

IPI in action



PORTUGAL

IPI cabled on May 21 its approval of the decision of the Portuguese Government to apply its press law in the newspaper "Republica" affair and supporting its efforts to maintain press freedom.

Left wing extremists seized the socialist daily *Republica* on May 19 in order, as they said, to put an end to party journalism. It was, according to reports, the only Lisbon daily outside Communist editorial control. Troops cleared the offices the following day and closed the buildings.

In a cable to the Portuguese Minister of Social Communication, Jorge Jesuino, IPI Director Ernest Meyer said:

"The International Press Institute notes with satisfaction your decision to apply the Press Law of the Republic in the conflict at the daily *Republica* and to preserve freedom of expression and the editorial independence from outside interference. IPI assures you of its support."

The Minister has said that the newspaper's future and future policy is a matter for the journalists on the paper, that there should be no interference in its editorial work either from Government or from non journalist trade unions.

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The arrest on April 9 of one of IPI's leading Portuguese members, *Diário de Lisboa*'s editor, Nuno Rocha, shocked the Institute into demanding by cable to the Prime Minister, Vasco Gonçalves, for an immediate explanation for the detention of "a known anti-fascist". Rocha's recent efforts to start a new paper backed by individual editors had met political opposition and printing workers had refused to print the paper.

On April 11 IPI cabled to the Prime Minister, IPI Director, Ernest Meyer, said in the cable:

"IPI, deeply shocked by arrest without explanation of journalist Nuno Rocha, an IPI member and known anti-fascist. Demands prompt explanation and appeals for immediate release from unjustified maximum security detention."

IPI had earlier attempted to persuade the Portuguese Government to intervene in the dispute with the printing workers so as to allow the new paper *Tempo* to appear, and so "safeguard press freedom."

In May Nuno Rocha had said privately that he hoped *Tempo* would soon publish as a weekly. He was held at Caxias, a maximum security jail near Lisbon. He was released again on April 11.

Speaking to IPI's Assembly in Zurich on May 12, Nuno Rocha said: "I had the opportunity to verify the great prestige IPI reflects towards the Portuguese authorities. I was arrested by army officers at my home at 7 a.m. At 9 a.m. the Minister for Social Communication assured my wife that my case would be resolved that day. He seemed deeply worried about the incident and I know the importance he gave to the fact of my being a member of IPI."

After 15 hours I saw liberty again, which means that the Portuguese military authorities remain faithful to their promises of respecting journalists as well as giving them the essential guarantees to fulfil the practice of their occupation in freedom."

KOREA

THE detention of six leading Korean journalists for questioning, allegedly over the contents of reports sent to the International Press Institute in Zurich, drew a response "condemning" such "unjustifiable arrests by the KCIA" (Korean Central Intelligence Agency). In a cable to President Chung Hee Park on April 29 IPI Director Ernest Meyer said:

"IPI once more calls on your government to respect the independence of a free and responsible press and strongly condemns the unjustified arrest by the KCIA of members of the journalists' association. Still hopeful that your personal intervention will permit restoration of press freedom."

Among journalists arrested in Seoul over the past few days were the President of the Korean Journalists' Association, Kim Byung-ik, and two Vice-Presidents, Paik Ki-bum and Chung Chu-hoe. A recently enacted press law in Korea stipulates that it is a crime for citizens to defame the nation's constitutional organs to foreigners with the intent of soliciting sympathy. There is a seven year maximum penalty. Two other officials of the journalists' association were arrested but have since been released.

A spokesman for the association is reported to have said that the reports mailed to IPI contained allegations of suppression of freedom of the press.

SOUTH AFRICA

The editors of South African newspapers wish to place on record their deep appreciation to IPI for its firm and courageous adherence to its principles in transferring its annual assembly from Nigeria rather than allow its South African members and their guests to be barred from attending.

Few International organisations would have adopted such an unpopular stance in the present world climate and we salute yours particularly as we are aware that it entails considerable sacrifice by the Institute.

We wish you well in your deliberations in Zurich and apologise for our inability to attend to voice our appreciation personally.

Edwin Linnington, convenor, Conference of South African Editors, in a cable to IPI Secretariat and Annual assembly in Zurich.

BRITAIN

The complaint by the Turkish Press Institute about a British newspaper story headed "Barbarians" concerning the Turkish invasion of Cyprus (see IPI Report October 1974 page 7 and IPI Report November 1974 page 7) was not upheld by the British Press Council.

The Turkish Press Institute had complained that *The Sun* (London) presented allegations as facts and accepted those allegations as facts in publishing comment upon them.

PORTUGAL

THE TAKE-OVER of the premises and transmitter of Lisbon's Radio Renaissance by its staff in protest against its alleged reactionary programme policy prompted the Zurich-based International Press Institute today to cable a reminder to the Portuguese Prime Minister that his government's Press Law should be applied — halting such moves to interfere with press freedom.

The station, administered by the Roman Catholic Church, ran into staff troubles in February after which the Government took a hand in the administration and appointed official representatives.

In his cable to Vasco Gonçalves, the Prime Minister, IPI Director Ernest Meyer, said:

"IPI urges your government to defend freedom of expression in Radio Rannescenca against interference and insists on respect of the Portuguese press law."

SAFETY COMMITTEE

EARLY this year a representative of the Safety Committee (International Professional Committee for the Safety of Journalists on Dangerous Missions, on which IPI is active) intervened with Prince Sihanouk in the case of the 21 journalists who have disappeared in Cambodia since April 1970.

Prince Sihanouk was interviewed, promised to act, but no new developments can yet be communicated. Other member bodies of the Safety Committee were informed of the then latest position on March 24.

Subsequently new and recent moves have been made by IPI and the Safety Committee to establish contacts with the recently appointed European missions of the Grunk (Royal Government of Cambodia).

IPI learns from information received towards the end of May that some Western foreigners detained by Khmer Rouge are still alive. This information is unconfirmed. IPI is following up the report.