

majority is short by five votes. Approximately fifteen CDA parliamentarians oppose deployment, and convincing them to vote with their own party will be easier if the wavering minister of defense sides with the prodeployment forces.

Yet all this may be in vain. On the one hand, too vague a formulation will not receive approval by the VVD; on the other, the peace movement is flourishing and has the blessing of church organizations. Although religious organizations aligned with the peace movement have, under pressure from the Council of Churches, abandoned such hard-line strategies as a proposed human blockade at the missile site and other acts of civil disobedience, they will present CDA backbenchers with a petition. And to emphasize its opposition to deployment, the Federation of Trade Unions—also a member of the peace movement—has promised strikes throughout May.

Thus, after a five-year debate that has consumed Dutch voters and politicians alike, nothing short of an outright affirmative will hold the center-right coalition together, and anything approaching such an affirmative will irrevocably split the leading party itself. If the government falls and (as unlikely as it appears at present) the Labor party can form a new coalition, victory will be with the antinuclear movement.

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EXCURSUS 2

Jim Hershberg on PROTECTING ONE'S OWN

No one who watched the news that night in June, 1979, is likely to forget. ABC-TV correspondent Bill Stewart, in Nicaragua to cover the revolt against Somoza, is standing on a battered, dusty street in Managua. During a lull in the fighting a few hours earlier he had interviewed a group of guitar-strumming Nicaraguan National Guardsmen. Now, as his camera crew records the scene, he gingerly approaches a National Guard checkpoint, arms outstretched, his journalist's I.D. prominently displayed. At gunpoint he is ordered to his knees, ordered to lie face down. Then casually, almost as an afterthought, a guardsman pumps a round into Stewart's head.

Stewart's murder horrified viewers in the United States and contributed to the collapse of American support for the Somoza regime. It had an additional effect on two journalists, who saw the event as one more manifestation of an ominous trend reaching far beyond the borders of Nicaragua. "We were concerned by the rising tide of repression against journalists around the world," recalls Michael Massing, then an executive editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*. "Not only the Stewart case, but the jailing of Jacobo Timerman in Argentina and the many unpublicized cases. Es-

pecially the unpublicized cases."

As Massing and writer Laurie Nadel of CBS News reviewed the situation, they were struck by the fact that the American press had never summoned its considerable power to assist foreign colleagues whose lives and work were endangered. Their decision to establish an organization dedicated to fighting censorship and the oppression of journalists abroad was made a year later. Its impetus was a meeting with a leading Paraguayan journalist, Alcibiades González Delvalle, who, while on a speaking tour in the U.S., had received word from Asuncion that a warrant had been issued for his arrest. He decided to return anyway, Massing relates, "because he said he did 'not want to let the government think it can get away with intimidation.'" Delvalle was arrested upon his return and spent four months in prison.

Massing and Nadel contacted some leading figures in the American press to explore the possibility of forming such an advocacy organization. Before long Walter Cronkite agreed to serve as the group's honorary chairman, and other prominent journalists joined the board of directors. The Committee to Protect Journalists held its first meeting in January, 1981.

Events since have amply demonstrated the need for a nonpartisan group that can mobilize support for the cause of press freedom: Of the cases known to the Committee, some seventy-seven journalists currently languish in prison as a result of their writings; and since 1981 at least seventy-five have disappeared or been killed. Scores more have been detained for various periods without trial or have been fired, expelled, harassed, or threatened. And between 1981 and 1983 there were, by very conservative count, forty-three government closings of newspapers.

Censorship is the rule in much of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America; press freedom survives in less than a third of the world's countries. And the trend is up. Right-wing death squads in El Salvador recently announced that correspondents who interview members of the guerrilla opposition and "distort reality" will be killed. In Chile, authorities have imposed sweeping new restrictions against coverage of antigovernment protest and have decreed that opposition newspapers must submit all copy to the censors twenty-four hours in advance of publication. In the Ukraine, Valery Marchenko, a journalist whose only offense was to hold independent views, was sentenced in March to ten years' imprisonment and five years' internal exile for "anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation."

During a typical week in March, for example, the Committee investigated and protested the stalking by police of a reporter in Turkey, the case of a Liberian journalist imprisoned without being charged and allegedly lashed for broadcasting a story on the BBC about the closing of his newspaper, and the detention of a reporter in Namibia on the charge of carrying banned documents that police had confiscated ten months earlier.

Often the persecuted journalist's only recourse is to appeal to public opinion in countries where press freedom is still considered a fundamental right rather than a subversive doctrine or expedient maneuver. In responding to such appeals, the Committee—a nonprofit organization supported by private, corporate, and foundation funds—relies heavily on the prestige and influence of its board of twenty-five American journalists. A staff of three and several parttime

assistants carry out the daily work at offices in New York. Its activities include:

- The collection and verification of reports of abuse. The Committee maintains a network of contacts—with other human rights groups, with foreign correspondents of U.S. publications, with local and exiled journalists, and with unions, governments, and academic specialists.

