

GUATEMALA

by Nancy Ross

In May of 1978 over 100 unarmed Kekchi Indians, including women and children were massacred at the town of Panzos, in northern Guatemala. The Indians who were afraid of losing their land, which they had farmed for many generations, to the large nickel operation of Exibal, a Canadian-American firm, went to Panzos to discuss their land claims with local authorities. Upon their arrival the unarmed Indians were confronted with the guns of an army detachment, before they had a chance to discuss with anyone their fears of losing their farms. Mass graves had been prepared for the Indians two days before they arrived in the town, claimed local residents.

Scenes like this exemplify the reign of terror presently existing in Guatemala said Peggy Mathews, Secretary of the Halifax Amnesty International (AI) local group when she spoke to the Gazette. Mathews then took this opportunity to speak out against the many horrendous violations of human rights occurring now in Guatemala.

She said twenty thousand people died in unsolved murders or disappeared at the hands of security forces between 1966-1976. These security forces and death squads were reputed to be mostly security personnel off duty.

In the early sixties these para-military groups surfaced to aid the military and right-wing civilians in a massive of-

fensive against guerrilla forces which were active in the eastern region of the country. Large landowners and their administrators were given full police power to fight subversion by the government. Mathews said the "death squads" have not been disbanded even though the guerrillas were crushed in the late sixties.

AI began seriously monitoring these violations of human rights in June 1978.

Death squads now existing work to repress opposition parties, trade unions, peasant leaders and their legal advisers. AI discovered that mass disappearances first occurred in 1966. During the past 16 months more than 2,000 persons have been killed by the military, security forces and death squads. The bodies of over 1,000 victims have been found in the first four months of this year. Most of these bodies were so mutilated that they were unidentifiable, being registered simply as XX. Some of the bodies identified were those of well known opposition politicians, trade union and student leaders, journalists, priests, lawyers, and members of the indigenous Indian population. Most of the victims' names had earlier appeared on lists issued by the death squads.

The bodies were usually found at a great distance from the place of abduction, often mutilated beyond recognition, with gunshot wounds on the face or the hands cut off. Nearly 200 bodies of the more

than 500 reported to have been found in the second half of 1978 bore the marks of torture.

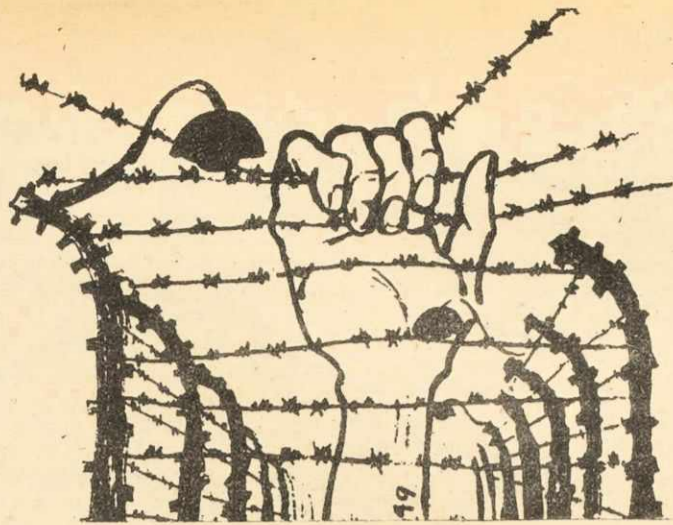
AI sent a mission to investigate violations of human rights in August 1979. The mission's report will be published in the near future.

In an attempt to supplement our information the Gazette went to the Political Science department. Dr. J. Murray Beck of this department said no one would comment on Guatemala's present political situation, as they were not up to date in Latin American politics.

On September 12, 1979, AI began a major international campaign in an attempt to halt the killings in Guatemala. The Halifax group of AI is co-operating in this campaign, says Mathews. This local group wants to inform Nova Scotians of the reign of terror presently existing in Guatemala.

