

MINNESOTA LAWYERS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

APRIL 1987

COMMITTEE TO HONOR FAMILIES OF DETAINED AND "DISAPPEARED" AT THIRD ANNUAL DINNER

The Minnesota Lawyers Committee will honor family groups for detained and "disappeared" persons at its third annual Human Rights Awards Dinner on Thursday, June 4 at International Market Square in Minneapolis. Representatives from family human rights groups in Argentina, Guatemala and South Africa will be recognized for their efforts to promote human rights in their respective countries. By striving to investigate the fate of the "disappeared," advocate against unjust political detentions, and encourage their government's adherence to internationally accepted human rights standards, family human rights groups have established themselves as vital regional means of aiding relatives of the detained and "disappeared."

Jan Smaby, co-host of KTCA's "Almanac" and President of Spring Hill Center, will present the Committee's 1987 awards to Isabel de Mariani and Estela de Carlotto, President and Vice President of the Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo) in Argentina; Nineth de Garcia,



Isabel de Mariani (left) and Estela de Carlotto (second from left), President and Vice President of the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo will be in Minnesota June 4 to receive the Committee's 1987 Human Rights Award

President of the Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo (Mutual Support Group) of Guatemala; as well as a representative of the Detainees' Parents Support Committee in South Africa. Each of these groups is respected internationally for its courageous grassroots support for relatives who are detained or "disappeared."

Co-hosts for the event, in addition to Smaby, will be Mayor Donald Fraser, Geri Joseph, Mayor George Latimer, Arthur Naftalin, Bishop David Preus, James Shannon, and Rabbi Max Shapiro. The Human Rights Awards Dinner is the Committee's 1987 fundraising event. Tickets are \$100 apiece. Formal invitations to the dinner will be sent out later this month.

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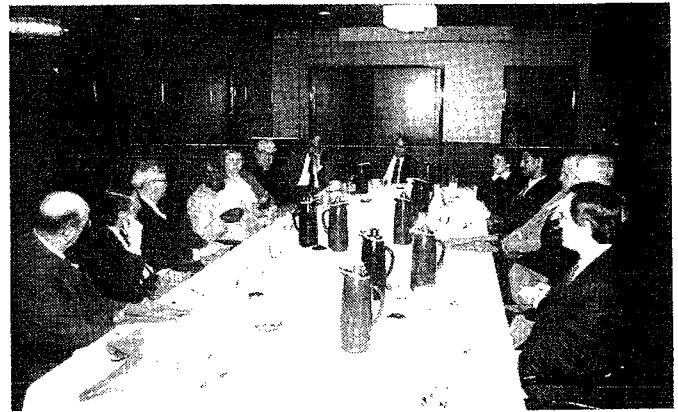
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FARISANI IN MINNESOTA FOR TREATMENT

Reverend T. Simon Farisani arrived in Minnesota on March 12 to seek treatment at the Center for Victims of Torture. Rev. Farisani, Dean of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venda, South Africa was released on January 30, 1987, after two months of detention by the government authorities.

During his two visits to Minnesota in 1986, Rev. Farisani was introduced to the Center for Victims of Torture (formerly, the Minnesota Center for Torture Victims). He contacted the Center to arrange for treatment because government-imposed travel restrictions made it impossible for Farisani to find the treatment he desired in South Africa. Although Rev. Farisani was not physically tortured during his most recent detention, he was subjected to a great deal of psychological torture.

On Monday, March 30, the Minnesota Lawyers Committee and Minnesota Attorney General Hubert Humphrey, III co-sponsored a breakfast in honor of



Farisani was honored at a breakfast on March 30

Rev. Farisani. Guests at the breakfast included clergy from various churches and synagogues who had joined in the effort for Farisani's release from detention. Several MLC Board members also attended the breakfast.

Rev. Farisani was recently joined by his wife and children in Minnesota.

SANCTUARY WORKER NOW PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

Stacey Lynn Merkt, an American sanctuary worker imprisoned in Fort Worth, Texas, has been designated by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience. Merkt was a volunteer at Casa Romero, a church shelter for Central American refugees in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. She is the first person in the U.S. to be adopted as a prisoner of conscience since 1979.

