



Amnesty International

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newsletter

International AI Conference on Death Penalty Adopts Declaration of Stockholm

On 11 December 1977, the international Conference on the Abolition of the Death Penalty convened by AI in Stockholm concluded its work by unanimously adopting the Declaration of Stockholm. The declaration incorporates the main findings and recommendations from the two-day conference, which was opened by Swedish Prime Minister Thorbjörn FALLDIN and chaired by Garfield TODD of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. AI will give it the widest possible dissemination in its program for the abolition of the death penalty.

DECLARATION OF STOCKHOLM 11 December 1977

The Stockholm Conference on the Abolition of the Death Penalty, composed of more than 200 delegates and participants from Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North and South America and the Caribbean region,

RECALLS THAT:

- The death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violates the right to life.

CONSIDERS THAT:

- The death penalty is frequently used as an instrument of repression against opposition, racial, ethnic, religious and underprivileged groups,
- Execution is an act of violence, and violence tends to provoke violence,
- The imposition and infliction of the death penalty is brutalizing to all who are involved in the process,
- The death penalty has never been shown to have a special deterrent effect,
- The death penalty is increasingly taking the form of unexplained disappearances, extra-judicial executions and political murders,
- Execution is irrevocable and can be inflicted on the innocent.

AFFIRMS THAT:

- It is the duty of the state to protect the life of all persons within its jurisdiction without exception,
- Executions for the purposes of political coercion, whether by government agencies or others, are equally unacceptable,
- Abolition of the death penalty is imperative for the achievement of declared international standards.

DECLARES:

- Its total and unconditional opposition to the death penalty,
- Its condemnation of all executions, in whatever form, committed or condoned by governments,
- Its commitment to work for the universal abolition of the death penalty.

CALLS UPON:

- Non-governmental organizations, both national and international, to work collectively and individually to provide public information materials directed towards the abolition of the death penalty,
- All governments to bring about the immediate and total abolition of the death penalty,
- The United Nations unambiguously to declare that the death penalty is contrary to international law.

- The full report of the Stockholm Conference will be made available to participants, AI national sections and other organizations and individuals as soon as possible.

117 COUNTRIES LISTED IN 1977 REPORT

Human rights violations in 117 countries are covered in *The Amnesty International Report 1977*, published on 8 December 1977.

The 352-page annual report is the most extensive in the organization's history. It shows that human rights are violated in a majority of countries all over the world. All major regimes, all political or ideological blocs are involved—in spite of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in December 1948.

In his preface Thomas HAMMARBERG, Swedish chairman of AI's International Executive Committee, says that "it is not only the number of countries where violations have occurred which is alarming. The positive elements in this report are few: there have been substantial releases of political prisoners in certain countries but these are outweighed by the deteriorating situation in other parts of the world".

The report's approach is country by country because "the techniques of repression vary. . . In some countries regimes allow paramilitary groups to kidnap, torture and assassinate political activists; in others political prisoners are kept in detention for years without trial. In some police stations torture is carried out with electric shocks; in others with psychological methods".

Statistics reflect the work of AI's International Secretariat and national sections. From 1 June 1976 to 30 June 1977, 2,285 new cases of individual prisoners were taken up and 1,657 released, with a total of 4,196 prisoners under adoption or investigation as of 1 July 1977. Urgent action was taken 208 times on behalf of victims of torture and in other emergency cases. Relief to prisoners and their families totalled £125,000, an increase of £27,000 from the previous year. During the same period, AI sent missions and observers to 22 countries, and published printed reports on 19 countries.

AI adoption groups in 31 countries increased by 270 over the previous year. By July 1977, AI had 168,000 individual members and supporters in 107 countries, an increase of 71,000 members and supporters and 29 countries over 1975-76.

The Amnesty International Report 1977, 352 pages, is published in English by Amnesty International Publications, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England. Price £2.00. Translated versions are in preparation.

POCS INVITED TO NOBEL CEREMONY

The three December 1977 prisoners of the month—Miss SUGIJAH (Indonesia), Alfredo BRAVO (Argentina) and Sergei KOVALYOV

(Soviet Union)—were invited by *AI* to attend the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo, Norway on 10 December. Invitations were sent to each prisoner and their respective governments were asked to allow the prisoners to attend. However, none of them was permitted to travel to Norway.

