

Miners Federation Meeting

consults with ISAT (Health and safety programs, Widows Fund)

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Active in promotion of women's issues, related to mining. (Mining Widows Fund) Empowerment strategies, resulting in the unification of men and women in the union.

In 1990 the federation had 90 local unions as members. That is 120.000 workers.

In 2001-the federation had 55 locals totalling 25.000 workers.

1out of 12 is unionised, 80.000 employees are third party workers.

Fujimori allowed any country to buy up state owned mines. Capital for foreign owned mines comes from Canada, USA, Switzerland, Mexico and China. Peruvian owned mines are the Vulcan and Buenaventura mines.

" We have to take advantage of the political moment."

"Now is the time for people to trust unions again."

Companies demand 4-5 year collective agreements

"Multi-Nationals are making trouble for peasant groups and indigenous people."

"No respect for their rights nor their ownership of land".

"There should be International motivation to stop abuse".

Part of Mining Federation's responsibility is to work with mining communities.

In terms of Health and Safety issues, the federation's policy is not to support the "increase of productivity", i.e. work faster

In 2001, so far there have been 18 fatalities and 94 mining deaths. One out of four widows is left with four or five children to care for, without moral or financial support.

Point of Interest: During our meeting, the atmosphere was filled with energy, anxiety and depression.

As well, at one point in the meeting we paused and stood for a "moment of silence" to honour those who lost their lives while at work.

In 1990 the federation established a National Central of Mining Women.

When women lost their housing when lay-off occurred, they also lost "leadership" positions-and were forced to leave.- This reduced the number of "Housewife Groups"- women decided to join men's union.

The focus is to set up micro enterprises as well as enticing new members.

Positive alternatives to build self-esteem-so that men value women's work.

Workplace health and safety issues affect productivity of worker.

Long hours and worry about family who were forced to move away, causes accidents.

"The press does not paint the true picture of workers' plight"

"It doesn't matter what race or who you re in the mine. Any mine worker's life is not valued by the companies". "Canada is very important to our federations".

"For ten years and during Fujimori years we received support from Canadians and Steelworkers Union. Without their support we might not have survived."

"Now there is a voice for mining workers in Congress".

Congressman, Gjan de Dios-Ramirez Canchari was president of the Mining Federation, who became a member of parliament. He was instrumental in passing 3-4 bills within a 1.5 year span. His appointment to parliament should have been 5 years, but Canchari told us at our meeting: "Under the Mafia," meaning "Fujimori"it was decided: "We don't need him any more".

Hence, Gjan de Dios -Ramirez took an alternate route and was elected to congress by his department.

"There has been so much injustice. Workers with 35 years of service are laid -off with 1 month of salary for 12 years. = 6 mos. Of salary paid out."

He introduced a bill to give "super seniority" to trade union leaders. The bill also included unionised workers could not be layed-off without cause- receive compensation.

Note: The night before our meeting with the Federation and Congressman Canchari, the Bill should have passed - but a member of the party asked to have it reviewed with "business" and return it in a couple of weeks.

"Public pressure- a major protest is necessary to pass this bill".