment with the new challenges and circumstances of the new times, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has just adopted the important decision of creating a Special Rapporteur Office on Freedom of Expression. This opportune initiative has merited the support of the American chiefs of state, meeting in the recent Presidential Summit in Santiago de Chile.

Fifty years later we can look with satisfaction on how much we have advanced in cementing in our surroundings and consciences the recognition of the essential rights of every person. But at the same time we must lament how much more we could have achieved, and recognize that the still-pending task is immense.

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Editorial...

Continued from page 2

step towards ending them - that which can be done in silence, can be done with impunity. Most human rights organization are deeply aware of that, and already publish reports and bulletins uncovering the abuses they learn about. Putting these publications on the Internet is easy and allows people from all over the world to know about them. From knowledge comes action, and from action, solutions. Part of the beauty of the Internet is that you don't really know who will access the information you post, whether it'll be a high school student learning about human rights for the first time, a member of the press hoping for a hot story, members of international or government bodies looking for information for their reports on human rights, common people who want to learn what they can do to improve the countries and the world they live in, representatives from governments or military forces, who may be ashamed at what the world is learning about their own actions, and even people who had no interest on human rights whatsoever, and got to your site by mistake, but once there learn something, and perhaps became more concerned. We get visits from all these types of people at Derechos, and many others - people who, if not for the information we publish, would not know about the human rights violations we report. People who will not know about the ones YOU report, until you put your reports on-line.

Publishing human rights information on-line can be a difficult thing for some organizations, however. Some groups depend on the funds they collect by

Part of the beauty of the Internet is that you don't really know who will access the information you post

selling their publications, and fear that if these are available on-line their sales will go down. While we can't offer any data to confirm or deny this, daily newspapers continue to flourish despite also publishing on-line versions, and the added exposure that the Internet can give you - by letting people know you exist - may help increase your sales, rather than decrease them. Some other groups are concerned about losing control of their information by posting it on-line. And indeed once you post a report on-line you no longer have control over it - you can digitally sign documents to ensure their integrity - but you don't know what people will do with it, use it for good or evil. The same is true with your print publications. In general, the good that the publication of your information may bring is much greater than any potential harm. Another

concern often voiced is that investment in the Internet may draw away from efforts done at the local level. This indeed is a legitimate issue. However, the costs of publishing information on-line are often very minimal. Web site space is available for free, it takes comparatively little time to convert a document already available in electronic format to HTML (the language understood by web browsers), and groups such as Derechos are always willing to give NGOs a hand in establishing their on-line presence. Furthermore, any investments you make now, especially in training people to use the Internet, will greatly pay in the future as this medium becomes more and more ubiquitous and you can no longer escape it.



Silence...

Continued from page 1

prior to publication, and to confiscate or close down their means of printing in the interest of public safety or national security. These laws have been broadly interpreted, and have led to the confiscation of many newspapers. For example, the August 1996 edition of the Arabic monthly *Al-Tadamoun* was confiscated by the authorities for printing an article that questioned the mental health of Arab leaders for dealing with Israel and the US. Papers carrying information about human rights abuses or articles criticizing the President or friendly countries, are also often censored.

Self-censorship, however, is the greater threat to freedom of speech. The three largest-circulation newspapers are state-owned and follow the government line. Their editors-in-chief are appointed only with the approval of the President of Egypt. There are several newspapers of smaller circulation, generally associated with opposition parties, most of which are actually printed in government-owned publishing houses. In addition, they suffer from severe financial difficulties, as all state and most private advertising goes to the state-owned papers for both political and circulation reasons.

Egypt has set up censorship offices for practically all media. The government has monopoly control of all broadcasting stations, and censors are involved early in the creative process. Broadcasts and films are often banned not only for presenting views and policies distasteful to the government, but for arousing the sensitivities of the religious establishment. For example the film "The Wise Man Understands" was banned from TV because it portrayed a Muslim Sheik as a charlatan. Self-censorship in films and TV programs is also widespread, not only to escape the censors at home, but because the Egyptian entertainment industry relies heavily on the Saudi Arabian market. Saudi guidelines for productions are much more stringent prohibiting certain expressions such as criticism of religion, political systems, those in authority, swearing, references to horoscopes, etc.

Egypt is considered the center of Arab intellectual life, and thus it's particularly troublesome that censorship not only applies to the mass media, but also to books. Works by Egypt's foremost novelist, Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz, continue to be banned for themes

offensive to the religious authorities. At the Cairo International Book Fair, a government censorship bureau controls the exhibitions. In 1995, for example, Moroccan writer Mohammed Chokri had his books banned on the grounds of sexual explicitness. Academic books are equally threatened. In 1997, Islamic writer Khalil Abdel Karim had two of his works on early Islam confiscated for "distorting the image of the first Muslims and the Prophet himself as well as devoiding the Medina community of moral values."