Merkt was first arrested for her work on behalf of Central American refugees in 1984, and two cases were subsequently brought against her in Brownsville, Texas. In the first case, she was convicted of three counts of transporting illegal aliens. However, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the conviction and ordered a new trial. All charges in this case were dropped on June 2, 1986.

In the second trial, Merkt was again convicted of conspiring to transport illegal aliens. She received a sentence of 18 months, of which 179 days were to be served. Merkt, who is married and expecting her first child, told the court she had acted in the belief that the Salvadorans she assisted were genuine refugees whose lives would

be endangered if they were returned to their countries. Merkt also noted that the U.S. government routinely denies claims of asylum if brought by Salvadorans or Guatemalans.

Amnesty International adopted Merkt as a prisoner of conscience because the Salvadorans she assisted could have been in danger of human rights violations of concern to the organization, including arbitrary seizure, torture, "disappearance", and extrajudicial execution, if returned to their country of origin. Such violations have been widely reported in El Salvador and Guatemala.

Merkt is only one of several people charged with immigration offenses because of their work in the sanctuary movement. According to Stephen Cooper, a St. Paul attorney who defended Merkt and other sanctuary workers, a majority of the trials of sanctuary workers have resulted in acquittals. He added that the conviction of Merkt has not weakened the movement. "The commitment of sanctuary workers is too strong to be extinguished by the government's actions," he said.

FILIPINOS SUFFER FROM INCREASED FIGHTING

Several Lawyers Committee members recently returned from a study tour of the Philippines co-sponsored by the Lawyers Committee and the Augsburg Center for Global Education. Ron Rosenbaum, an attorney from St. Paul, interviewed farmers, church leaders, human rights leaders and government officials in the Philippines while on the tour. What follows is an excerpt from an article by Rosenbaum about human rights abuses in the Philippines. In the article, which appeared in the Minneapolis Tribune on March 22, Rosenbaum concluded that while a year has passed since the "People Power" revolution swept President Corazon Aquino to power, serious human rights problems remain.

The candlelight in the bamboo hut danced across Emelio Andujado's face, playing tricks with the shadows as he told his tale. "Last April my brother Eldarico had been a leader in the strike against the sugar planters on a nearby hacienda. Armed men working with the military threatened him and he hid. They caught him a few days later and took him at gunpoint. Two days later we found him in a shallow grave near here with his ear hacked off and stab wounds all over his body."

Earlier that afternoon, on a nearby hacienda where she was hiding, Cristina Villacuatro related a similar story. "My husband, Rodrigo, was an active organizer in the Sugar Workers Union. He was approached by armed men associated with the military at a dance. There were words between them and he was shot. They carried his body away and we later found it with his eyes gouged out, his skull cracked, his tongue and ear cut off and all his teeth pulled out. I'm afraid they're now after me and my children."

It is civilians such as these who appear to be paying the highest price



Maria Vazquez, a woman whose husband was killed by armed men associated with the military

for the increased fighting between the government troops and communist insurgents. For the 2 million residents of the once sugar-rich island province of Negros, about 500 miles southwest of Manila, the problems are particularly acute.



Site of a massacre at Escalante, Negros

The military presence on Negros has increased dramatically, although observers report little evidence of increased rebel activity since the cease-fire. Armed forces on the island include Task Force Sugar Land, a special unit--8000 strong--in charge of battling the guerrillas.

With the military buildup has come an intense anti-Communist propaganda campaign, coupled with the rise of so-called "armed independent vigilante groups" terrorizing and murdering those identified as Communist sympathizers.

Bacolod, the major city in northern Negros, has seen a sharp increase in vigilante attacks on union workers, church leaders, and human rights lawyers, according to Rolando Villamore, a lawyer at the Social Action Center in Bacolod.

"These armed independent groups are tied in with and trained by the military. They appear to be part of the counterinsurgency program," said Errol Gatumbato, research director of Task Force Detainees-Negros, a nationwide

OAKDALE DELEGATION FINDS CONDITIONS IMPROVED

By Lisa Knazan

In February, the Lawyers Committee sent its second delegation to investigate conditions at the Oakdale Detention Facility in Oakdale, Louisiana. The group included attorneys Karen Ellingson, Lisa Knazan, Carol Merlin-Queensen, and Ron Rosenbaum, as well as Kai Bjerkness, an aide to Congressman Gerry Sikorski.

