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EL SALVADOR — A CATALOGUE OF ATROCITIES

The security forces in El Salvador have been carrying out a systematic and widespread program of torture, "disappearances" and individual and mass killings of men, women and children. The victims have included not only people suspected of opposition to the authorities but thousands who were simply in areas targeted for security operations, whose death or mutilation seems to have been completely arbitrary.

Testimonies received daily by *AI* implicate all branches of the Salvadorian security services in these violations of human rights, which have occurred on such a scale that there can be no question that they constitute a gross and consistent pattern of human rights abuses.

In a special supplement to this issue of the *Newsletter*, *AI* publishes excerpts of testimonies collected by it and others from Salvadorian refugees who gave horrifying accounts of terror in the countryside of El Salvador.

UN sets up voluntary fund for victims of torture

The United Nations General Assembly has established a voluntary fund for victims of torture—and the Swedish and Dutch Governments have already pledged \$150,000 and \$50,000 respectively towards it.

The UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture was adopted by 96 votes to 15 (33 abstentions) at the assembly's 36th session from September to December 1981.

In adopting A/RES/36/151 the assembly extended the UN Trust Fund on Chile to individuals "whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of torture" and to their relatives. Humanitarian, legal and financial aid is to be distributed through established channels of humanitarian assistance, with priority being given to victims of violations by states which have been the subject of resolutions or decisions by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or the Commission on Human Rights.

The fund is to be administered by

the UN Secretary-General, advised by a board of trustees to be appointed by him.

During the session, the assembly finally adopted the "Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief" which has been on the agenda since 1962. The text is an elaboration of the right to freedom of religion or belief as set down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The declaration requires all states to take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on grounds of religion or belief; and to enact or amend legislation to prohibit such discrimination. It states that the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief shall include the rights to worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief; to establish and maintain places for these purposes; and to write and disseminate relevant publications□

Iran

Execution toll now over 4,000

At least 255 people are reported to have been executed in Iran during January 1982. This brings the total number of executions in the country since 20 June 1981 to more than 2,618; and since the February revolution in 1979 to more than 4,108.

The Iranian authorities are reported to have confirmed that Shokrollah PAKNEJAD, Secretary General of the Association of Former Iranian Political Prisoners, has now been executed. He had been imprisoned since at least September 1981.

Badly tortured

Reports reaching *AI* say he died in Tehran's Evin Prison in December 1981 and had been badly tortured. His body was not handed over to relatives for burial.

On 13 January 1982 *AI* had appealed to Prime Minister Housein MOUSAVI for confirmation or denial of reports that Shokrollah Paknejad had been executed.

During the rule of the Shah, *AI* appealed on his behalf after he had been sentenced to death (he was arrested on a number of occasions and was once forced to spend two years as a private in the army as a punishment). The death sentence was later commuted to one of life imprisonment. He was held from 1969 until just before the February revolution of 1979. Afterwards he helped found the National Democratic Front—the avowed aim of which was to protect democratic freedoms and rights in Iran—and served on its Executive Committee and Central Council□

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USA — nearly 1,000 now under sentence of death

At least 924 people were under sentence of death in the USA by the end of 1981—believed to be the largest number recorded in the history of the country—after a year in which an average of four people were condemned each week.

Statistical surveys show that most of the condemned come from the ranks of the poor and unemployed. Over 40 per cent of the 924 were black.

On 17 February *AI* members around the world launched an effort to persuade US authorities to abandon the death penalty as an arbitrary and discriminatory punishment and to spare the lives of those awaiting execution.

Appeals are being sent from many countries, especially to the 28 states where there are condemned prisoners, stressing the record of unfairness in the application of the death penalty and the lack of any evidence that it deters crime more effectively than other punishments.

Launching the new drive in a news release on 17 February, *AI* pointed out that recent studies in the USA, as well as international experience and a United Nations study, showed no special deterrent effect for the death penalty. A survey of the record in New York State over more than 50 years showed that

the number of homicides rose immediately after executions, possibly because of the publicity for the taking of life. New York State no longer uses the death penalty.

A commission appointed by the late President Lyndon B. Johnson reported in 1967 that the death penalty was imposed disproportionately on poor people, blacks and members of unpopular groups.

