

# WOMAN

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

# Struggle

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### BARBADOS HOTEL WORKER FIRED OVER HAIRDO

A worker in the Barbados hotel industry has been dismissed from her job as activities hostess because of her hairstyle. According to a report in the local press the young woman said she was informed that she would have to leave the premises if she did not undo her braids. She refused to do either. The General Manager claimed that complaints had been recieved from staff and also guests about the hostess' hairstyle and that she "could not continue working there if her hair was in such a condition.

The young woman said that black women have historically worn braids, adding that the film "The Colour Purple" currently showing in Barbados influenced her to stand up for black women and her principles.

Info. from Sunday Sun Nov. 23, 1986 and Caribbean Today  
(CANA) Nov. 24.

### GUATAMALAN ACTIVIST AND DAUGHTER RECEIVE DEATH THREATS

Amnesty International has expressed concern to President Cerezo of Guatemala at renewed death threats directed at Nineth Montenegro de Garcia, president of a mutual support group of relatives of the "disappeared" in Guatamala. Threats against Nineth and her young daughter followed an army communique issued on September 17, which warned that "if anything fortuitous were to happen to the GAN (Grupo de Apoyo Muto) President or any of its members, it was already anticipated by those who are their puppeteers and who concieved this Machiavellian plan."

On September 21 a second army communique maintained that the first had been misinterpreted and should not be construed as a threat. Amnesty International has stated, however, that given the wording of the first communique and past human rights abuses directed at GAM members, the organization remains concerned about the safety of members of the group.

Amnesty International Newsletter Vol.xvi #11, Nov, 1986

#### ANOTHER MULTINATIONAL GOES OFFSHORE

INTEL (Barbados) Ltd. closed its doors to its 1000, mainly female, non unionised workers last month. The US offshore company which built electronic components has its headquarters in California with subsidiaries in Puerto Rico, Israel and Malaysia.

Two other multinationals have recently closed in Barbados. Last year CORCOM put 250 employees out of work and in August this year TRW announced that it too was pulling out.

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#### JAMAICA'S FREE TRADE ZONE EXAMINED

A seminar on conditions facing women in Jamaica's Free Trade Zone took place in Jamaica recently at the height of public debate over the working conditions and the role of the zones in Jamaica's economic development. The question raised was whether the main social benefit of Free Zone Policy, that is "rapid short term stimulation of employment" of women can compensate for "notoriously low wages, gender subordination, job monotony and insecurity which characterise employment in the Free Zone."

The seminar was sponsored by the Canadian non governmental development agency, CUSO together with the Joint Trade Union Research and Development Centre. Participants included representatives from political parties and the workers themselves who told of arbitrary



dismissals and suspensions, forced overtime work imposed at short notice against the will of the shift workers, inhuman treatment by foreign supervisors mainly from Hong Kong and the Philippines, wages inadequate to meet basic travel, lunch and domestic expenses, lack of trade union representation and more. The Minister of Labour had earlier discounted many of these allegations.

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#### ANC CALLS ON POLICE WOMEN TO RESIGN

The African National Congress has called on women in the South Africa police force to "resign and join the people's struggle for national liberation". A report on the call, which appeared in the journal of the Women's Section of the ANC said, "because of the lack of other employment opportunities ... you have been left with no choice but to participate in your own oppression and repression". The report also pointed to the subordinate position of women in the force. After receiving the lowest wages for doing the most humiliating work, "they still have to go back to the township and face isolation and rejection by their own people."

Voice of Women No.4, 1986

#### WOMAN RATHER BE JAILED THAN TESTIFY

An American woman who had been raped and jailed twice for refusing to testify against her former boyfriend was released after three days. A Judge ordered her jailed when she said she was so afraid of seeing the defendant in court that she would rather leave with her children than testify. She posted bond and was released after four hours. The following day she appeared in court but again refused to testify and was sentenced for 30 days in jail for contempt of court. She would be released, the Judge said, if she decided to testify. However, three days later the same Judge ruled that holding her in jail was further victimization, which was not his intention, and ordered her release. The state prosecutor has requested that the woman's statements to the police made after the alleged assault be admitted as evidence.

JR, info. from New York Times in Off Our Backs Vol.xvi #8  
1986.