The prize, worth £83,000, was accepted on behalf of the movement by Thomas HAMMARBERG, chairman of *AI*'s International Executive Committee (IEC). The 1977 Nobel Peace lecture was given on 11 December by IEC vice-chairman Mūmtaz SOYSAL, an ex-prisoner of conscience.

The prize will be deposited in a special fund and used for the development of international *AI* activities and for other projects within the objectives and program of the movement □

AI WELCOMES AMNESTY IN VIETNAM

Vietnam announced on 17 September 1977 that 1,613 officials of the former Thieu government had been released. This amnesty marked Vietnam's National Day on 2 September.

AI wrote on 23 November to Premier PHAM VAN DONG of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, welcoming the releases, and asking for details of the numbers and categories of persons still undergoing "re-education". (see *CAT Bulletin* page 2) □

15 CASES IN ISRAEL TAKEN UP

During November 1977 *AI* took up the cases of 15 prisoners in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Included were six students at Bethlehem College arrested in connection with the publication of two University magazines, *Al-Jami'a* (the University) and *At-Tali'a* (the Avantgarde) in March and April 1977. A petition protesting against their arrest and the overall restriction of freedom of opinion was signed by around 300 fellow students. This petition was published by *Al-Manar* in London on 12 November □

AI CONCERNED AT DEATH SENTENCES IN THE PHILIPPINES

AI cabled a protest to President Ferdinand MARCOS of The Philippines on 28 November 1977 at the death sentences pronounced against Benigno AQUINO, Bernabe BUSCAYNO and Victor CORPUZ. *AI* also protested against use of military tribunals under martial law and urged annulment of the three men's trial.

Former Senator Aquino, 44, a long-time *AI* adoptee, has been imprisoned since martial law was declared in September 1972. Then he was secretary-general of the opposition Liberal Party and widely regarded as President Marcos' main rival in the presidential elections scheduled for November 1973 but never held. He was charged with murder, subversion and illegal possession of arms.

The other two accused were charged with subversion, and Mr Buscayno was also charged with murder. Mr Buscayno and Mr Corpuz were alleged to have been leading members of the underground New People's Army.

Following widespread international protest, President Marcos on 29 November 1977 ordered a new trial for the three prisoners before a military tribunal. On 30 November, *AI* again cabled the president repeating that civilian detainees should not be tried before military tribunals.

The Supreme Court of The Philippines, in a unanimous ruling on 15 December 1977, called on the Martial Law authorities to suspend the re-trial of Mr Aquino before a military tribunal. The Supreme Court justices criticized the military tribunal's procedures in convicting Mr Aquino despite a petition of *habeas corpus* pending before the Supreme Court.

A final ruling of the Supreme Court is scheduled to be given at the end of January □

AI'S EXECUTIVE PLANS ACTIVITIES FOR 1978

At its November 1977 meeting in London *AI*'s International Executive Committee (IEC) agreed that *AI* should accept the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize, and made final arrangements for the movement's representation at the presentation ceremony (see page 1).

The IEC also discussed arrangements for the conference against the death penalty which took place in Stockholm, Sweden, at the same time as the Nobel prize presentation (page 1).

The IEC decided at its meeting to examine its working and functioning and allocated functions for the coming year among its ten members.

A survey of national section resources, in the broadest sense, was agreed as an important step in assessing and planning the future development of the movement. A questionnaire to all national sections is in preparation.

The IEC, in addition, agreed in principle the 1978 action planning for the whole movement.

Dutch lawyer Dick OOSTING was appointed Deputy Secretary General of *AI*. His appointment took effect on 1 December.

Dick Oosting joined the IS in 1974 as an organizer for the Campaign for the Abolition of Torture, after working for *AI*'s Dutch Section.

June RAY was appointed researcher in the Middle East unit of the IS research department. She had been an executive assistant within the department for the last three years □

BANGLADESH NEWSPAPER CRITICIZES AI ACTION

An article commenting on *AI*'s action appeared on 30 October 1977 in a Dacca newspaper after an appeal to Bangladesh President Ziaur RAHMAN to order an immediate end to widespread executions of military men (see December 1977 *Newsletter*). They had been executed following trials by martial law tribunals for alleged involvement in an

attempted military coup in Dacca on 2 October.