More than half of the 3,863 people put to death in the USA since 1930 were black. During this period, black people made up about 10 per cent of the total population.

A recent study showed that in Florida, the state with the most prisoners condemned to death, black people who killed whites were nearly 40 times more likely to be sentenced to death than those who killed other blacks, and five times more likely than whites who killed whites.

Living under a death sentence is in itself cruel, *AI* said. In addition, prisoners isolated on "death row" (segregated to await execution) are usually deprived of much of the human contact and activity which other prisoners are allowed. They are often held for years under conditions which focus their attention on impending death □

Zaire President announces releases

At least 15 prisoners of conscience are reported to have been released in Zaire during December 1981. They include Professor DIKONDA wa Lumanyisha, prisoner of the month in November 1981, who had been detained without charge or trial since March 1981, and 13 former People's Commissioners (elected members of the National Assembly) arrested in January 1981 after signing an open letter criticizing some of President Mobutu Sese Seko's policies.

These former People's Commissioners had been restricted to isolated villages in their provinces of origin since May 1981.

The releases were announced to *AI* during a meeting in London on 10 December 1981 between *AI*'s Secretary General, Thomas Hammarberg, and

President Mobutu.

However, more people suspected of voicing criticisms of the government were arrested in late 1981. They included SEBERA Inkaka, a doctor detained in Bukavu, the capital of Kivu region, on suspicion of distributing tracts criticizing a new nationality law, and WAMBA dia Wamba, a history lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, arrested in Kinshasa by the military security service on 18 December. The latter was on his way to visit his family and had not been in Kinshasa for more than 10 years. He was accused of bringing subversive literature into the country and detained without charge, held incommunicado and periodically beaten for over a month. He was released on 22 January 1982 and told to remain in Kinshasa and report regularly to the police □

Saudi Arabia Public executions

Two Philippine nationals and an Indian are reported to have been publicly beheaded in Saudi Arabia in January 1982.

The Filipinos, Conrado ACOSTA and Mano MIXTANG, were convicted of killing a Lebanese citizen, assaulting his wife and stealing jewellery and money from them. They were executed in Riyadh on 29 January. On 4 February *AI* expressed concern about the executions in a cable to the Saudi Minister of the Interior, Prince Naif bin Abd al-Aziz.

The third execution reported, that of an Indian, Qamaruddin Rayyes EDDIN, took place on 8 January in Dammam, in the eastern province. He had pleaded guilty to killing his employer and her daughter; he said the mother had slapped him.

The death penalty in Saudi Arabia is used in accordance with the *Shari'a*, Islamic Law, against people convicted of premeditated murder, adultery (if the convicted person is married), sodomy and rape. In practice sentences are carried out only after judgments by three courts—the court of first instance, the court of cassation and the Supreme Court of Justice—and after ratification by the Minister of Interior.

During 1981 *AI* received reports of 14 executions in Saudi Arabia, 13 by beheading and one by stoning. In December 1981 it wrote to Prince Naif expressing concern about these executions and reiterating its opposition to the death penalty in all cases on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment □

Djibouti releases

Seven political prisoners, members of a group of 13 who had been arrested on 7 September 1981 after trying to establish an opposition party, were released by order of President Hassan GOULED on 3 January 1982 as a measure of clemency to mark the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. The other six members of the group had been released in October 1981 □

DEATH PENALTY

AI has learned of 263 people being sentenced to death in eight countries and of 249 executions in six countries during January 1982.

Campaign for Prisoners of the Month



Each of the people whose story is told below is a prisoner of conscience. Each has been arrested because of his or her religious or political beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin or language. None has used or advocated violence. Their continuing detention is a violation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International appeals can help to secure the release of these prisoners or to improve their detention conditions. In the interest of the prisoners, letters to the authorities should be worded carefully and courteously. You should stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. In *no* circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner.

Raúl CARIBONI da Silva, Uruguay

A history teacher and educational planner aged 51, he is serving a 15-year prison sentence. He suffers from a serious heart condition, exacerbated by the effects of torture.