From March through November, 1986, Oakdale had been functioning as a stress-filled immigration mill where primarily Central American refugees were shipped in and out, many without access to counsel. A previous Lawyers Committee fact-finding group visited the facility in November, 1986 and heard of many human rights abuses as well as irregularities in Immigration Court proceedings.

In November, the Immigration and Naturalization Service announced a "change of mission" at the facility to the detention of Mariel Cubans. During December and January, 600 detainees were transferred to Oakdale mainly from the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, but also from INS facilities in Miami and El Paso. The Cubans arrived at Oakdale with renewed hope about their long awaited release, and are on their best behavior at this time. Moreover, all detainees interviewed by the Lawyers Committee delegation said that conditions at Oakdale are far better than those in Atlanta.

Oakdale is to be a transition place for up to 900 Cubans, the majority of whom have been recommended by the INS for re-parole into halfway houses. Those from Miami and El Paso have not yet been screened by INS for reparole. It is not clear when their cases will be reviewed or under what guidelines.

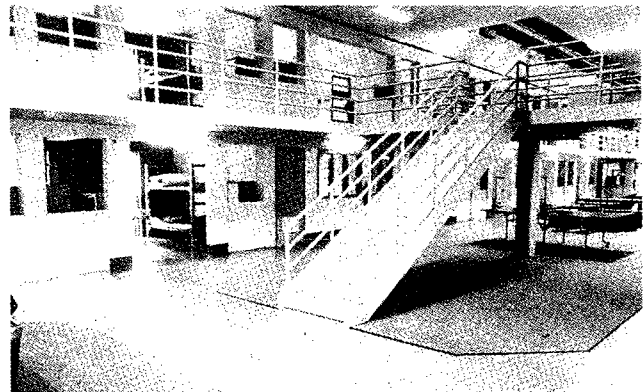
The reason for bringing Cubans to the facility, according to the BOP Warden, is to economize on the limited resources of the Justice Department's Community Relations Service (CRS). This agency is responsible for coordinating the release of Cubans into federally-approved halfway houses around the country. Since December 1986, approximately 48 Cubans have been released to the five approved halfway houses located in St. Louis, Detroit, Kansas City, Chicago and Columbus, Ohio. There are no approved facilities in Miami, the city where most Cubans have family connections.

The halfway houses send

representatives to Oakdale on a rotating basis to interview prospective detainees. The Cubans will be interviewed in chronological order, i.e. the first to arrive at Oakdale will be the first to be interviewed for release. The detainees know very little about the timetable for their release and wish they could be better informed.

Since the arrival of the Cubans, the facility has dedicated some of its resources to educational programs, with an emphasis on English classes. Unfortunately, only about 150 detainees can presently be accommodated. An elaborate profit-making prison industry system is also planned for the facility. Currently, a towel factory employs a small number of detainees. Both the educational and employment programs have long waiting lists.

Three hundred more Cubans are to be transferred to Oakdale soon from Atlanta



Interior of Dormitory at Oakdale and St. Elizabeth's prison in Washington, D.C. This group will occupy the newly completed mental health unit.

These Cubans have significant mental health problems; many are on psychotropic medications or are considered heavy suicide risks. It is anticipated that the Public Health Service will get involved in locating appropriate placements for release of these detainees to halfway houses as well. However, little is known about the duration of stay for Cubans in this "mental health" group.

The INS has stated that after about two years, Oakdale will have released all its Cubans to halfway houses and will then revert back to its original population of multi-national immigration detainees. The BOP Warden, however, believes that the processing timetable is unpredictable, and that it could take up to five years to complete the process.

Lisa Knazan is an attorney with Mid-Minnesota Legal Assistance

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

I was fortunate to attend the 43rd session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva in March. The Commission is the UN legislative body which addresses internationally recognized human rights, including the right to be free from arbitrary detention, torture or execution.

As a first-time observer at the Commission, I came away with mixed feelings. I was impressed at the diplomatic progress that has been made in the area of human rights at the UN, yet disturbed at the politicization of the debate on these important issues.

With so much personal suffering due to human rights violations by governments, I find myself feeling impatient at the slow pace of international diplomacy. Yet, it is only international pressure, from private groups as well as governments, that can put a stop to these brutal activities.

