

Juspax

Bolivia: A Mouse Roars

Bolivia is a landlocked country in the heart of South America. Precisely because of its central geographical location it has become a symbol to further development of Latin America. Ernesto (Che) Guevara chose Bolivia for the second revolutionary effort on the South American continent (history will give judgement on the Cuban revolution). For the very same reasons, the United States State Department has followed the history of Bolivia closely.

Once again the world's attention is focused on the people of Bolivia. After almost seven years of political stability in a country that has a history of political instability, President Hugo Banzer Suarez not only has called for election, a move that all had anticipated and had been promised, but he withdrew himself as a possible candidate. When there has been a great centralization of power backed by the military there was suddenly a scramble for positions.

Under the Banzer regime, backed and encouraged by the financial interests of the upper classes as well as the international markets, serious questions were raised over the price that was being paid for the economic growth. Union leadership, traditionally the most powerful force in the political arena, had been controlled by the government since November 1974. At that time the government replaced the elected union leaders with work coordinators. Consequently the union leadership found themselves with three options -- jail for continued resistance to the government, exile either self-inflicted or government enforced, or

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fading into the wood-work.

At the same time the union leadership was being dismantled, all political parties were experiencing similar fates. Many military persons and leaders of the major political parties had fled to Caracas, Mexico City, Lima or Buenos Aires. With the announcement of the resumption of the political process and the withdrawal of Banzer as the "official" candidate, the exiles began to return home.

In the midst of this return, several wives and 14 miners' children called on the government to grant a general amnesty for all political prisoners and exiles and remove all military units from the mining districts. (The miners are the strongest political group in Bolivia and have been subject to much control.)

This little group captured the spirit of the entire nation. While the government refused to take the group seriously, the wives were joined by students, priests, returning exiles, and the like. What started out as a small group of women mushroomed into a coalition of more than 400 persons. It was at this point that Banzer began to formulate a response to the strikers.

His first move was to enlist the support of the Catholic Church. In a hastily planned meeting, President Banzer asked that Cardinal Maurer, the archbishop of Sucre, mediate the conflict. A conciliatory statement submitted to the cardinal contained a number of expedients. Amnesty was conceded but it excluded all those that had broken the current emergency regulations. The cardinal, thinking that both parties had participated in the statement, signed it only to find out subsequently that he had been used.

As the cardinal began to remove himself from the statement, the strike gained momentum. What had grown to some 400

swelled to a total of 1,380. When the government did not budge, the Miners Federation called for a 24 hour hunger strike.

The Bolivian Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, an ecumenical Church sponsored body, strongly supported the hunger strike and issued a statement calling upon the government to meet the strikers' demands. The assembly further declared that, contrary to government accusations, hunger strikers throughout the country are neither instigated nor guided by any political party. According to the Permanent Assembly the hunger strike represented a firm expression of the generalized frustration with the government.

The government countered this move and enlisted the "worker coordinators" to announce a counter strike in support of Banzer. This strike was a failure and on the night of Jan. 16, Banzer moved against the strikers, the University, the church of Maria Auxiladora and the United Nations offices. The weakened strikers were removed by ambulance.

The reaction was swift and fierce. The Church threatened ex-communication and called for the suspension of all Liturgies. The public was in an uproar. Banzer had to choose to exert more force or to give in to the mounting pressure. Given these two options, plus the dangerous position his supporters would be placed in if they argued for more repression, Banzer announced that he would grant a general amnesty.

What occurred was a great step forward in returning the nation to democracy. A small group of seemingly powerless women converged with the movement of history and brought about the freedom of many prisoners and exiles. Even so, the future will be difficult for a people just growing into freedom.



Sister Jane Frances and Sister Virginia.

Mercy Sale Set April 22

The Sisters of Mercy are gearing up to offer the public a home-cooked beef supper and Spring Mini-Sale on April 22 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the cafeteria and gym of Our Lady of Mercy High School.

perhaps the most unusual items, the Candle Booth, featuring handcrafted candles in every shape from a sand castle to a cube of lace.

be a Family Liturgy celebrated at 5:30 p.m. in the Sisters Chapel.

Sister Jane Frances Hauser is heading the committee preparing for the event.

Food Stamp Users May Get Help

Proceeds of the sale will go toward the repair of the boiler that serves both the Motherhouse and the school.

A feature of the event will

Families that use food stamps may catch a glimpse of silver lining in their recent home heating bills. The biggest bill of the year, rather than the average cost of heat, now is used in the formula that sets the price of the stamps.

Richard Peck said, and if anyone has misplaced this classic bill, RG&E "will be more than happy to make a duplicate." The power company also can provide "instant verification" of bills submitted to stamp examiners in its territory, he said. In Monroe County, food stamp information is available at the Department of Social Services, 442-4000, extension 2608.

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MEN'S SUITS

\$58 \$68

SPORT COATS \$33 - \$48	SLACKS \$12 ⁰⁰
NEW ZIP-LINED RAINCOATS \$29 ⁰⁰ - \$58 ⁰⁰	NEW SPRING SHIRTS THIS WEEK \$38 ⁰⁰

MICHAEL'S/STERN

Skokie Clergy Protest Nazi Demonstration

Skokie, Ill. (RNS)—A group of Roman Catholic and Protestant clergy in this heavily-Jewish community has prepared a response to a possible Nazi demonstration here.

In a statement, 12 members of the Niles Township Clergy Forum, which includes both Christians and Jews, said, "We are committed to identifying with the Jewish residents in their deep distress occasioned by the Nazi presence and exercise of un-American and irreligious free speech. We are aware also that a Nazi presence would be distressing for a variety of reasons to thousands of non-Jewish residents as well."

The Christian clergy who issued the statement urged residents of other communities "not to complicate the already formidable

problem of Skokie authorities in dealing with crowds on the day of a Nazi demonstration, and encouraged residents of Skokie and neighboring areas to pray "in their own communities" on that day.

They also proposed an open-air worship service on April 16, prayer in houses of worship in Skokie and elsewhere during a Nazi demonstration, a series of Christian-Jewish studies, encouraging the wearing of Star of David arm bands on the day of a Nazi demonstration, and cooperation with a Holocaust Remembrance Week planned by the mayor and village board of Skokie for mid-April. A large majority of Skokie's 70,000 residents are Jewish, many of them concentration camp survivors.

A federal judge issued an

order March 17 delaying any Nazi demonstration in Skokie for at least 45 days.

SBS CONCERT

The choir of Sacred Heart Cathedral, under the direction of Anthony T. Rimore, will perform Antonio Vivaldi's Gloria on Sunday, April 16, at 4:30 p.m. in the Chapel of St. Bernard's Seminary. The office of Vespers will be celebrated immediately afterward.

TV MASS

Father John DeSozio will be the celebrant of the television Mass for Shut-Ins at 8 a.m. Sunday, April 16, over Channel 10, WHEC-TV. The weekly Mass is co-sponsored by the diocese and the Basilian Fathers.