The local AI group asks Nova Scotian to help people in Guatemala by writing as individuals or as groups to the President of Guatemala. His Excellency General Fernando Romeo Lucas Garcia, Presidente de la Republica de Guatemala, Palacio Presidencial, Guatemala City, Central America, urging him to halt the killings.

In co-operation with the Spanish Department, AI will be showing a film on Guatemala called "My country occupied" on Friday, November 2, at 12:30 p.m. of the Mc-Mechan Room, Killam Library.



NEW ENERGY SOURCES DISCOVERED

by Immanuel Labour

There has been several disturbing articles pointing accusing fingers at the people in charge of the disposal of spent radioactive materials from the Slowpoke nuclear reactor located in the bowels of the Life Sciences Building, and I'd like to say that my confidence in those people is unbounding. It's been suggested by one unnamed source that the nuclear waste is being disposed of through the air conditioning system but I'm not worried in the least.

I'm currently studying four courses which require my attendance on the 1st floor of the Life Sciences Building for a total of twelve hours each week not including the numerous labs I'm committed to, and outside of the fact that I tend to glow in the dark, I haven't noticed anything unusual.

It's been pointed out by the atomic Energy Commission that 'glowing in the dark' isn't all that serious and in fact is quite economical. I can read in the dark without the aid of a flashlight, and night time bicycle rides are now made in perfect safety.

Recently my pinky on my left hand dissolved causing a good deal of alarm but the AEC has assured me that it was a useless appendage anyway and in the course of man's assention into the nuclear age certain sacrifices would have to be made. I can understand that but it doesn't make it any easier to play the piano or pick one's nose, if so inclined. Personal sacrifices will have to be made and rewarded. I'm told, in the secure knowledge that their contribution to the nuclear industry will lessen our dependence on foreign oil.

I've often wondered why we don't tap our own natural resources in terms of oil. For instance Canadians are reported to have the oiliest skin in the western world. Why not promote a campaign urging all patriotic Canadians to "squeeze a zit today". The possibilities are endless. Think of the savings. some people's faces may end up looking like a sandtrap on the 18th green at Glen Abbey but again, sacrifices will have to be made. I knew one fellow who was so patriotic his face looked as though it had caught

fire and somebody else put it out with a bicycle chain.

Natural gas. There's a lot to be said for this traditionally misunderstood energy form. Some people would argue that this isn't a legitimate form of energy at all, but a nasty bi-product of asparagus. To disprove this argument we took our case to my physician, Dr. Mel Practice, who conducted an experiment on an aquiescent member of the Gazette staff. With two people holding the subject down we funneled enough baked beans down the poor woman's throat to feed the Maritime Command. We locked her in an enclosed room for forty minutes to allow her to effervesce. As scientists, we felt that the time duration was sufficient for our purposes without the paint peeling from the walls. With the introduction of a single Bic lighter and a pair of heavy-duty nose plugs we successfully ignited the Gazette offices in a flash exploding sending typewriters and journalistic paraphenalia hither and yawn. The smoldering proof was self-evident.

I know one fellow personally who could clear the SUB cafeteria from Coburg Road if the wind was right. The possibilities are endless for this much-maligned energy form.

I keep hearing reports about all these outrageous environmental hazards which, according to the so-called 'experts', threaten our very existence. A good case in point is the articles published by the Gazette concerning Acid Rain. Apparently there is an enormous amount of acid in the rivers and the fish are dying.

That sounds logical if you equate their breathing habits with that of a human being. It stands to reason that if the atmosphere were subject to high concentrations of purple microdote we'd all be dropping like flies, albeit, with ear to ear grins, but belly up all the same. From the article I gleaned that the phenomenon only occurred when it rained, so last week with lightning and thunder upon us, there I stood, in the middle of Henry St., with tongue outstretched, waiting for the rush of my life. It nearly came in the guise of a '67 Buick but outside of that, all I got was pneumonia.

graduation portraits

by JARVIS of Halifax

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