Direct and indirect censorship are not the only threats to freedom of speech in Egypt. Journalists and writers also run the risk of imprisonment and death for expressing their views. Egypt's press and defamation laws are draconian, and the state of emergency law authorizes the President and the Minister of Interior to order the arrest and prolonged detention without charges of anyone deemed to be a threat to security and the public order. Journalists have been arrested for reporting on corruption in government, human rights violations in Egypt and even the private illicit actions of the families of government officials. An



investigative journalist was convicted of "revealing military secrets and endangering the higher interest of the State" for writing an article exposing how retired Army generals were taking bribes in an arms deal. A newspaper editor is currently serving a one-year prison sentence on libel charges for publishing an article alleging that the son of the Interior Minister had refused to pay a hotel

bill in Cairo. According to the Center for Human Rights Legal Aid, 72 journalists were threatened with arrest for publishing offences in early 1998; several are already serving prison sentences.

Journalists for the foreign press also face threats to their freedom of expression. Unsuitable foreign publications are banned, and journalists whose coverage of Egypt offends the government are deported. The Minister of Interior, for example, has threatened to sue or deport any journalist whose stories on Islamic armed groups contradict the official version of events. Access to news can also be limited for foreign journalists; foreign journalists have at times been barred from covering the trials of Islamic militants.

Journalists and writers also face threats from Islamic fundamentalists. In 1992, Egyptian writer and human

Continued on page 17

Silence...

Continued from page 16

rights defender Farag Foda was shot dead by militants from a fundamentalist group. Farag Foda's book "To Be or Not to Be" had been banned and he had been prosecuted for "offending religion" two years earlier and a week before his murder, he had been branded as an apostate by Al-Azhar, the government-supported religious establishment. In 1994, Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz was stabbed in the neck and seriously wounded by Islamic militants, after Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahmame, spiritual leader of the armed fundamentalist group al-Gama'a al Islamiyya, issued a fatwa excommunicating him. The fundamentalists have also used the justice system to harass and intimidate writers. In 1995, fundamentalists brought an action before Egyptian courts demanding the divorce of Quranic Sciences professor Nasr Hamed Abu Zaid from his wife, on the grounds that he was an apostate and a Muslim woman could not continue being married to a non-Muslim man. While the lower court threw out the case, the Court of Appeals reinstated it and ordered their divorce.

The court establishment support of the fundamentalists in this action is not altogether surprising. Islamic fundamentalists have made profound inroads in Egypt in the last few years, criticizing the secular and western-oriented stand of the government. As a response, the government has tried to reassert itself as Islamic, giving the religious establishment of Al-Azhar University a broad power of influence, which they have used to enhance the presence of religion in the public sphere, while curtailing expression distasteful to them. Government repression against journalists and writers, however, is not limited to only "secular" journalists - publications from Islamic fundamentalist groups are also banned.

There are, however, some hopes for Egypt. In addition to the continuous work of journalist groups and human rights organizations to expand freedom of speech in Egypt, new technologies are making censorship more difficult. Satellite dishes, which receive foreign signals, have become affordable. While there has been some attempt to regulate this (in 1994, for example, some cities banned the use of large dishes at coffee-houses because men were congregating in them to watch "erotic" Turkish programs), there are over 350,000 dishes in Egypt reaching millions of Egyptians. While not as widespread, the Internet also promises to bring a modicum of freedom of expression to the country. Three human rights organizations have web pages where they report on different human rights issues including the threats to freedom of expression. The Middle Eastern Times publishes copies of all their banned articles at their own web site. An estimated 50,000 Egyptians have access to the Internet, and so far there are no laws specifically regulating speech online. No efforts to censor, block, or punish online speech in Egypt have been reported, and ISPs are not required to submit information about the identities of Internet subscribers, or get clearance before issuing accounts or hosting websites.

We can only hope that the freedom of speech enjoyed by Egyptians online be extended to the rest of the media, rather than the other way around.



Puigjané...

Continued from page 1

ured Fray Antonio and had violated his right to justice and to appeal his sentence to a higher court. The IACHR recommended that the Argentine government take the most appropriate measures to "repair the harm suffered" by Fray Antonio. After more than 9 years in prison, his immediate freedom is the only way to begin repairing the harm. Although house arrest is better than prison, Fray Antonio still has unjust restrictions on his movements.

Both Derechos Human Rights and Amnesty International has declared Fray Antonio a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for the peaceful expression of his beliefs. Religious groups, government officials, and thousands of people from around the world have called upon the Argentine government to release Fray Antonio.

Please send appeals to the Argentine government asking for Fray Antonio's immediate and unconditional release from house arrest. Appeals can be sent to: Sr. Presidente de la República Argentina, Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem, Casa Rosada, Balcarce 50, Buenos Aires C.F., Argentina

Montesinos...