Forty-three countries are voting members of the Commission, representing about one third of the countries in the UN. The countries represent a fairly even distribution of the world's major geographic and political blocs.

The Commission meets once a year for six weeks and creates a series of resolutions that serve as standards for governmental actions concerning the human rights of their citizens.

The activity on the floor is sometimes fascinating though frequently tedious because of time-consuming procedural jockeying or empty political rhetoric. International celebrities occasion-ally make appearances, livening the mood at the Commission. Anatoly Scharansky and Yuri Orlov, recently-released Soviet political prisoners, presented their views on human rights in the USSR. Carmen Gloria Quintana, who survived an attempt by Chilean police officers to burn her alive, gave moving testimony about human rights violations in Chile.

Verbal theatrics are the order of the day at the Commission. Governmental and nongovernmental representatives alike are permitted to give short speeches relevant to the agenda items on the floor. The result is often dramatic. A human rights group which may be subject to persecution within the borders of its own country is suddenly given the opportunity to confront its government, whose delegates are sitting

in the same hall. Mothers of the Disappeared spoke about human rights violations in Chile and Guatemala and the Baha'i International Community gave testimony on Iran's ruthless persecution of members of their religion.

The center of drama on this year's Commission agenda was a United States resolution expressing concern over allegations of human rights violations in Cuba. The U.S. delegation made a tremendous effort to gain support for its resolution, including a special trip to Geneva by General Vernon Walters, head of the permanent U.S. delegation to the United Nations, and several emotional speeches by members of the U.S. delegation and former prisoners in Cuba. For special effects, the U.S. brought to Geneva several former Cuban prisoners, some of whom were blind and lame, and drove them in vans to the Palace of Nations to fill the edges of the great hall where the Commission meets.

Despite its efforts, the U.S. lost its resolution against Cuba by one vote on a motion not to consider brought by India, and supported by many non-aligned countries. It was evident that the non-aligned countries wanted to bow out of any confrontation between the East and West over the Cuba resolution. Despite the benign language of the resolution, the U.S.'s heavy-handed presentation seemed to scare off the support of many countries. The government of Cuba, of course, was no better. Its own counterattack--a resolution citing human rights violations by the U.S. government against blacks and Indians--fell short of votes on an identical procedural motion brought by India.

Despite the political maneuvering, the endless hours of hot air and the negotiations nipped in the bud upon orders from back home, many actions taken by the Commission were encouraging. Important resolutions passed concerning conscientious objection as an exercise of the right to freedom of thought, against torture, and against summary and arbitrary executions. The Commission also passed resolutions addressing human rights violations in South Africa, Afghanistan, Chile and Sri Lanka, among others.

The UN process is indeed slow, but the importance of the work of the Commission on Human Rights should not be underestimated.

Barbara A. Frey

MINNESOTA LAWYERS COMMITTEE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MLC EVENTS

Thursday, April 23: Nancy Arnison and Ron Rosenbaum will speak on "Human Rights in the Philippines," at 12:15 p.m. in the 20th floor conference room of Dorsey & Whitney, 2000 First Bank Place East, Minneapolis. The two lawyers participated in the MLC's travel seminar to the Philippines from February 22 to March 8, 1987. The group was in the Philippines over the first anniversary of President Cory Aquino's rise to power. See article, page 2. Bring a bag lunch.

Friday, May 1: An Asylum Training Program will be presented in Duluth from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon at 720 Midwest Federal Building. The program will cover the basics of asylum law and prepare volunteers to offer free legal assistance through the Pro Bono Asylum Project. The program will feature Attorneys Carol Merlin Queensen and Marie Bibus, who will also show highlights of the 1986 training seminar. For more information contact Marie Bibus at (612) 341-3302 or Jack Setterlund at (218) 727-8451.

Friday, May 8: Peter Thompson will speak on "Judicial Independence in Sri Lanka" at 12:15 p.m. at Briggs and Morgan, 2400 IDS Center in Minneapolis. Thompson is representing the Minnesota Lawyers Committee on a mission to Sri Lanka during the first two weeks in April. Bring a bag lunch.