The article, in the English-language Sunday newspaper *Holiday*, criticized *AI* for intervening in a matter "which is essentially military". It said: "It is incredible that the Amnesty International has been less savvy than it is reputed to be while dealing with the situation currently obtaining in Bangladesh. . . There is no denying the role of the Amnesty International in upholding the cause of human liberty all over the world". But it asked *AI* what it thought "Bangladesh should have done with those who have massacred people to destroy the armed forces and cripple the defense line?"

A letter from *AI* Secretary General Martin Ennals in reply, printed in *Holiday* on 27 November, stressed that *AI* "in no way contests the right of any government to deal firmly with civilian or military men who make attempts to overthrow a government by force. But it does require that any government does so openly and publicly in accordance with internationally accepted standards of justice".

The following paragraph of *AI*'s letter was omitted: "There is no doubt that, during the last weeks, at least 37, and perhaps many more people have been executed in Bangladesh. Executions on this scale following trial by martial courts are, to our knowledge, unprecedented in the history of Bangladesh. . ."

AI reiterated its concern that trial by martial law courts without appeal fell far short of requirements of the rule of law even in emergency situations.

AI's reply also stressed that the organization opposes the death penalty, without reservation □

YUGOSLAVIA AMNESTIES POLITICAL PRISONERS

President Josip Broz TITO granted amnesty to a significant number of political prisoners in Yugoslavia on 29 November 1977. In a letter to the president the next day, *AI* expressed the hope that all Yugoslav prisoners of conscience would be released and that all cases of Yugoslav citizens charged with "hostile propaganda" or "contacting hostile organizations abroad" will be reviewed by the appropriate judicial authorities.

The amnesty, marking the 40th anniversary of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, is said to affect 218 political prisoners. Official reports say over 50 per cent of these will be released and the rest will have their prison terms reduced. Mirko KALEZIC, spokesman of the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry, said prior to the amnesty that a significant number of Yugoslav citizens suspected of political crimes and detained and awaiting trial will also benefit from the decree.

AI-adopted prisoners of conscience released include: writer Mihajlo MIHAJLOV, Professor Marko VESELICA, Judge Franc MIKLAVCIC, journalist Viktor BLAZIC and Dr Djura DJUROVIC □

Prisoners of the Month Campaign

Participants in the campaign are reminded that appeals must only be sent to the officials named at the end of each case. In *no* circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner. It is important for the prisoner that messages to the authorities are worded carefully and courteously and that they are never sectarian.

Dr Nikola NOVAKOVIC, Yugoslavia
Dr Nikola NOVAKOVIC, 64-year-old pharmacologist and former member of the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska Seljaska Strana*), was arrested by the UDBA (Yugoslav secret police) in March 1977. For over four months before his trial, he was reportedly kept in solitary confinement.

Dr Novakovic was tried on 3 August 1977 by the district court of Sarajevo and found guilty of "establishing contacts with hostile organizations abroad" (article 109 of the Yugoslav penal code) and disseminating "hostile propaganda" (article 118). He was found guilty and sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment and confiscation of all property.

Mr Milorad Podparic, the presiding judge, said that Dr Novakovic frequently contacted members of the CPP in exile who are "systematically trying to overthrow the political system by unconstitutional and violent means". To *AI's* knowledge, the CPP is traditionally a democratic and non-violent political organization.

Dr Novakovic was also accused of helping to compile the party's program since 1962, when he travelled extensively to England, the Federal Republic of Germany and other European countries. Dr Novakovic, denying this, reportedly stated that he had visited old colleagues living abroad and privately discussed political, social and cultural issues, but had never participated in the compilation of "hostile political programs".

Dr Novakovic also refuted the "hostile propaganda" charge by pointing out that the Yugoslav constitution guarantees freedom of expression including public exchange of critical views on the country's political and economic system. The court did not explain why Dr Novakovic was detained only in 1977 when the charges go back to 1962.

He is now in the State Penitentiary of Zenica north-west of Sarajevo. According to his medical record he suffers from acute rheumatism and cardiac disorders.

In politely worded letters, appeal for the immediate release of Dr Novakovic to: President Josip Broz Tito, Beograd, Bulevar Oktobarske Revolucije 70, Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia.

Jamil SADAN, Syria

Jamil SADAN has been imprisoned for 21 years without charge or trial. Aged 46, he is a member of the Druze sect who live in the mountainous area, known as the Jebel Druze near the border with Israel.

