

Repressive leader tortures people Pakistanian people terrorized

Analysis by Zahid Makhdoom

Amongst the ever increasing fraternity of military dictators, ruling over eighty per cent of what we call the Third World countries, General Zia ul Haque of Pakistan certainly qualifies as one of the senior-most and indeed an extremely oppressive ruler. Zia has demonstrated his insatiable appetite for inflicting the worst kind of tortures upon the people of Pakistan.

Since the military *coup d'etat*, led by Zia, that overthrew elected government of late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on July 5, 1977, hundreds of urban protest movements have been brutally

crushed by an indiscreet resort to force. In fact, within the very first month of Zia's regime more than two hundred textile workers were killed when police and military forces opened fire on peaceful labour meeting in Colony Textile Mills, Multan. This firing was reminiscent of General Dyer's Amritsar firing of 1919. Quite recently, in the province of Sindh more than 200 people have been killed by Zia's "law-enforcing" forces. In addition to these brutal and un-called for killings of innocent citizens, more than 23,000 Pakistani democrats are languishing in Pakistani prisons today; the Constitution of

Pakistan is virtually abrogated; the civil Courts have been absolved from imparting justice; the universities are functioning under the whims and caprices of Pakistani junta; the legitimate rights of Pakistani women have been subjugated; scores of people are being flogged every week while the remaining Pakistani people are living under a constant fear of the regime's barbarism.

General Zia's regime has provided a *carte blanche* to the landlords to eject peasants from the land and to the industrialists for adamantly refusing to pay any heed to the genuine demands of the working people. The peasants and

workers are being continually terrorised by the police and army. In the workers' colonies of large urban centres, the inhabitants line-up for hours in order to have a pitcher of water.

In the villages of Pakistan, the peasants are still living in the stone-age, treating their glaucoma by an extract "manufactured" by boiling tree-bark and water in baked sand pitchers. Nevertheless, Pakistan is a "modern" state, at least its Air Force operates state-of-the-art F-16 war planes!

On the academic campuses however, the task of terrorizing the academics and students have been "bestowed" upon the Islami Jamiat-i-Tulaba (IJT), the student wing of the pro-military Jamat-i-Islami. The members of this organisation also serve the purpose of government informers. All student organisations, but with one exception of the IJT, are practically banned. A number of university professors such as Jamal Naqvi, Jameel Omar, Dr. Saleem, and Hissan are serving sentences in Pakistani jails. Thousands of students are in jail and at least four of them have died of police and army tortures. All other political prisoners are invariably tortured and are living in sub-human conditions in prisons.

The national press is subject to worst kind of censorship, numerous journalists have been flogged so far for committing the crime of honest journalism. The cultural fabric of Pakistan is being shred to pieces by the Wahabi ideologues of the Pakistani junta. Most of the creative writers have been thrown out of their jobs. Poets like Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Ahmad Faraz are living in exile. The wide variety of creative literature being produced by the non-Urdu speaking writers is subject to indiscriminate proscription. The aesthetic values of Pakistani people have been

squashed under the uncouth military values, wrongfully dubbed as Islam.

The condition of women in Pakistan has become increasingly worst. Apart from meting out tyranny to women as citizens and workers, the Zia regime has sought to repress and disenfranchise them as women. In the midst of well orchestrated pseudo-ideological propaganda campaign about the inherent "inferiority" of women, the military junta in Pakistan has taken measures which ban the participation of women in sports, drastically curtailed their appearance on television, and are in the process of taking away the residual civil rights which men still have in Pakistan.

To protest this outrage, the Pakistani women have organised themselves into numerous associations and have carried out numerous activities, including public demonstrations. But these demonstrations were met with not less brutality, scores of women have been arrested. At least six of them have been tortured according to Amnesty International.

The story of the repression in Pakistan would require tomes in order to be told adequately. The above mentioned facts, though fragmentary, should help raise awareness of the freedom-loving people around the world. The people of Pakistan are suffering, their life, liberty, and honour have been jeopardized.

They are condemned to live under the heavy boots of General Zia, whose actions are unchecked by anyone, who is resourceful and is having an extremely affluent Uncle, Sam, who dishes out armaments and money to him whenever the need is expressed by him, and who is conveniently oblivious of the crimes being committed by his "worthy" nephew - the Pakistani Big Brother General Zia.



Girls like Tracy never tell their parents about guys like Rourke.

Reckless

AN EDGAR J. SCHERICK/SCOTT RUDIN Production "RECKLESS"
AIDAN QUINN DARYL HANNAH KENNETH McMILLAN CLIFF De YOUNG Written by CHRIS COLUMBUS Produced by EDGAR J. SCHERICK and SCOTT RUDIN
Directed by JAMES FOLEY

Tomorrow
2:30, 4:10, 7:10, 9:00

FAMOUS PLAYERS THEATRES
Movies as they SHOULD be seen...
on a LARGER-THAN-LIFE motion picture screen
7:15, 9:15
mat. Sun. 2:00

CAPITOL SQUARE 10065 Jasper Ave. 428-1303
LONDONDERRY 137th Ave & 66th St. 475-4555
WESTMALL 170th St & 90th Ave. 481-6932

Asner and El Salvador

A film featuring TV's "Lou Grant" (Ed Asner) and a representative of the El Salvador Women's Association are two of the main highlights of the Central America Day Festival.

Scheduled for 1:00 pm. to 5:30 pm. this coming Sunday, February 5 at the Citadel Theatre's Zeidler Hall, the Central America Day Festival will be something of a first for Edmonton.

"We wanted to present Edmontonians with as broad a cross-section of Central American life and current social issues as possible within the confines of one afternoon," said festival organizer Keith Wiley, a staff person with the Edmonton Learner Centre.

"So we're having a full afternoon of films, all recently released, plus a couple of speakers, live music and a selection of different foods from the area."

One of the films, "Americas in Transition" features Ed Asner. It's

a fast-paced exposition of U.S. policy in the Western Hemisphere.

Of special interest will be the opening remarks with which Ms. Esther Ramirez kicks off the festival.

Ms. Ramirez is a representative of the El Salvador Women's Association. Prior to his assassination in 1980, she worked closely with Archbishop Oscar Romero.

"Central America is so much in the news these days, especially following the American-led invasion of Grenada and consequent increased tensions throughout the Caribbean basin," Mr. Wiley said.

"It is our hope that the people

of Edmonton will come out on Sunday to hear the story from another angle, that of the people working for change in Central America. Then they can judge for themselves."

And, he said, at an admission price of \$3.00 for unemployed people and \$4.00 for others, "it's a cheap way to live and learn for a whole Sunday afternoon."

The festival is being jointly sponsored by the Edmonton Learner Centre, the Coalition to Aid Nicaragua, Canadians for Non-Intervention in Central America, and the Farabundo Marti Committee for Solidarity with the People of El Salvador.

Stopping smoker's pollution

The Groups Against Smoker's Pollution (GASP) will be holding general meeting at 9901-108st, Mon. Feb. 13 at 7:30 PM.

GASP is a charitable organization, founded in 1975, to promote legislation against smoking in public places.

This is the group responsible for Edmonton's anti-smoking bylaw passed three years ago.

The guest speaker at the meeting will be Edmonton Journal Columnist Judy Schultz.

Anyone who wants to find out more about this organization is encouraged to phone 421-GASP.