Thursday, May 14: Lev Fabrikant, a former refusnik and Jewish activist will speak on "Soviet Emigration Today," at 12:00 noon in the basement cafeteria of the State Office Building in St. Paul. Fabrikant was active in the Riga refusnik community and gave seminars on Jewish topic in his home. He was warned by the KGB to curtail his activities. He was recently allowed to emigrate to Israel. His visit to Minnesota is part of a national tour. The May 14 lunch talk will be co-sponsored by the Minnesota Elected Officials for Soviet Jewry and the Minnesota-Dakotas Action Committee for Soviet Jewry.

Tuesday and Wednesday, June 2-3: "Victims of Torture: Recognition and Treatment," a two day seminar will be presented at the University Radisson by the Center for Victims of Torture, in cooperation with the Minnesota Lawyers Committee. The seminar will feature representatives from the Center for Treatment and Rehabilitation in Copenhagen, Denmark, and medical and psychological experts in torture treatment in the United States. More details will be featured in the next MLC newsletter.

Thursday, June 4: Third Annual Human Rights Award Dinner honoring the families of the detained and "disappeared" from Argentina, Guatemala and South Africa. 5:30 cocktails, 6:30 dinner, International Market Square, Minneapolis. Honorary Co-hosts include Mayor Donald Fraser, Mayor George Latimer, Bishop David Preus, Rabbi Max Shapiro, Art Naftalin, Geri Joseph, Jan Smaby and Jim Shannon. Tickets \$100 apiece.

OTHER EVENTS

Friday and Saturday, April 24-25: Don Mosley, founder and member of Jubilee Partners, a Christian community in Georgia, will be in town to speak on the community's work of helping Central Americans emigrate to Canada to avoid deportation. Mosley will speak at 5:30 p.m. Friday at Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis and 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota. For more info, contact Linda Gesling at 646-4763 (h) or 870-1501 (w).

Wednesday, April 1: Lisa Brodayaga, one of the defense lawyers in the Texas sanctuary cases and a consultant to the Salvadoran Human Rights Commission will speak about alternative legal careers at 12:15 p.m. in Room 40 of the University of Minnesota Law School and at 5 p.m. in Room 309 at William Mitchell College of Law.

PROJECT UPDATES

Guatemala Mission Planned for June:

Judge Isabel Gomez-Edwards will lead a Minnesota Lawyers Committee delegation on a fact-finding mission to Guatemala from June 5 to 14, 1987. Other delegates include attorneys Tom Barrett, Michael Persellin and Louis Smith. The delegation will investigate the status of the habeas corpus cases filed by the Minnesota Lawyers Committee and seek to gain an understanding of the Guatemalan judicial process concerning habeas corpus. The delegation intends to meet with members of the government, the judiciary, the bar, the U.S. Embassy, local human rights groups and religious institutions.

Thompson to attend conference in

Sri Lanka: Local attorney Peter Thompson and his wife, Rikki will represent the Minnesota Lawyers Committee at a conference on "Law Enforcement Agencies and Their Role in the Implementation of the International Bill of Human Rights," in Colombo, Sri Lanka from March 30 until April 8, 1987. Thompson, an active member of the Committee's Inquiry Procedures Project will distribute copies of The Minnesota Protocol: Promoting Human Rights Through an Adequate Death Investigation and Autopsy for discussion at the conference.

Committee Submits Amicus Brief in Case Against Marcos:

Attorneys at Dorsey & Whitney are preparing an amicus brief on the issue of head of state immunity for submission in Sison v. Marcos in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Plaintiffs in the case allege that they are victims or survivors of victims of torture and illegal detention on the part of ex-President Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines. The case is on appeal from the dismissal of Judge Fong of the U.S. District Court in Hawaii as non-justiciable under the "act of state" doctrine. Attorneys working on the amicus brief include Leslie Anderson, Steve Kinnunen, Jim Langdon, Ray Meyer and Jane Sullivan.

Ellingson in Washington, D.C. to

Discuss Mariel Cubans: Attorney Karen Ellingsen recently joined members of a national coalition in Washington, D.C. to inform members of Congress about the status of Mariel Cuban detainees in United States jails and prisons. Ellingson was part of the Minnesota Lawyers Committee delegation that investigated the Cuban's detention in the Oakdale, Louisiana. (See article, page 4). The Coalition in Support of the Mariel Cubans recommends the certification of additional halfway houses for quicker processing of the nearly 3,000 Cubans currently in detention.