Founder member of the Teachers' Trade Union of Montevideo and the National Federation of Teachers, Raúl Cariboni was arrested by the armed forces in March 1973, three months before the military coup in Uruguay. Despite his serious heart condition (mitral valvular stenosis), he was badly tortured after his arrest and later had a heart attack.

On 25 March 1973 he was moved to Libertad prison, San José province, where he has been held ever since. He was removed from the prison and tortured again in April 1975 and 1976.

Raúl Cariboni was tried in 1977 under the Law of National Security (1972), which brought civilians under military justice, and sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for "subversive association" and "conspiracy to attack the constitution"; the sentence was increased to 15 years' by the Supreme Military Court in November 1979. In September 1980 he became eligible for parole but this has not been granted.

In December 1978 a panel of doctors at Montevideo's National Institute for Cardiac Surgery recommended prompt surgery for his diseased mitral valve on the grounds that delay would increase the risk of the operation. The necessary surgery has not yet been performed and *AI* is concerned that the harsh conditions in Libertad prison may lead to a rapid deterioration in his condition. (In December 1981 *AI* learned of the death of another Libertad prisoner with a serious heart condition, Miguel COITIÑO.)

Please send courteous letters appealing for his immediate release to: Exmo. Sr. Presidente de la República/Teniente General (R) Gregorio C. Alvarez/Casa de Gobierno/Montevideo/Uruguay.

Rafael LABUTIN, The Philippines

A lay worker for the Roman Catholic Commission of Justice and Peace, he has been detained since April 1979; he was tortured for several days after his arrest.

Rafael Labutin, whose work involved investigating reports and complaints of human rights violations in the region of Calbayog, Samar, was arrested by Arrest, Search and Seizure Order (ASSO) on 27 April 1979. The martial law powers invoked by President Marcos in September 1972 enabled him or the Minister of National Defence to use the ASSO to order arrests without reference to the courts.

Immediately after arrest, Rafael Labutin was reportedly held incommunicado in various "safe houses"—secret places of detention where prisoners are held for interrogation. He is reported to have been tortured for several days until he signed a statement prepared by the military authorities. Afterwards he was transferred to a civil prison in Tacloban City, Leyte, where his interrogation continued over a period of 18 months. On 24 October 1980 he was transferred to the regional military detention centre at Palo, Leyte.

It was not until June 1981 that he learned that a formal charge of subversion had been laid against him. Hearings of his case were subsequently delayed by the local military authorities on arbitrary pretexts.

After President Marcos lifted martial law in January 1981, national security cases (previously heard by military tribunals) were referred to civil courts. In December 1981 Rafael Labutin appeared before the civil Court of First Instance of Samar—and was acquitted.

In spite of this, he is still being held in the provincial jail in Catbalogan City—because he was arrested under an ASSO which may still be cancelled only by order of the President, despite the lifting of martial law.

Please send courteous letters appealing for Rafael Labutin's immediate release to: His Excellency Ferdinand

E. Marcos/Malacanang Palace/Metro Manila/The Philippines.

Jan LITOMISKY, Czechoslovakia

An agronomist, aged 38, active in the country's unofficial human rights movement, he is serving a three-year prison sentence (to be followed by two years' police "protective surveillance") for "subversion".

Jan Litomisky, an active supporter of the 1968 reform movement, signed the unofficial human rights document *Charter 77* in 1977 and in 1979 joined the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted, the unofficial human rights group known as VONS. Throughout 1980 he was the victim of continual official harassment: his home was repeatedly searched and he was detained for interrogation a number of times, once for 96 hours.

On 17 October 1981 he was arrested on charges of subversion and brought to trial before the regional court in Ceske Budejovice on 23 October. Only his mother and brother were admitted to the public gallery.

The main charges against him were based on his activities in VONS: that he had collected and disseminated anti-state materials and that his contacts abroad were damaging to Czechoslovakia. In his indictment he was accused also of a "negative attitude" towards the Soviet Union and other socialist states (based on his possession of a copy of the late Andrei Amalrik's study, *Will the USSR survive until 1984?*) and of conduct not conforming to the social norms—the latter based on the evidence of two witnesses who claimed that he "did not conform to their concept of decent people" because of the way he was dressed at a graduation party.