Regularly travelling about this border zone, the nomadic Druze are frequently accused of espionage. The sect, estimated

at some 130,000 people, is an offshoot of the Ismaili Moslems and its teachings are kept secret.

Jamil Sadan is believed to have been arrested in 1956 after a land dispute with his brother, a member of the security forces, who falsely informed against him. It is common practice in Syria for the security forces to arrest persons who have been informed against without any supporting evidence, according to numerous reports received by *AI*. The security forces may also detain political prisoners indefinitely without charge, trial or access to legal representation. The number of long term detentions without trial is one of *AI's* principal concerns in Syria.

Sadan was initially imprisoned in Al Mezze military prison near Damascus. He was then held for some 12 years in the remote high-security prison at Tadmur, near Palmyra. At the beginning of 1974 he was then transferred to Qalaa prison in Damascus, which holds both political and civil law offenders.

He is currently held in a cell for political prisoners known as Room 8. This cell contains 40 beds but recently 73 people were known to be held in the cell. Sadan now shows signs of mental disturbance. He is illiterate and has difficulty in talking. He is used in prison as a servant, performing menial tasks for prison guards and other prisoners. *AI* believes that, since he can in no way help himself, Sadan's case has simply been forgotten.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Jamil Sadan, to: His Excellency Lieutenant General Hafez Assad, The President, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic; *and to:* His Excellency Mr Adib Nahawi, Minister of Justice, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic.

Gilbert NACCACHE, Tunisia

Gilbert NACCACHE was a 29-year-old agricultural engineer when first arrested in 1968. He was associated with a marxist-leninist group of students and intellectuals who produced a publication called *Perspectives Tunisiennes*, which criticized the government of President Habib Bourguiba.

Naccache was tried in September 1968 before the State Security Court in Tunis along with 133 others. They were charged with subversion against the state, forming an illegal association and spreading false information. In Tunisia these are standard charges against those tried for their political convictions.

During the trial torture was reported to have been used during police interrogation, but police statements formed the basis of the prosecution, and lawyers were prevented from conducting a proper defence. Naccache received one of the heaviest sentences in the trial—16 years' imprisonment. In March 1970 he was freed by a presidential pardon and placed under restricted residence. In February 1972, during a wave of arrests of members of the leftwing opposition, he was detained incommunicado for two months, then released, and finally re-arrested in December 1972. Although he and his former associates had all been restricted since 1970 to remote villages, they were again accused of forming illegal organizations, and in March 1973 Naccache was sentenced to one year's imprisonment. At the end of this sentence he was not released, and in April 1974 the pardon of 1970 was withdrawn. Naccache therefore had his original 16 year sentence re-imposed.

Gilbert Naccache and his associates are imprisoned at the Prison de Nador, Bizerte, where poor diet and lack of specialist medical care have made a number of them seriously ill. Naccache's condition is especially grave; he suffers from kidney stones, haemorrhoids, and chronic digestive and dental troubles. Appeals for his release should make special reference to his health problems.

Please send courteously worded letters (in French if possible) appealing for the release of Gilbert Naccache to: Son Excellence Habib Bourguiba, Président de la République, Tunis, Tunisia; *and to:* M. Tahar Belkhdja, Ministre de l'Intérieur, Tunis, Tunisia.

FEARS FOR LIVES OF HUNGER STRIKERS IN BRAZIL

Serious fears were expressed by *AI* on 10 November 1977 for the lives of three women political prisoners detained in the Talavera Bruce prison, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, who were on continuous hunger strike for three weeks. Six women prisoners originally began a hunger strike on 24 October in protest at the lack of medical treatment, arbitrary curtailment of visits, and lack of security inside the Talavera Bruce prison, which predominantly houses criminal prisoners. They also complained at isolation from other political prisoners. Three were transferred to a prison hospital, but did not receive adequate medical attention. The head of the prison, Senhor Augusto THOMPSON, remained adamant that they could not be moved to another prison. The remaining three are currently awaiting their trial in freedom.

In view of the deadlock, *AI* wrote to President Ernesto GEISEL calling for his personal intervention in the hunger strike and for guarantees for the prisoners' full security during their detention and appealing to him to do all in his power to "prevent a tragic end to this episode".

