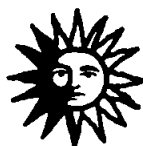


# VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY



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## CRUSHING DEFEAT OF THE DICTATORSHIP

On 28 November 1982, the political parties permitted to exist by the Uruguayan dictatorship held internal elections for party leaders.

The military had previously imposed a candidly anti-democratic statute regulating party activities, leaving out thousands of proscribed citizens and not permitting the participation of parties and groups which participated in the 1971 elections, such as the Frente Amplio which was the second political force in the capital, Montevideo, and the third in the country as a whole.

Uruguayans voted at the polls for delegates who would designate leaders of the two traditional parties, National (Blanco) and Colorado, who would in turn meet with the military to study the proposed constitution restoring civic life in the country.

In a climate for terror and threats, of trials and imprisonments of political party leaders during the electoral campaign, there was a large turn-out of voters. The banned Frente Amplio called on its adherents to cast blank ballots, and on all citizens to express their protest against the dictatorship regardless of partisanship. More than 80% of voters did so, that is, three of every four voters against the dictatorship: a victory for the opposition in all 19 Departments into which Uruguay is divided.

In the 1980 plebiscite on the military's regressive and anti-democratic Constitutional reform plan, the citizens inflicted the first electoral defeat on the dictatorship with more than 60% of *No* votes. In 1982 the chorus of *No* —votes against pro-dictatorship candidates in the two traditional parties, plus blank ballots— rose to 82%. In both the National and Colorado parties the majority vote went to candidates with the clearest and most consistent democratic positions, such as the Por la Patria Sector and National De Rocha Movement candidates who won by ample majorities.

Within the Colorado Party, the sector of ex-President *Pacheco Areco*, who favored the military in the 1980 plebiscite, suffered the biggest defeat.

The blank votes totalled some 83,000. The call for blank votes was issued by the Frente Amplio and other left forces under conditions of illegality, when any such call was prohibited, most of their leaders were in jail or in exile, and most of the "proscribed" were from their ranks.

The dictatorship's defeat in its second resort to the ballot within two years has generated joyous enthusiasm in the Uruguayan people. When the results were announced on 29 November, there were demonstrations in the streets with calls for "Liberty Now!", reaffirming the "the people united will never be defeated." The victory is proof positive that, despite all the dead, tortured, imprisoned and exiled citizens, a mature people is fighting against one of Latin America's most brutal dictatorships, and that international solidarity is not in vain.

The dictatorship is now committed to discuss its "democratization" scenario with spokesmen for the popular will, who must be alert against further trickery. Meanwhile hund-

reds of political prisoners still fill the jails and the fate of some 150 "disappeared" remains unexplained.

## AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION CONDEMNS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN URUGUAY

At its 110th annual meeting in Montreal in November 1982, The American Public Health Association (APHA) heard a report from *Dr. Richard Goldstein* on human rights violations and the medical profession in Uruguay. The report was received with great support and sympathy, permitting a "late breaking resolution" on the subject. The text of the resolution which was unanimously approved by the APHA governing council, follows.

*Dr. Goldstein*, a chest physician at New York's Bellevue Hospital, is co-author with *Dr. Alfred Gellhorn* of *Human Rights and the Medical Profession in Uruguay Since 1972*, published in August 1982 under auspices of the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Committee on Human Rights, New York Academy of Sciences. *Dr. Gellhorn* is a visiting professor at the Harvard School of Public Health and a professor at City College Scholl for Biomedical Education in New York City. He is also immediate past president of the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences.

## PRISONERS RELEASED

International solidarity has won the release of the following: *Julio Lev*, lawyer who undertook the defence of political prisoners and who was himself arrested for legitimately practising his profession. (Many other such lawyers have gone into exile to avoid Lev's fate.)

*Ismael Weinberger*, journalist, imprisoned since Jan. 1976. The International Organization of Journalists and the Latin American Journalists' Federation spearheaded a broad campaigning on his behalf.

*Alfredo Pareja*, who had been for seven months confined in the Military Hospital with serious health problems, complicated by a pulmonary complaint which almost deprived him of speech.

Many other political and trade union prisoners, some of them having served their sentences, remain in the dictatorship's jails and in need of continuing international solidarity. We particularly solicit demands for the release of former Deputy *Jaime Pérez*, who was tortured to the brink of death.

## BOLIVIAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION ON URUGUAY

Bolivia's Chamber of Deputies has unanimously approved a resolution demanding the release of *Gen. Liber Seregni* and all political and trade union prisoners in Uruguay. The resolution expresses total solidarity with the struggle of the Uruguayan people for a regimen of authentic democracy and respect for human rights. It condemns as flagrant violations of elementary freedom of expression the arrests of political leaders engaged in electioneering activities.

## PERMITTED PARTIES HOLD CONVENTIONS

At the end of January the political parties permitted to exist by the military dictatorship held conventions of delegates chosen at the November 28 elections. Both the National (Blanco) and Colorado Party conventions came out for full restoration of the Constitution and repeal of the institutional measures which corrode public freedoms and individual rights. The task of the 500 delegates at each convention, of whom opponents of the regime were the overwhelming majority, was to name the party spokesmen who would discuss with the military the future political life of the country.