Jan Litomisky appealed against the regional court's sentence but it was upheld by the Supreme Court in Prague on 7 January 1982.

Please send courteous letters appealing for his release to: His Excellency/Dr Gustav Husak/President of the CSSR/11908 Praha-Hrad/CSSR.

An AI report published on 10 February 1982—'Yugoslavia: Prisoners of Conscience'—draws attention to the marked rise in the number of people imprisoned in that country for criticizing official policies or expressing opinions disapproved of by the authorities. The report stresses the severity of the sentences given to many prisoners of conscience, ranging in some cases up to 15 years.

Political imprisonment in Yugoslavia

Jovo ILIC, a migrant worker, and Dr Marko VESELICA, a former senior Communist Party official, are serving jail sentences of nine and a half and 11 years respectively. Like many other Yugoslavs adopted by AI as prisoners of conscience they were convicted of engaging in "hostile propaganda" under Article 133 of the country's criminal code. They were also found guilty of "participation in hostile activity"; Dr Veselica was convicted also of "inciting national hatred" and Jovo Ilic of "damaging the reputation of Yugoslavia".

Jovo Ilic, aged 36, a Serbian from Bosnia who worked in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), was arrested in July 1979 while on holiday in his home village. At his trial in December that year he was accused of contacts with politically active emigres in the FRG, of having received propaganda materials from them and of using these in hostile activities against the state by giving them to Yugoslavs working in the FRG and smuggling them into Yugoslavia with the intention of carrying out hostile activity there.

On the basis of court documents, however, it appears that his only proved contacts with emigres were casual, with fellow-workers. One of them had given him some postcards showing Serbian religious and historical figures and newspaper cuttings; these and some family photographs and badges with crowns on them advertising beer and cigarettes constituted the alleged "hostile propaganda" material. It was not proved that Jovo Ilic had shown them to anyone—although

one witness stated he had seen a postcard showing a picture of a Serbian king which the defendant had dropped by mistake. Jovo Ilic was also accused of having spoken ill of President Tito. He denied all the charges against him.



Dr Marko Veselica

Dr Marko Veselica is a former assistant professor of economics at Zagreb University, a member of the presidency of the Croatian Confederation of Trade Unions and deputy to the Federal Assembly. He was expelled from the Croatian League of Communists and dismissed from other posts in 1971; he was jailed from 1972 to 1977 on conspiracy charges and adopted by AI as a prisoner of conscience.

At his second trial, in September 1981, the charges of "hostile propaganda" and "incitement to national hatred" arose from an interview he had given to a foreign journalist in which he argued that Croatia was at a political and economic disadvantage within the Yugoslav federation; he did not in any way advocate violence. The charge of "participation in hostile activity" was based on an accusation that he had sent documents alleging human rights violations in Yugoslavia to several people abroad, including three Croatian emigres, for publication in the emigre press and for presentation at the Conference on Security and Cooperation

in Europe held in Madrid in 1980. He denied the latter charge and also that he had any contacts with emigres. He acknowledged giving the interview but pleaded not guilty to all the charges against him and declared that he was on principle against any extremist organization, whether at home or abroad, and was against violence and hatred.

His trial followed those of two other prominent Croatian dissenters, the historian Dr Franjo TUDJMAN and the writer Vlado GOTOVAC, who in February and June 1981 were sentenced to three and two years' imprisonment respectively for interviews they had given to foreign journalists.

Since early 1980 the number of Yugoslavs prosecuted like these four for the non-violent exercise of their fundamental rights has risen substantially. In 1980, 553 people were charged with political crimes, the great majority "minor verbal offences" (according to official Yugoslav figures)—an 83 per cent increase over the previous year.

A decision taken at a meeting of public prosecutors in April 1981 to prosecute political offences more severely has been reflected in the high sentences (from one to 15 years' imprisonment) imposed during July to September 1981 on over 300 ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province for their part in nationalist demonstrations which erupted in the province in March and

'Hostile propaganda'

Yugoslav citizens who have exercised the right to freedom of expression in ways disapproved of by the authorities have typically been convicted under Article 133 of "hostile propaganda", an offence punishable by up to 10 years' imprisonment. They have usually been accused of having "depicted maliciously and untruthfully" the socio-political situation in Yugoslavia, for having expressed criticism of the Yugoslav political order or nationalist views (Yugoslavia is a multi-national state), whether in literary works, pamphlets or letters, in articles or interviews published abroad, or even in private conversations in their own homes.