• On 7 December 1977, *AI* wrote to Brazilian
Continued on page 4, column 1

Fears for Lives of Hunger Strikers in Brazil *Continued from page 3, column 3*

Minister of Justice, Senhor Armando FALCAO, expressing concern for the lives of 15 political prisoners detained in the Penitenciária Professor Barreto Campelo in Itamaracá, in the state of Pernambuco, who had started a hunger strike on 15 November in protest at the isolation, since 1975, of two of their fellow prisoners, Carlos Alberto SOARES and Rholine Sonde CAVALCANTI. The hunger strike ended on 9 December without any change in the situation of these two and reliable sources allege that the prison authorities are considering isolating four more from this group □

INDONESIA REFUSES RED CROSS ACCESS TO EAST TIMOR

Following a resolution on East Timor adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 November 1977, the Indonesian government declared on the following day that it would not permit the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit East Timor.

AI promptly criticized the Indonesian government's refusal stating that the ICRC must be allowed full access to East Timor to conduct its normal work, in view of continuing allegations of atrocities committed by Indonesian armed forces there.

Armed conflict has reportedly persisted in East Timor since Indonesian forces entered the territory on 7 December 1975, and there are reports of continuing resistance to Indonesian occupation □

INFORMATION REQUESTED ON DEAD HAITIAN PRISONERS

Full information on several hundred political prisoners reported to have died since 1971 in Fort Dimanche prison, Haiti, was requested in an *AI* cable of 14 October 1977 to President Jean Claude DUVALIER. *AI* also asked for medical help and legal assistance for four prisoners held incommunicado and last seen alive in September.

Executions and illness, (tuberculosis taking the highest toll), reportedly account for the deaths, including well-known lawyer Hubert LEGROS, adopted by *AI*. René FRANEX is reported to have been executed in 1974 and radio journalist Marie-Thérèse FEVAL in 1976. Their cases had also been taken up by *AI*.

The Haitian authorities have never informed the prisoners' families of these deaths, and have even denied the existence of certain prisoners to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IAHCR) and *AI*.

In September, 105 Haitian prisoners were released under a presidential amnesty and the government announced that there were "no political prisoners left in Haiti". *AI* welcomed the amnesty at the time, but asked the government to clarify the situation of missing prisoners. It would now appear that most of those missing were already dead, confirming that Haiti has one of the world's highest mortality rates among prisoners □



President of the United Nations General Assembly, Lazar MOJSOV, (left) and Vice-Chairman Mümtaz SOYSAL of AI's International Executive Committee discuss AI's worldwide petition calling for the immediate release of prisoners of conscience throughout the world. Professor Soysal presented the petition—signed by 1,121,609 individuals and organizations representing 84 million people in 133 countries—to Mr Mojsov and to UN Secretary General Kurt WALDHEIM at their New York offices on 7 December 1977.

WRITERS AND POETS ARRESTED IN SOUTH KOREA

A number of South Korean writers and poets have been arrested and prosecuted in recent months in connection with writings allegedly critical of the government. All such criticism is illegal in South Korea under the provisions of Emergency Regulation Number 9, decreed in May 1975.

Among those arrested is PARK Yang Ho, the author of an allegorical story entitled "Mad Bird". The editor of the magazine which published "Mad Bird" was also reported to have been arrested.

Others reportedly arrested for articles and poems allegedly critical of the government include RIM Jon Nam, managing editor of the journal *Taehwa*, and CHONG Yon Ju, a contributor to the journal; CHANG Gi Pyo, a poet, reportedly sentenced to five years' imprisonment; RYANG Song U, arrested after his long poem "A Slave's Memo Book" was published in the Japanese magazine *Sekai*; and KO Un and CHO Tae Il, two poets who had helped publish poems by Ryang Song U. A petition signed by 275 South Korean writers, calling for the release of the latter two men, was presented to the Prosecutor General, OH Tak-kun, on 27 October 1977, a month after their arrest.

AI is taking up the cases of the arrested writers. *AI* also continues to press for the immediate and unconditional release of the writer and poet KIM Chi Ha, who remains in detention in Seoul's West Gate prison.

The arrests coincide with increasingly outspoken criticism from within South Korea of the administration of President PARK Chung-hee. In particular, there has been continuing unrest at many South Korean universities. On 7 October, more than 1,000 students at Seoul University held

a demonstration calling for the release of political prisoners and the restoration of basic freedoms in South Korea. Similar demonstrations followed at other universities in Seoul, including Yonsei University, Ewha Women's University and Sogang University. An unknown number of students were said to have been arrested. *AI* is investigating all such reports.