Continued from page 1

Montesinos received cadet training at the U.S. Army School of the Americas soon after becoming an army officer. In 1976, he requested sick leave, stole and falsified a blank form, and went to the U.S. Embassy in Lima. On September 5, 1976, Montesinos flew to the U.S. as a guest of the U.S. government. According to Peruvian journalist Gustavo Gorriti, once in the United States, Montesinos met with Luigi Einaudi, of the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department, and CIA Office of Current Intelligence officer, Robert Hawkins. He also met with academics in Connecticut and Washington and gave a talk at the Inter-American Defense College.

Upon his return to Peru, Montesinos was arrested and later charged with treason. The treason charge was dropped, but he was convicted of lying and falsehood in May 1977. He was expelled from the army and sentenced to one year in jail.

During his time in jail, Montesino studied the law and in the 1980s, he made a fortune representing drug traffickers and policemen linked to drug trafficking. In the early 1980's, he signed legal documents on behalf of a Colombian client for the purchase or lease of two buildings in Lima that were later raided and found to house cocaine processing.

By 1990, Montesinos had developed a comfortable relationship with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), including meetings with the station chief in Lima and a visit to CIA headquarters in Langley. In 1991, Montesinos took over command of nearly all of the joint Peru-U.S. anti-drug operations and developed an anti-drug unit within the National Intelligence Service (SIN). Now, with the fox guarding the hen house, cooperation in anti-drug efforts took a downward turn, and the SIN anti-drug unit committed human rights and other abuses, but did not catch drug traffickers.

Since then, Montesinos has consolidated his power as de-facto head of the Peruvian National Intelligence Service (SIN) and as a Peruvian military power broker. His zeal for rooting out "subversion" has made him many powerful friends in the US but it has often resulted in grave human rights abuses and illegal acts against the political opposition.

In November 1991, fifteen people, including an eight-year-old, were killed when hooded men with silencer-equipped automatic weapons opened fire without warning on a party in the Barrios Altos neighborhood of Lima. The Barrios Altos massacre

was later revealed to be the responsibility of the Grupo Colina death squad, which answered to Montesinos. The Grupo Colina consisted of members of the Peruvian military and intelligence.



Montesinos and US Drug Zar Gen. McCaffrey

After Fujimori's auto-coup in April 1992, Montesinos took advantage of the situation to even the score with Caretas journalist Gustavo Gorriti who had written articles critical of Montesinos and the Fujimori government. Gorriti was arrested hours after the coup and questioned about what information he had about Montesinos. After two days of interrogation, Gorriti was released to find that all information about Montesinos has been erased from his computer. In the days following the coup, police generals who had arrested Montesinos' former legal clients also received payback as they lost their jobs.

Three months after the auto-coup, the Montesinos-directed Grupo Colina abducted nine students and a professor at La Cantuta University. The case was blown open by General Rodolfo Robles, the third-highest ranking military commander, who took refuge at the US Embassy after he stated in May 1993, "The crime of La Cantuta was committed by a special intelligence unit (known as the Grupo Colina) operating under the orders of Vladimiro Montesinos..." After the civilian judge indicated her intention to call Montesinos and Army Chief General Nicolas de Bari Hermoza to testify in the case, the Peruvian Congress (installed by Fujimori after the auto-coup in April 1992) passed a law moving jurisdiction in the case from the civilian courts to military courts. In March 1998, former Peruvian Army Intelligence Agent Luisa Zanatta said that army intelligence agents killed fellow Mariella Barreto Riofano because she gave a magazine information about human rights violations and where from the La Cantuta massacre were buried. Shortly before Barreto was killed, she told Zanatta that she was part of the Grupo Colina death squad responsible for the La Cantuta massacre. Barreto's body was found by a roadside on March 29, 1997. The body showed evidence that Barreto was tortured

Continued on page 19

Montesinos...

Continued from page 18

before she was decapitated and her hands and feet cut off.

When self-confessed drug trafficker Demetrio Chavez, known as *El Vaticano*, was arrested in 1996, he was originally charged with drug trafficking. However, after he claimed that he paid \$50,000 per month to Montesinos in exchange for protection of his jungle drug operations, he was charged with collaborating with terrorists. This gave the military jurisdiction his case. Later, a visibly dazed Chavez retracted his allegations and Chavez' lawyer claimed Chavez had been coerced. According to the Los Angeles Times, transcripts of radio intercepts compiled by Peru's navy intelligence gave the impression that Chavez was an ally of the military, as he talked of working with military officers.