April. The demonstrations culminated in violent clashes with security forces in which an unknown number of people were killed (nine or 11 according to official figures) and several hundred wounded.

A total of 500 demonstrators were summarily sentenced to up to 60 days' imprisonment or fines. Although some of those convicted were charged with the use or advocacy of violence, others appear to have been imprisoned for non-violent activities. Among the latter, Daut RASHANI, an 18-year-old high school student, was jailed for six years by Pristina district court for pamphlets of a "hostile content" he had written and distributed to friends before the demonstrations, for participating in the demonstrations and later describing them in a pamphlet as a success. Like many other defendants in these trials he was accused under Article 114 of the SFRJ Criminal Code of "endangering the social order", an offence punishable by up to 15 years' imprisonment.

Article 114, like other articles under which prisoners of conscience are commonly convicted, such as Articles 133 and 131, is loosely formulated and in practice has been applied to penalize many kinds of activity, including non-violent activity, in violation of

'Hostile activity'

Under Article 131, dealing with "participation in hostile activity", a Yugoslav citizen who "with the intent of engaging in hostile activity against the country, enters into contact with a foreign state, foreign or refugee organization or group of persons, or aids them in the performance of hostile activity", may be punished by up to 15 years' imprisonment. This article too does not make the use or advocacy of violence a necessary element of the offence and charges under this article have typically been brought against Yugoslavs accused of contacts, while living or working abroad, with politically active emigres opposed to the Yugoslav political order. Heavy sentences are frequently imposed under this article, even where the defendants were not accused of the use, planning or advocacy of violence.

the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which Yugoslavia ratified in 1971.

People arrested on political charges have often reported breaches of international standards for investigation and trial procedures.



Father Nedjo Janjic. . . jailed after singing "nationalist" songs in his home

- Access by the accused to a lawyer of their choice during investigation has sometimes been severely restricted, or even denied.
- Political offences are frequently investigated by state security officials; some detainees have stated that they were intimidated, threatened or physically ill-treated to force a "confession" from them.
- The principle of open trial has often been ignored. Some political trials have been held *in camera*; more frequently access has been restricted to a small number of people issued with a pass.
- Courts have often rejected defence proposals for the presentation of evidence or the calling of witnesses on behalf of the accused, so that trials have been heavily weighted in favour of the prosecution.

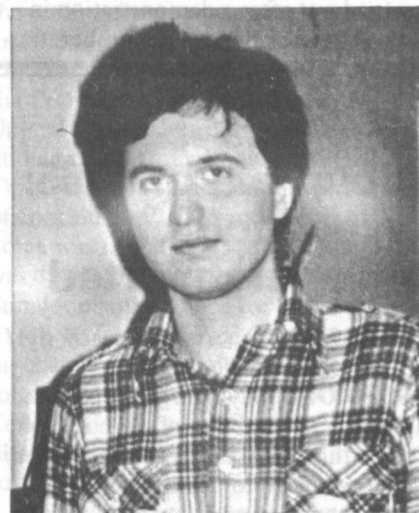
A number of these breaches of procedure are reported to have occurred in a series of trials in 1980 and 1981 of members and officials of the Roman Catholic, Serbian Orthodox and Muslim faiths in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who have been accused of "abusing religion for political ends".

In December 1980, Father Nedjo JANJIC, aged 23, a Serbian Orthodox priest, was sentenced by Sarajevo district court to six years' imprisonment (reduced on appeal to four and a half years) on charges of "inciting religious and national hatred" for songs of a nationalist content sung by him and his guests at a private christening party for his baby son.

In October 1981 another parish priest, Brother Jozo ZOVKO, a

Franciscan friar, was sentenced to three and a half years' imprisonment for "hostile propaganda". He was accused of having spoken of Yugoslavia's post-war history as "40 years' imprisonment" in a sermon to pilgrims in July 1981. At his trial he is reported to have stated that his words had been misinterpreted; that he had been preaching repentance and had alluded to a Gospel passage in which the state of sin is likened to imprisonment. The court is said to have refused the defence's request that theologians be called to give expert testimony and that numerous parishioners who attended the sermon be called as witnesses.