There has also been reiteration of the demands made in the "Myong-Dong declaration" of March 1976 (April 1976 and June 1977 *Newsletters*).

On 10 November 1977 these demands were re-stated in a declaration endorsed by leading men and women, including former President YUN Po Sun and Quaker leader HAHM Suk Hon, who were prosecuted in connection with the "Myong-Dong declaration" in 1976 □

AI CONCERN FOR NEPALESE PRISONER

On 25 November 1977 *AI* cabled Prime Minister Kirtinidhi BISTA of Nepal to express concern at reports that former Nepalese Prime Minister B P KOIRALA was not allowed to see his lawyers. (February 1977 *Newsletter*)

Mr Koirala, arrested on 8 November on his return to Nepal after medical treatment abroad on parole, is facing trial before a special court on a number of criminal charges. *AI* urged that his case be transferred to an open court where ordinary procedures of law apply □

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campaign for the abolition of torture

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MONTHLY BULLETIN

Continuing "Disappearance" of Torture Victim

"He was not wearing a shirt and was covered with wounds. On his whole body there was not one inch of skin without injury. He was sweating profusely and saying 'water, water'."

So Estela Mary CORNALEA, aged 32, an Argentine national, describes the condition of her husband Alberto Samuel FALICOFF after he had been tortured in an unofficial detention center in Argentina. The couple were taken there from their Buenos Aires flat by four armed men on 25 November 1976. Though Estela was released without explanation after one month, the whereabouts of her husband are still unknown and writs of *habeas corpus* have failed to locate him.

Alberto Falicoff is a paediatrician. He qualified at the National University of Córdoba and later became an organizer of the Córdoba Medical Association. He was doctor to trade unionists, children of the poor, political prisoners and their families. These activities led to his abduction and subsequent disappearance.

Estela and her husband were driven in separate cars to an unknown destination about 20 minutes from their flat. Their 3-year-old son Alfred José was taken to his grandmother's house in Chaco province.

At the detention center, Estela was handcuffed, chains and padlocks were put on her feet and a tight elasticated mask around her head. She was immediately given a number which she was told to remember—103. She was closely questioned about herself, her family and her husband's activities. Next door, she heard her husband screaming "Murderers!" and a terrific noise of water. She was obviously next door to the torture room.

People were taken into the torture room in turn. Every time somebody went in, she could hear the sound of water and cries of pain, even though loud music played continuously. At one point, Estela realized that her husband was sitting in a chair next to her: she recognized his trousers and shoes. Once the chief came in and asked how things were going. He was told that three people—two men and one woman—had died. He told them to be more careful because "that was a lot for one day".

This same day, Estela heard her husband being tortured several times. Twice she realized that he was having breathing difficulties; the music was stopped and the doctor was called. "I could hear someone running and then the doctor saying that he couldn't take any more if they wanted him alive."

Estela later saw her husband lying motionless on a mattress in the state quoted above.

She was permanently fettered, although occasionally her handcuffs and mask were removed. She estimates that about 50 people

were detained there, among them a lawyer, a veterinary surgeon and his brother and a schoolteacher. At the beginning of December 1976, about 40 people were taken away. Estela heard one guard ask another where they were being taken to and the reply was "food for fish".

She was released without explanation on Christmas Eve 1976. She was told she was going to her mother's home in Resistencia, but she was not to communicate with her in-laws, not to go to Córdoba and not to go to Buenos Aires for some months. She was given a false identity card and some money; she was told to buy a go-kart for her son for Christmas.

Estela now lives in Europe. She made the above statement to draw attention to the serious human rights violations in the Argentine Republic and in hope of saving her husband's life□

DEATH SENTENCES IN BERMUDA

Black Bermudans Erskine BURROWS and Larry Winfield TACKLYN were executed in Bermuda on 2 December 1977 in the first executions to take place in the territory for more than 30 years.

AI appealed for the sentences to be commuted when it learnt that Bermuda's Committee of Mercy had ruled against commutation in May. Last moment appeals were also sent by cable and telephone on 1 December, the day before the executions.

