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SCHOOLGIRLS STRIPPED AND SEARCHED

Two members of the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF), were suspended from duty yesterday and will answer disciplinary charges in connection with the "strip and search" of fifth and fourth form students of the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic School.

This is the latest development in the saga which unfolded last week when the police, called in to investigate a report of an \$800 theft from a secretary's purse at the institution, conducted a body search of about 25 female students.

Many of the students refused to be searched by two women police and pandemonium broke out in the new wing of the school.

Public Relations Officer of the RBPF, issued the following statement late yesterday afternoon: "Relative to reports carried in various sections of the media, to the effect that children from St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Secondary School, Bridgetown were stripped and searched by police, initial reports were received and disciplinary charges have been made against two male officers of the force who have also been suspended from duties with effect from today.

"Other disciplinary charges are being considered.

"Investigations are being continued and the matter will be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions for direction."

A member of the school's board of management describe the incident as "A very serious matter which the board will have to investigate thoroughly."

An official at the school said that two policemen responded to a call about a theft of \$800 from a purse belonging to a secretary at the school.

The official said after initial inquiries one of the policemen left the building and returned with two policewomen who ordered the students into a classroom used for remedial reading where they were body searched. The girls were in the 14 to 17 age group.

The students had completed term studies in English, biology, arts and craft, shorthand and typewriting, book-keeping, office procedure, cookery and needlework and were preparing to go on their long summer holidays the next day.

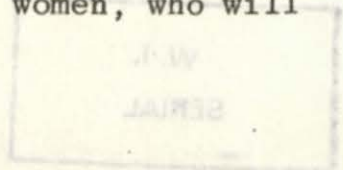
Barbados Advocate

July 20, 1988

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS REJECT FREE TRADE ZONES FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

A number of organizations in Trinidad and Tobago are concerned about government's plans to establish export processing free trade zones (FTZs) in that Caribbean territory. Industry, Enterprise and Tourism Minister Ken Gorden has said that the plan "is being attacked on every front" but is insisting that the idea be given a try.

Supporters of FTZs point to them for easing unemployment and balance of payment problems. But several women's organizations and trade union groups are strongly opposed to FTZs and are calling on Prime Minister Robinson to enlighten the country on the trade zones through public discussions. The local press has reflected concerns about the exploitation of women, who will



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mainly be employed. Fears have also been expressed about potential toxic waste, adverse health conditions, and low wages.

Writer Merle Hodge who works with a group vehemently opposed to the trade zones, points out that governments do not have the freedom to dictate wages and working conditions inside the zones. "That is what free trade zones are all about - freedom to the investors. Governments give up jurisdiction over that part of the country." Under such systems in operation in Jamaica, Mexico and the Phillipines, "women get the messy end of the stick".she said. Hazel Brown, a member of the Prices Commission sees little evidence that FTZs act as a catalyst for industrialization.

(Info from Caribbean Contact
Vol. 16 No. 2 July 1988)

FREE TRADE ZONE WORKERS FIRED

Hundreds of women from the free trade zones of Jamaica have been fired in the wake of demonstrations to protest low wages and poor working conditions (see Woman Struggle No.68). The spate of protests climaxed when 2000 (mainly garment) workers marked International Women's Day this year with a march in Kingston, prompting Prime Minister Edward Seaga to set up a joint industrial Council. Strong reaction from employers resulted in the scrapping of the Council and its replacement by a sole government inquirer. Several free trade zone workers and women's groups have been making submissions to him.

Of the workers who participated in the IWD demonstrations, and have been dismissed, the majority came from East Ocean Textiles, the largest garment multinational in the Kingston Free Trade Zone.

The average take home pay for the 13,600 free trade zone garment workers who have 24,000 dependent children is approximately US \$16.00 per week. Many of these women are single parents and

are demanding an increase that will bring their wage to US \$27.00 per week or US \$0.28 per hour. Other demands are the right to, unionize, a healthier working environment, realistic and attainable production quotas, health insurance and clear guidelines for dismissal. Such demands are being fought for in a climate where Caribbean governments are being criticised for pursuing economic developmental strategies based on the exploitation of cheap female labour.

