



PRESS CONFERENCE

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 1979, 11:00 A.M.

EXECUTIVE ROOM, 14TH FLOOR

NATIONAL PRESS BUILDING

COLOMBIA: THE DECLINE OF CIVIC INSTITUTIONS AND THE THREAT OF MILITARY RULE

DR. JOSE GUTIERREZ

Dr. Gutierrez, the Colombian psychiatrist, columnist, former government advisor and public figure, is one of the founders of FIRMES, a newly formed coalition of Columbians opposing the current accelerating drift to authoritarian rule in his country. He also is the author of Gamin, an internationally acclaimed study of the growing problem of abandoned street urchins in urban areas of developing countries.

Dr. Gutierrez's presentation takes place against a backdrop of the arrests of thousands of Columbians since the beginning of the year, the closing of the Associated Press office in Bogota, and the rising authority of the military. Since Colombia is one of the two remaining major democracies in South America and has played a fairly prominent role in international forums in upholding a strong human rights policy, the deterioration of civil liberties in the nation is viewed with alarm by hemispheric policy makers. Its reputed key position in the flow of drugs to the U.S. further underscores its importance for this country.

CHAUNCEY ALEXANDER

Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers and Chairman of COHA's Board of Trustees will chair the press conference.

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