In October 1996, Montesinos was seen in public for the first time in years when he met with former General Barry McCaffrey, head of the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy. Despite the failure of Peruvian authorities to investigate Montesinos' links to confess drug trafficker *El Vaticano*, McCaffrey stated his belief that the Peruvian government has the political will to eradicate drug production.

Although Peru receives millions of dollars from the U.S. each year (\$25 million in fiscal year 1997) to support anti-narcotic efforts, Peru continues to provide the largest source of coca leaf, coca paste, and cocaine base (The Supply of Illicit Drugs to the United States, The NNICC REPORT 1996, U.S. DEA). The March 1998 U.S. Government Accounting Office report, Status of U.S. International Counternarcotics Activities, cited widespread corruption in Peru and noted that four previous reports had "concluded that U.S. officials lacked sufficient oversight of aid to ensure that it was being used effectively and as intended in Peru..."

Less than a year after Demetrio Chavez claimed that he paid Montesinos \$50,000 a month to protect his drug operations, the Peruvian press reported that Montesinos' tax records showed that he had an income of \$600,000 per year, although his official salary was just \$18,000 per year. Does Montesinos augment his government salary from the CIA, skimming US funds for anti-drug operations, drug traffickers, or all of the above? We're unlikely to know unless the US decides to tell what it knows about Montesinos or the Fujimori-controlled Peruvian Congress decides to investigate him.

Letters to the Editor

Derechos, I am writing too express my unbelievable dismay after reading the Without Impunity newsletter from Derechos. In describing human rights your editors have included a section that includes opinions concerning female genital mutilation that are clearly divisive and not beneficial to children.

To describe female genital mutilation as something some human rights activists approve of as a traditional practice of millions of women is duplicitous and unethical.

The deception described in the phrases stating "conflicts between some civil rights - whose conception has been mostly western in nature - and cultural practices of non-western communities..." and "some (by no means all) human rights activists" is that many AFRICAN women (and even some men) have been fighting genital mutilation for years, often calling it barbaric (their own words). And surely, anyone who does not consider the butchering of a girl's body a violation is not a human rights activist.

The traditional practice by millions of women is merely slaves behaving like slaves. Mutilation was the women's indoctrination into slavery. It was torture. And one day she will be ready and willing to torture her own daughter.

Slavery works best when other slaves are put in charge of certain details. Women are powerless in most of Africa, except for enforcing mutilation. Whether it is Bondo Society women pretending to have great power and enticing girls to submit quietly, or a Somali woman holding her daughter down during a horrific infibulation, the purpose is the same.

Enslavement perpetrated by other slaves. These women are incapable of normal thought process. They have lost their sense of empathy.

To defend mutilation is to defend the indefensible. Derechos has crossed the line of civility. You have sent messages to numerous people containing pro-mutilation proselytizing. You have NOT done the right thing. You have pandered to the arrogance of an Africa that enslaves its daughters. You have made a mockery of decent Africans who struggle against the horror of mutilation. But worst of all, you may silence people who might speak out against mutilation by telling them that it is a cultural practice that is approved of by human rights activists. You have committed a crime against humanity - against children who are destined to suffer. May you be haunted by the screams of a little girl.

Susan Sylvers

NOTE: Letter edited for brevity. This letter is a response to the following sentences from our June 1998 article "What are Human Rights", by which we stand. "Moreover, the are often conflicts between some civil rights - whose conception has been mostly western in nature - and cultural practices of non-western communities. For example, while some (by no means, all) human rights activists consider female (though usually not male) genital mutilation a violation to the right of physical integrity, it is a traditional practice of millions of women."

Want to know more?

You can find additional information and sources for the articles that appear in this newsletter in Without Impunity's Resource page:
<http://www.derechos.org/wi/2/resources.html>

Do you have a question?

If you have a question about human rights, activism (and even the internet), please send it our way. We hope to inaugurate a Question & Answer section in our next issue.

Contributions Welcomed!

We welcome all types of contributions to Without Impunity. Articles on human rights topics, opinion pieces, poems, art, book reviews - whatever - if it has to do with human rights, feel free to submit it. You are also invited to submit letters to the editor and tell us what you like and what you don't - and what we got wrong! Of course, we retain the rights to not publish and to edit any submissions. Send all submissions to wi@derechos.org.

Urgent Action

Approximately 70 minors, aged 7 to 17 years of age, and 99 adults have been arbitrarily arrested in Bahrain from March to June 1998.

They had reportedly been severely beaten at the time of their arrest and it is feared that their physical and psychological integrity is at great risk considering that detainees, in general, are held "incommunicado" for long periods of time. Furthermore, it is believed that there are other similar cases which have not been documented.

Please write to the Bahrain authorities urging that they take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of all the minors held in detention and order their immediate release in the absence of valid legal charges or, if such charges exist, bring them before an impartial and competent tribunal and guarantee their procedural rights in all times. Write to:

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