(Information from News Release;
Sistren Research, 20 Kensington
Cre., Kingston 5, Jamaica and
CAFRA News Vol. 2 No. 2 June 1988)

PHILIPPINE PROBE INTO GIRL'S DEATH

A Philippines Congressional probe will be held into the death of a 12 year old street child in Olongapo. Rosario Baluyot died in May 1987, six months after she was picked up for sex by a tourist, who left a broken tip of a vibrator in her uterus. This resulted in an infection and girl's death.

Heinrich Ritter, an Austrian surgeon, was picked up as a suspect. He was identified by a 14 year old companion of Baluyot. Ritter reportedly made a P20,000 out-of-court settlement with the child's grandmother. A city official accepted a P40,000 bribe to drop charges against Ritter, according to other reports. A court in Olongapo ordered the re-arrest of Ritter after these reports were leaked to the press.

Outwrite Issue 66, June 1988

RE-ARRESTS IN SINGAPORE

Four women were among nine people re-arrested under the Internal Security Act of Singapore on April 19th. Ng Bee Leng, Ching Suan Tze, Tang lay Lee and Wong Souk Yee were originally arrested in May and June 1987 accused, along with 18 other people, of

being involved in a 'Marxist conspiracy plot'. After television appearances in which they 'confessed' their involvement' they were released under Restriction Orders.

On April 18th this year, nine of the ex-detainees issued a statement denying the government's accusations, saying that they had been tortured and forced to make the televised confessions. The following day they were re-arrested and kept in detention.

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ISRAELI WOMEN IN BLACK PICKET

ISRAEL - In three major Israeli cities, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, pickets of women dressed in black take place each Friday afternoon under one slogan: Down With the Occupation!

In each of the cities the women, identified only by the name 'the women in black', have chosen a major intersection where they are visible to hundreds of motorists stuck in the weekend traffic jams. The picket attracts about 150 women each week and is one of the most effective actions of the anti-occupation movement in Israel.

Outwrite Issue 65, May 1988

BRITISH GROUPS AGAINST JACK THE RIPPER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

British feminists are planning actions against a disgusting wave of "celebrations" of the 100th anniversary of "Jack the Ripper's" mass murders of women. There are plans to sell "Jack the Ripper" T-shirts and mugs.

A newly issued "Jack the Ripper" computer game reenacts the murders--using photos of models with their throats cut, not computer graphics. The government has said the game should be

restricted to adults.

Already, a campaign by East London women has prompted the Jack the Ripper Pub to change its name back to the earlier name, Four Bells.

Feminists are asking for protests to be sent to the makers of the computer game: CRL Group PLC, 9 Kings Yard, Carpenters Road, London E 15, England.

Two of the London groups working to combat this trivialization and glorification of violence against women are: WAVAW. c/o A Woman's Place, Hungerford House, Victoria Embankment, London, England. Sexual Violence and the Law Group, c/o Rights of Women, 52-54 Featherstone Street, London, England.

Info. from Trouble & Strife,
in Off Our Backs Vol. xviii
No. 6 June 1988

MAN AWARDED CUSTODY OF CHILDREN OF THE WOMAN HE KILLED

A man in the USA who strangled his wife in front of their two daughters has been granted custody of both children.

The man strangled his wife, to death on December 21, 1984, after an argument about whether she could take the girls shopping and skating. The couple were having marital problems and were planning to separate after Christmas.

The woman's mother picked up the girls after the murder. Both Tracy, age 8, and Dana, age 7, told her they saw the fight. The two girls started mimicking what they saw, pushing and grabbing each other by the neck.

The father was originally charged with murder, but the charges were reduced to voluntary manslaughter when the judge determined the girls were too young to testify against their father. He served 20 months in prison after which he was released and the judge returned custody to him.

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