

WOMAN

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GABRIELA DENOUNCES MARRIAGE TRADE

The Philippine national organization of women, GABRIELA has strongly protested the most recent Nye Philnor - sponsored trip of Norwegian men to the Philippines. The trip is annually arranged by Nye Philnor, a Norway based penpal club engaging in the mail order bride business.

An advertisement by the agency pitches Filipinas as bestowing thier "faithful friendship for free". GABRIELA stated that "given their destitute state, more and more women (of the Third World) have opted to enter an interracial marriage of convenience to escape the bleak future that awaits them in their impoverished country.

GABRIELA denounced the practice of marriage bureaus, penpal clubs and other agencies "in turning the country into a mecca for lovelorn men" most of whom are Norwegian, Australian and German. "We vehemently protest the use of Filipino women as commodities; packaged and marketed by profit-seeking enterprises in the commercialised marriage circuit.

Outwrite Issue 52, November 1986

MALASIAN WOMEN SEEK AMENDMENT TO RAPE LAW

Complaints from women plantation ^{workers} and factory workers about sexual harrassment has brought forth a proposal to amend the existing rape law from the Malasian National Council of Women's Organizations.

The workers complain that harrassment from male superiors include threats that promotion and job security would be dependent on their "consent" to sexual favours.

The Council's amendment includes extended provision that forbids any male in a position of authority over a woman to abuse that authority to have sexual intercourse with her against her will. The Law Reform Committee of the Malasian Bar Council is considering the proposal.

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URUGUYAN WOMEN PROTEST RAPISTS' "IMPUNITY"

Thousands of women in Uruguay have demonstrated against the 'impunity' of those men responsible for torture, rape and the disappearance of thousands of people.

With Uruguay returning to democratic rule the debate on 'impunity' has seen strong reaction by women who under the theme "Mujeres por la vida y la Justicia" have made a statement to the legislator. It reads in part "... any form of impunity will be a threat to our future, an attack to our dignity. Unsolved, unjudged crimes will make us to re-live the insecurity we knew and which we face."

The Home Minister had said of the raping of women prisoners by military and policemen "... it depends on the rapist's intentions ... if the rapists had good intentions then they will be pardoned because their actions were done in duty to combat subversion"

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NICARAGUAN WOMEN'S LEGAL OFFICE EXPANDS

The Oficina Legal de la Mujer (OLM) in Nicaragua is opening a fifth regional office in Juigalpa. Over 50 women daily visit the office in Managua, the capital for legal advice particularly about domestic violence. The OLM assists them in dealing with the police and in preparing for court, provides counselling on this and other areas such as divorce, maintenance and custody.

The OLM also visits women's work and meeting places to provide information and provoke discussion about women's rights. So far they have trained 462 women who are now able to advise others about their rights. Over the past nine months they have taken up over 5700 cases throughout the country.

In addition to working with individual women, the OLM has submitted radical proposals to the National Assembly for reform on marriage/divorce, custody, paternity and maintenance. "The job of the OLM is not just to 'resolve cases'; it is, and must be more and more for each companera who comes to us, a step towards becoming more conscious of our situation and of the need for women to unite in order to achieve absolute equality, be it social, economic or legal."

Women in other provinces are now demanding the same resources. The Juigalpa office will employ two women lawyers, a psychologist and an administrative worker.

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BRITISH WOMEN MEET SISTERS IN CHILE

A delegation of British women including those from trade unions and miners' support groups who visited Chile earlier this year have published a report called "Somos Mas" ("There are more of us").

The British met the Chileans in the organizations which have evolved for the survival of and in opposition to the Pinochet military regime. In medical centres, soup kitchens self help groups and co-operatives, women have organised services and supplies on a communal basis.

In an interview, a member of the delegation described an incident on International Women's Day, "I witnessed (the Chilean women) walking up to soldiers and putting their hands in front of the soldiers' faces saying 'Our hands are clean; we have no blood on our hands' They were so strong that I was glad they are on our side!"

Faced with the vicious clampdown of the first years of the Pinochet regime, women reacted as mothers and wives; their demand was to know where their sons and husbands had been taken. During the 1970's they organised economically to keep themselves and their communities alive. Now in the 1980's the organizations have developed a more directly political aim - to bring down the Pinochet regime.

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