Erskine Burrows was convicted for the murder in 1973 of the late Governor of Bermuda, Mr Richard SHARPLES. Larry Tacklyn was initially accused, but found innocent, of acting as an accomplice in this crime. He was subsequently sentenced to death for another murder. Before their trial, Mr Burrows and Mr Tacklyn had been named as murderers by a coroner's court, an action which violates the Bermudan legal principle that a defendant is considered innocent unless he or she is found guilty after trial in a court of law.

Bermudan law permits either the defence

For reasons of space, three articles concerning death penalty cases in Bermuda, Grenada and Vietnam could not be incorporated into this month's *Newsletter*. In light of the Stockholm Declaration that "the death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment" (see front page), these articles were included in the *CAT Bulletin*.

or the prosecution to call a "special" jury where the members are selected on the basis of educational and other special qualifications. Bermudan Attorney General Gerald COLLETT decided to call for a "special" jury to judge the case against Mr Burrows and Mr Tacklyn. Of the 12 jurors chosen, nine were white and only three black. 60 per cent of Bermuda's population is black.

A dependent territory of the United Kingdom, Bermuda bases its legal system and principles on those of the United Kingdom. The death penalty was abolished in the UK in 1965 for all but a small number of offences against the State but a sentence of death required the unanimous verdict of a jury. British law was amended in 1974 to permit majority decisions under certain circumstances—but when a jury of 11 or 12 is present, that majority must be of 10 members. The majority on the 12-person Bermudan jury that sentenced Erskine Burrows and Larry Tacklyn to death was only nine.

Since 1958 seven death sentences have been passed in Bermuda, but in each case the condemned prisoner has been relieved.

• Grenada

Four men were executed in Grenada on 17 November 1977, the first executions on the island since 31 May 1962. In a letter to the Prime Minister of Grenada, Mr Eric GAIRY, *AI* urged him to do everything possible to prevent execution of five or six other men sentenced to death□

BIKO INQUEST EXONERATES SECURITY POLICE

The death in detention of the South African Black Consciousness leader Steve BIKO could not be "attributed to any act or omission amounting to a criminal offence on the part of any person" according to the inquest magistrate, Martinus PRINS. Mr Prins issued this verdict on 2 December 1977 at the
Continued on next page, column 2

appeals

Pablo MORALES CRUZ, Jose DAMASO ALTAMIRANO—*Nicaragua*
Pablo MORALES CRUZ, 22, and his middle-aged neighbour Jose DAMASO ALTAMIRANO were detained by the Nicaraguan National Guard on 23 August 1977 and have since "disappeared". Both are *campesinos* (peasant farmers) from the township of El Naranjo in the isolated Zelaya province. There is fear that the two men may be suffering prolonged interrogation under torture and that their lives may be in danger. Severe torture has been alleged by *campesinos* released after up to six months of secret detention.

Relatives of Señor Morales Cruz travelled to Managua, the capital, to tell the press that Pablo was ordered by local authorities to report for questioning "to one of the camps maintained by the National Guard in the area". He was detained on arrival. A civilian employee of the National Guard told Pablo's family at the end of August that he had been transferred to another camp.

Señor Damaso Altamirano was detained near his home and has not been seen since.

Over 250 *campesinos* detained in Zelaya province since December 1974 have been the subject of *AI* inquiries. The Nicaraguan government has not formally replied, although most *AI* adoption groups have received lengthy printed bulletins from the Nicaraguan Government Information Service, located in Washington, DC, USA. These bulletins have stressed the difficulty in accounting for individual human rights cases, noting in one circular that "there is no system of ID (identification) papers in Nicaragua". Most material from this source has concerned leftwing guerrilla groups in Nicaragua.

Independent sources have recently confirmed that 18 of the "disappeared" *campesinos* in Zelaya have been released, although others have died in National Guard custody.

In the September *Newsletter* a special appeal was made for Solomon PEREZ LOPEZ and five members of his family, detained in February 1977. Although the government has not responded to this appeal, Roman Catholic church authorities say Señor Perez Lopez is dead: ". . . the big list of over 200 names of 'disappeared people' is almost completely intact, and for Solomon Perez Lopez it will never change. His community found him among others in a mass grave close to the chapel where he was 'Delegate of the Word of God'. Nevertheless. . . perhaps some day 'justice' will be done. Very probably the members of Solomon's family are with him. . ."

Please write courteously worded letters requesting that Pablo Morales Cruz and Jose Damaso Altamirano be immediately brought

to trial or released, to: Exmo Sr Presidente General Anastasio Somoza Debayle, Casa Presidencial, Managua, Nicaragua. Please send copies of your letters to Nicaraguan representatives in your country.