The demands of the National Party convention were:

- (a) An end to all the proscriptions imposed on citizens, parties and trade unions;
- (b) Liberation of all political prisoners;
- (c) Speeded-up transfer of power to representatives of popular sovereignty.

The name of *Wilson Ferreira Aldunate*, now an exile in London, was invoked at the convention, and homage was paid to former Chamber of Deputies chairman *Héctor Gutiérrez*, who was murdered by the River Plate dictatorships in Buenos Aires in May 1976.

The Colorado Party convention, demanding repeal of the institutional measures against freedoms and rights, and restoration of the Constitution, paid posthumous tribute to former Senator *Zelmar Michelini* who was murdered in Buenos Aires along with *Gutiérrez Ruiz*.

At the convention of the Civic Union Party, the third permitted political organization, the majority voted to reaffirm the party's adherence to liberty and demand lifting of the political proscriptions and disqualifications that affect thousands of citizens.

Thus within the three parties is being expressed the desire for full validity of public freedoms and liberation of prisoners, reflecting the sense of the popular vote of 28 November 1982. (See previous bulletin.)

## MORE DISAPPEARANCES

Word has been spread in Montevideo of the disappearance of several citizens in recent months, without any explanation to their families by the military authorities. The names are *Felix Ortiz Omar Paita*, and *Miguel Angel Mato Grajean*, of whom there has been no trace since September 1982. Clandestine publications in Montevideo are calling upon international solidarity to press for the life and liberty of these young men.

## ROBALLO TURNS UP IN BARRACKS

*Américo Roballo*, 32-years old father of three children, was arrested in 1976 and tried after brutal torture. He was released after four years in jail. On 20 Sept. 1982 he disappeared, and the authorities declined responsibility or to identify his whereabouts. He has now turned up as a prisoner in Montevideo's Buco barracks, following an international campaign of his behalf. Pressure for his immediate release is urged.

## MORE ATTACKS ON THE PRESS; BATLLE ARRESTED

The magazine *Búsqueda* (Search) was closed down by the Interior Ministry for five issues after publishing a reportage on *Jorge Batlle*, proscribed leader of the Colorado Party's Unity and Reform Sector.

*Batlle*, grandson of a famous reform President of Uruguay, recently gave a long interview to the *New York Times*, critical of the military dictatorship but suggesting U.S. State Dept.

favor of him as a possible national leader after the dictatorship is abandoned.

The close-down order on *Búsqueda* said that statements to the press by proscribed politicians, and publication of such statements, are prohibited. *Batlle* and *Búsqueda* editor *Ramón Díaz* were detained for interrogation at Montevideo Police Headquarters.

Simultaneously summoned for Police H.Q. interrogation were editor *Enrique Tarigo*, assistant editor *Luis Antonio Hierro*, and responsible subeditor *José Luis Guntin* of the weekly *Opinar*, which had published a reader's letter about the budget expenditure stemming from the internal state of war. The three were asked for the name of the correspondent and declined to give it. *Hierro* and *Guntin* spent 24 hours in the Intelligence Department.

When the 25 Jan. issue of the Buenos Aires newspaper *Clarín* arrived in Montevideo, all copies were seized. It contained information about Uruguayans who have disappeared in Argentina (see previous issues of this Bulletin) and human rights violations in Uruguay.

## REAPPEARANCE OF RAUL SENDIC

In the midst of an international mobilization to save the life of the popular Uruguayan leader, *Raúl Sendic*, he reappeared in a barracks in the city of Rocha, some 280 km east of Montevideo, in seriously damaged physical condition. He had been submerged in cold water outdoors at below-zero temperatures. His appearance is a stimulant to further efforts for his liberation and that of other jailed and disappeared Uruguayans. The moment when the majority of Uruguayans have expressed their protest against the dictatorship in the internal elections is an appropriate one to resume the struggle for these men's and women's lives.

## TRADE UNION LEADERS FREED

The following have been released from prison after serving their sentences, as a result of an international campaign and intensive demands from inside the country.

- *Héctor Rodríguez*, Secy.-Gen. of the Unifying Action Groups, member of the Frente Amplio, leader of the Textile Workers Union, and founder of the National Workers Convention. In greatly deteriorated health after nine years of mistreatment and lack of medical attention.
- *Didaskó Pérez*, Secy.-Gen. of the Uruguayan Teachers Federation.
- *Juan Antonio Cáceres*, Del Cerro packinghouse workers leader in Montevideo and Paysandú.
- *Juan Antonio Iglesias*, Secy.-Gen. of the Glassworkers Federation affiliated with the National Workers Convention also.
- *Uruguay Ruffinelli*, former counsel to the University of the Republic Veterinary faculty.

Other trade union and political leader who have served their sentences remain in jail, the dictatorship refusing to release them. An intensified campaign for their prompt release is urged.