MOTHERS COMMITTEE LEADER DENIED U.S. VISA

On February 17, 1987, Maria Teresa Tula, a leader of the Committee of the Mothers of the Disappeared in El Salvador, and her two children were denied United States visas at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. Tula was invited by twelve members of Congress and over 80 humanitarian organizations to participate in a national tour. Tula was one of the four "mothers" denied a visa by the State Department in 1984 to receive the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award.

Under the McCarren-Walter Act, the State Department has determined that Ms. Tula is a member of a communist or anarchist group who may engage in activities prejudicial to the public interest or endanger the welfare, safety or security of the United States. Human rights groups are concerned for Ms. Tula's wellbeing because of the rejection of the visa request by the State Department. Ms. Tula was recently released from detention in El Salvador, where she had been subjected to ill-treatment.

- Comadres Bulletin

REPRESENTATIVES OF W. SAHARA TOUR U.S.

On March 19 and 20, the Lawyers Committee hosted the visit of Mrs. Zahra Ramdane of the Sahrawi Red Crescent (the Red Cross of Western Sahara, Africa) and Ms. Teresa Smith, president of the Western Sahara Campaign in New York. Mrs. Ramdane and Ms. Smith met with lawyers, journalists, and members of the Red Cross in the Twin Cities to discuss human rights conditions in Western Sahara.

The Polisario Front in Western Sahara has been at war with neighboring Morocco since 1976. Morocco, with its 100,000 troops, currently occupies about 1/6 of Western Sahara. According to Mrs. Ramdane, the war has forced about 200,000 Sahrawis to flee their homes and live as refugees in desert camps. Human rights problems caused by the militarization of the Western Sahara include arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and "disappearances" of hundreds of Sahrawis.

During April, Mrs. Ramdane and Ms. Smith will be speaking in cities throughout the southern United States about the violence and widespread hunger in the Western Sahara. The purpose of the tour, sponsored by the Africa Peace Committee, is to generate public pressure for changes in U.S. policies toward Africa and to promote support for human rights, self-determination, and an end to militarization and hunger.

PHILIPPINES from page 3

church-affiliated organization that monitors human rights abuses. "More than 23 civilians have been (murdered) in the last year while 16 have disappeared," Gatumbato said. Many of the bodies bear evidence of torture and mutilation. We have received only two complaints of rebel violations during the same period."

The failure of the government to disarm the civilian vigilante groups concerns human rights activists including Rene Sarmiento, a lawyer now serving on the Presidential Committee on Human Rights (PCHR). The PCHR was established by Aquino to investigate and punish those committing human rights violations under government authority. Sarmiento notes that the majority of human rights abuses attributed to paramilitary groups were alleged to have been committed by the Civilian Home Defense Force, a group notorious for its

abuses of civilians during the Marcos regime.

Longtime human rights observers in Manila believe Negros' problems are not unique. "We have been receiving very similar reports from Mindanao," said Abelardo Apotadero, Jr., a human rights lawyer and member of the PCHR. "We have heard of mass evacuations of civilians in Davao City, capital of Mindanao, and mass graves being dug up in the area." Mindanao is an island province about 600 miles south of Manila.

The PCHR is currently investigating the Feb. 10 killing of 17 civilians and one soldier in the town of Lupao, 90 miles north of Manila. Sources believe the military massacred the civilians more than an hour after rebels had fled after the shooting of a soldier during a skirmish.

Some claim that the failure to disarm the paramilitary groups is evidence of a compromise which, in effect, provides military support for the coup-shaken government.

For its part, the Aquino administration is optimistic but appears caught in the middle. "We're working on reform and reorientation of the military. We're having some problems, but we're moving in the right direction," said Joker Arroyo, Aquino's executive secretary and himself a detainee during the Marcos regime. "The abuses are not even 10 percent of those under Marcos," he said. "They're more in the manner of arrest and detention--no longer torture."

But for some, like Cristina Villacuatro and Emelio Andujado in northern Negros, Aquino's commitment to human rights has not yet affected them. Villacuatro, in fear for her life, is fleeing with her five children to join her parents in the south. Andujado has no where to go. "These armed groups, with help from the military, are getting more powerful every day." Andujado said. "They have guns. What can we do?"