Defence proposals for the presentation of evidence and the calling of witnesses were also rejected in the case of Dobroslav PARAGA, a 19-year-old law student, who was arrested in November 1980 after he had helped to collect signatures for a petition for an amnesty for political prisoners. He was sentenced to three years'



Dobroslav Paraga

imprisonment in May 1981 on charges of "participation in hostile activity" and "hostile propaganda", based on a confession which he had retracted—he said he had made it after having been intimidated and threatened by state security police and deprived of food for five days. In December 1981 the Supreme Court of Croatia increased his sentence to five years' imprisonment.

Although the Yugoslav Constitution guarantees the right of petition, a statement in February 1981 by the official Yugoslav news agency, *Tanjug*, announced that this and several other similar petitions had been rejected as "legally and politically unacceptable"; it accused their authors of "evil and immoral intentions" and of having deliberately organized a "campaign to discredit Yugoslavia's high reputation in the world" □

Gabon Many arrested in Libreville

More than 100 people are reported to have been arrested in Libreville in November and December 1981. They included a former ambassador to the USA, the Central African Republic and Egypt, Jules MBA; the Rector of the National University, Jean-Pierre Nzoghe NGUEMA; an airline hostess and other employees of the state airline; and a typist, several students and teachers and other civil servants.

The arrests followed the establishment of a political group, the *Mouvement de redressement national* (MORENA), Movement for National Recovery, which challenged the authority of President Omar Bongo's one-party state. On 28 November 1981 seven prominent people suspected of involvement with MORENA were arrested. Many more arrests were carried out after a demonstration in central Libreville on 1 December, dur-

ing which demands were made for the release of the seven, the resignation of the government and the formation of new political parties.

Although many people were freed within weeks, more than 20 were still in custody two months after the first arrests; charges are known to have been brought against them.

Some of the detainees are reported to have been severely beaten after their arrest and a woman accused of typing tracts, Yolande KAMBISSI, was reported in January 1982 to be in urgent need of medical attention after a nervous breakdown. By late January those in custody were believed to be in a special section for political detainees in Libreville's Central Prison. In the past, political detainees there have been held incommunicado and on occasion severely beaten □

Indonesia Coup bid of 1965: execution of colonel reported

Unconfirmed reports have reached *AI* that former Air Force Colonel SOEDIONO may have been executed recently. He was one of a group of more than 50 political prisoners tried and sentenced to death on charges of involvement in an attempted coup in 1965 (see June 1981 *Newsletter*).

In the past members of the Indonesian Government have indicated unofficially to other governments that none of those under sentence of death in this case would be executed.

On 8 February *AI* cabled President Suharto asking for information about the reported execution and, if it did take place, for the reasons behind the apparent change of government policy.

Earlier, on 15 January, *AI* had urged President Suharto to grant clemency to the group. Its appeal was made in a letter welcoming news that the President had the previous month announced the commutation to life imprisonment of death sentences on former Air Marshal Umar DHANI and Dr SUBANDRIO, the latter adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience.

- President Suharto is reported to have rejected a request for clemency from Timzar ZUBIL, sentenced to

death in 1977 after being found guilty on charges of involvement in a series of bombings and murder in north Sumatra. This is the first instance known to *AI* of the President rejecting such a plea from an alleged member of the extremist Muslim group *Kommando Jihad*, Holy War Command. *AI* has sent a cable urging that the decision be reconsidered □

S. Africa: Union leader dies in security police HQ

The South African security police reported on 5 February that Dr Neil AGGETT, aged 27, a leading official of the Food and Canning Workers Union, had been found hanged in his cell at 01.30 am that day.

He was being held in John Vorster Square Police Station, headquarters of the Johannesburg security police. He had been detained under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act and, apart from two brief visits by close relatives, had been held incommunicado since his arrest.