Biko Inquest Exonerates Security Police

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end of the three-week inquest hearings in Pretoria. The verdict was greeted with incredulity both within South Africa and abroad, particularly in view of the evidence concerning security police ill-treatment of detainees brought out during the inquest.

Although the South African Minister of Justice James KRUGER claimed shortly after Biko's death on 12 September that he had died as a result of a hunger-strike, the inquest magistrate concluded that Mr Biko in fact died from extensive brain injuries inflicted during his detention. Several members of the Port Elizabeth security police were called to testify at the inquest. Under cross-examination by Sidney KENTRIDGE, the lawyer representing the Biko family, the security police admitted that Biko had been kept naked and chained for much of his time in detention. Still naked and chained, he was placed in the back of a landrover and driven the 1,200 kilometers from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria on the day before he died.

Doctors who examined Mr Biko in Port Elizabeth testified that he was already seriously ill before this journey.

Conflicting evidence was given by security police about how the brain injuries occurred. They alleged that he had tried to assault five security police interrogators while being questioned on 7 September, and that during the ensuing struggle he had struck the back of his head against a wall. No indication was given of how Mr Biko suffered another, probably fatal, injury to the left side of his head. Doctors who examined Biko claimed that they had not noticed this injury.

At the close of the inquest, Mr Kentridge called upon the magistrate to return a verdict that Steve Biko died as a result of criminal assault by one or more security policemen. He argued that the available evidence pointed to the security police deliberately and unlawfully inflicting fatal injuries on Steve Biko. At the very least, those responsible were guilty of culpable homicide, he said, and claimed that the inquest had "revealed the dangers to life and liberty involved in the system of holding detainees incommunicado". Mr Kentridge concluded: "A firm and clear verdict may help to prevent further abuse of the system. In the light of further disquieting evidence before this court, any verdict which can be seen as an exoneration of the Port Elizabeth security police will unfortunately be interpreted as a licence to abuse helpless people with impunity".

While the inquest on Steve Biko was still in progress, the South African authorities announced on 18 November that yet another political detainee had died in security police custody. Bonaventura Sipho MALAZA, aged

18, allegedly hanged himself while detained at Krugersdorp. He had been held incommunicado and without trial since early July 1977 □

DEATH SENTENCES IN VIETNAM

Confirmation of three death sentences in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam prompted a cable from *AI* on 17 November 1977 expressing concern to President TON DUC THANG.

NGUYEN Duc Hung, NGUYEN Huu Nghi and NGUYEN Suan Hung were sentenced in September 1976. They were among 14 people arrested in February 1976 following reported gunfire with police around the Vinh Son Catholic church where they had taken refuge. One policeman was reportedly killed.

The three were alleged to be members of a resistance group called Militia for National Recovery. *AI* urged commutation of their sentences on humanitarian grounds □

FRENCH AI MEDICAL COMMISSION WINS BROAD SUPPORT

More than 550 doctors, nurses and medical students met the French *AI* Medical Commission in Paris on 30 November 1977 to learn about *AI*'s medical work. The meeting was addressed by Dr Alain BERNARD, leader of the French Medical Commission, commission member Madame Anne-Lise PICARD and three members of the *AI* Medical Advisory Board from the Netherlands and Denmark.

Dr Bernard emphasized the individual and collective responsibility of the medical community to prevent medical personnel from participating in torture directly, advising torturers, helping cover traces of torture, improving torture techniques, or deliberately neglecting ill or wounded prisoners and forcibly imprisoning and treating sane dissidents in mental hospitals.

Madame Picard invited her colleagues to join *AI*'s medical program in France. This includes urgent action campaigns for imprisoned colleagues and for cases of severe medical neglect or ill-treatment, work to improve and implement medical codes of ethics against torture, medical aid for political refugees in France and training of refugee medical personnel to help their fellow-exiles overcome the after effects of imprisonment and torture.

Dr Inge GENEFKE and Dr Eric KARUP PEDERSEN spoke about the Danish Medical Group's work, citing a recent forensic study of the death in detention of South African dentist Dr Hoosen HAFJEJEE (December 1977 *Newsletter*) □

Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in November 1977 of the release of 112 prisoners under adoption or investigation and took up 111 new cases.