APRIL 6 INDIAN RIGHTS TALK SET

Robert (Tim) Coulter, Executive Director of the Indian Law Resource Center will speak on "Indian Rights: the Battle for Change," on Monday, April 6 at 12:15 p.m. at the U of M Law School, Rare Books Room. Mr. Coulter is an expert on the issues concerning indigenous populations of Central and South America. A 3:15 p.m. reception in the Rare Books Room is open to the public.

LETTERS REQUESTED ON BEHALF OF KENYAN LAWYER

On March 12, 1987 it was disclosed in the High Court in Nairobi, Kenya that Gibson Kamau Kuria, a lawyer and active advocate for prisoners of conscience in that country, had been detained under the Preservation of Public Security Act. The Preservation of Public Security Act in Kenya provides for detention of an indefinite period without charge or trial on grounds of public security. Gibson Kamau Kuria has recently been declared a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International.

The Minnesota Lawyers Committee requests members to send a variation of the following appeal letter to Kenyan authorities:

Your Excellency:

I am writing to express my concern over the detention without charge or trial of (my colleague) Mr. Gibson Kamau Kuria, a lawyer and law lecturer in your country. According to my information, Mr. Kuria has been detained under the Preservation of Public Security Act and remains in detention without charge or trial.

Let me respectfully remind you that under the rules of law recognized by peace-loving nations, Mr. Kuria has the right to know the reasons for his detention, contact members of his family, obtain legal counsel and receive humane treatment while he is in custody.

Mr. Kuria appears to me to be a prisoner of conscience and thus imprisoned for his nonviolent opinions and his legal activities to defend clients in the name of human rights rather than having committed any unlawful act. I urge you to promptly release Mr. Kuria if you have no plans to formally charge him with a recognizably criminal offense and proceed with a fair trial. I would further appreciate your immediate attention to the well-being of (my fellow colleague) Gibson Kamau Kuria.

Respectfully,

Appeals to:

The Honorable Daniel Arap Moi
President of the Republic of Kenya
Office of the President
P.O. Box 30510
Nairobi, Kenya

The Honorable Matthew Muli
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
P.O. Box 40112
Nairobi, Kenya

The Honorable Justus Ole Tipis
Minister of State
Office of the President
P.O. Box 30510
Nairobi, Kenya

Mr. James Kanyotu
Director of Special Branch
Kenya Police Force Headquarters
P.O. Box 30083
Nairobi, Kenya

Copies to:

Justice Cecil Miller
Acting Chief Justice
Chief Justice's Chambers
High Court
P.O. Box 30041
Nairobi, Kenya

The Honorable Mwai Kibaki
Vice President and Minister of
Home Affairs
Office of the Vice President
P.O. Box 30520
Nairobi, Kenya

Ambassador Sospeter O. Mageto
Embassy of Kenya
2249 R Street NW
Washington, DC 20008

The Kenya Times
P.O. 30958
Nairobi, Kenya

Lawyers are asked to copy appeals to:

Mr. G.B.M. Kariuki, Chairman
Law Society of Kenya
P.O. Box 72219
Nairobi, Kenya

bcc:

Minnesota Lawyers International Human
Rights Committee

MEMBERSHIP NEWS is a publication of the Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee, a non-profit organization committed to promoting human rights and investigating human rights violations in the United States and abroad.

The Minnesota Lawyers Committee advocates against individual human rights abuses, researches and investigates human rights conditions in other countries, encourages the adoption of international human rights standards by all countries, and educates the membership, the Bar, political leaders and the public about human rights issues.

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MLC HOLDS LOGO CONTEST

Taking our cue from the experience of the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Lawyers Committee has chosen not to spend \$100,000 on a new logo.

The Minnesota Lawyers Committee is holding a contest for the best logo design for our organization. All closet doodlers are invited to enter as many times as they wish. The winner will receive a free ticket to the 1987 Human Rights Awards Dinner on June 4th. Designs may be submitted in pencil or in ink. The deadline for contest entries is May 15, 1987.

We would like the logo to represent the Committee's local activity on international issues. Inclusion of the (long) title of the Committee is optional. The Executive and Newsletter Committees will judge the contest.

**MINNESOTA LAWYERS
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

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