- The issuance of protests directly to heads of state and embassies and the organization of campaigns to pressure offending governments once reports have been confirmed. Other human rights and journalist groups in the U.S. and abroad are provided with information about such cases and joint actions are mapped. Occasionally, the U.S. media are supplied with pertinent data and urged to publicize the abuses uncovered. The Committee also contacts appropriate State Department and congressional offices to solicit assistance and information.

These campaigns, undertaken with such groups as Amnesty International, the Newspaper Guild, and International PEN, sometimes bear fruit. Among the journalists freed during the past year were Irshad Rao, editor of a banned Pakistani weekly, imprisoned for two-and-a-half years for "creating unrest among the masses and disaffection towards the armed forces"; two Salvadoran employees of the now-closed daily *El Independiente* who were jailed for two years; Joe Thloloe of the *Sowetan* of South Africa who was sentenced to two-and-a-half years for possession of a "banned" book; and Vladimir Danchev, a Radio Moscow newscaster who was held in a psychiatric hospital for six months for criticizing the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Committee also joined in a successful campaign to reopen Chile's only independent radio news service, Radio Cooperativa, after its silencing by the government during anti-Pinochet protests in May, 1983, as well as to release from jail several journalists of the Filipino opposition newspaper *We Forum*.

- The formation of delegations of prominent journalists to investigate conditions in countries where abuses have been alleged and warrant closer inspection. Following such trips, in-depth reports based on interviews with reporters, editors, publishers, human rights activists, government officials, and diplomats are produced, offering reliable and up-to-date information on the state of press freedom therein. In the past two years, delegations have traveled to El Salvador, Guatemala, Kenya, Nicaragua, South Africa, Uruguay (in association with PEN), and Zimbabwe. This year the Committee will send groups to Turkey, the Philippines, and Honduras—places in which press-government relations are now in ferment.

While professionals frequently form organizations to protect their own interests, in the case of the press "there's an even more compelling reason," says Barbara Koepfel, the Committee's executive director.

"When the press is blocked from placing critical information in the public realm or debating key issues, when publications are confiscated, censored, bombed, or stuffed with only that news the authorities want printed, when reporters and editors are brutalized, then the possibility of achieving political, social, and economic justice is almost nil."

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EXCURSUS 3

Thomas Land on CLOSING THE IVORY TRADE

Belgium's national airline, Sabena, has acknowledged defeat in an embarrassing international confrontation over its profitable trade in illegal African ivory—a trade exposed by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). According to WWF estimates, Sabena has carried at least three hundred tons of ivory from Burundi to Belgium over the past ten years, representing the death of 25,000 elephants—a protected species—at the hands of poachers. Recently, however, Belgium became the eighty-second country to ratify the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

The move was timed to coincide with European Community legislation that would oblige Belgium to observe the same regulations as those of CITES, regardless of national ratification. Nevertheless, the ratification has been jubilantly hailed as a success by CITES supporters.

In a recent open letter to Sabena's president, Carlos van Rafelghem, WWF Director-General Charles de Hass declared that "Although it is well known that only one elephant exists in Burundi, most of this ivory was exported with customs documents certifying Burundian origin. It is also well known that the true origin of the tusks was Zaire and Tanzania, entering Burundi in violation of the laws of those CITES-member countries."

"Such ivory," continued de Hass, "is 'laundered' in bonded warehouses in Belgium and passed on to buyers with spurious certificates of legal origin or mixed in with legal shipments."

Sabena first responded to the charges with embarrassed silence; but very senior company executives, talking unofficially to trusted correspondents, were at pains to distance themselves from the company's ivory policy, indicating that it would soon be fundamentally altered—to the shared relief of managers and staff. They argued, too, that Sabena was required by its charter to carry any freight accompanied by apparently faultless documentation. They acknowledged that Hong Kong, one of the main users of ivory, had refused to purchase tusks from Burundi; but they insisted that there was nothing that they could do as a carrier so long as papers were in order—unless the Belgian Government intervened. This they had asked it to do.

Although Belgium was one of the first signatories of the agreement ten years ago, it delayed final ratification and, thus, enforcement, enjoying an annual wildlife trade estimated at \$30 million. All this has changed now. Sabena's president has stated publicly that the CITES provisions now apply to Belgium and that the airline would "completely abstain from any transport of ivory that is not duly justified by the terms of the convention."

Naturally, the WWF is delighted. Said one spokesman: "Poaching of elephants in Africa remains a serious problem in many countries, but the traffic will dry up when transport to the markets outside Africa is denied. Sabena's action closes one more trade route."

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