AI has called on the Prime Minister of South Africa, P.W. Botha, to institute an immediate inquiry into the reasons for Dr Aggett's detention and the circumstances of his death in security police custody □

Malawi Former Minister, wife and son held

A former minister of justice and attorney general in Malawi who went into exile in 1964 is reported to have been detained by the Malawi authorities at the end of 1981. His wife and son are also in detention and it is feared that all three may be being ill-treated.

According to Malawi's government radio, Orton CHIRWA, his wife, Vera, and son, Fumbani, were detained on 24 December after secretly returning to Malawi via Zambia.

Information reaching *AI*, however, suggests that they were abducted by Malawi security agents while attending a meeting in Zambia's eastern province, close to the border with Malawi.

No details are available yet of the legal basis for their arrest, although they are probably being held under police detention orders.

Orton Chirwa left Malawi soon after independence in 1964 after he and five other cabinet ministers had had a major dispute with President Hastings Banda.

In recent years two senior government officials have been charged with offences against the state. In 1977 Albert MUWALO was sentenced to death and executed for treason. In early 1981 Gwanda CHAKUAMBA, by then the most prominent political figure in Malawi after the President, was sentenced to 22 years' jail for sedition □

Mission to Uganda

An *AI* mission visited Uganda from 11 to 19 January 1982 for talks with the government. The delegates were Dick Oosting, *AI*'s former Deputy Secretary General and Secretary General Designate of its Dutch national section, and Michael H. Posner, Director of the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights. They met President Milton OBOTE and other members of the government and discussed *AI*'s concerns in Uganda: detention without trial, torture and ill-treatment of prisoners, and "extra-legal" executions.

AI had earlier welcomed the release on 1 January 1982 of 35 detainees, including Professor Yoweri KYESIMIRA and three other opposition members of parliament, and of the Rev. Vincent OKOT, the Rev. Christopher OKOTH and another opposition member of parliament, *Haji* Ali SSERUNJOGI in December 1981. On 19 January 155 more detainees were freed □



amnesty international

campaign for the abolition of torture

Chile's secret police accused of electric shock torture

A senior member of the Chilean Human Rights Commission suffering from a neuro-psychiatric illness and an economist are reported to have been severely tortured while held in secret places of detention by Chile's secret police in the first half of December 1981.

The two men—Pablo Antonio FUENZALIDA Zegers, provincial coordinator for the Chilean Human Rights Commission (CCDH), and the economist, Sergio AGUILO Melo—are reported to have been the victims of four different kinds of electric shock torture which was so severe that one of them had to have emergency external heart massage.

Pablo Fuenzalida and the CCDH's national secretary, Germán MOLINA Valdivieso, were arrested without warrant by plain-clothes agents of the security police, *Central Nacional de Informaciones* (CNI) on 10 December 1981 as they were leaving a Human Rights Day meeting in Santiago. They were held for five days in a secret place.

On 14 December they and four other people, Sergio AGUILO, Raúl Enrique REYES Susarte, Ramón Rodolfo PINA Vargas and a lawyer, Eugenio DIAZ Corvalan, were brought before the 2nd Military Prosecutor, accused of belonging to the banned political party, *Izquierda Cristiana*, Christian Left, and of possessing arms. The second charge was later dropped, except in the case of Raúl Reyes. All six are being held in Santiago Penitentiary. At least three are reported to have been tortured by the CNI; *AI* has details on two of the alleged victims.

Pablo Fuenzalida described his alleged torture to a CCDH representative who visited him on 14 December. He has suffered from a neuro-psychiatric illness for 17 years and needs regular treatment. He said his treatment ceased as soon as he was detained and that on 12 and 13 December the CNI had used torture methods known as "*parrilla*", grill; "*picana*", prod, and "*silla eléctrica*", electric chair, to apply electric shocks to sensitive parts of his body. He said his right leg was temporarily paralysed and that as a

result of torture he suffers from severe headaches, finds it difficult to walk and has lost coordination in his right hand and arm.

On 12 December the Santiago Appeals Court authorized an independent doctor to visit Pablo Fuenzalida in his place of detention—but the CNI would not allow the visit.

Sergio Aguiló was arrested in Santiago by CNI agents on 4 December and held blindfolded and incommunicado in a secret detention centre for 10 days.

He later filed a complaint with the courts against the CNI and in a sworn statement described what had happened to him:

"The day of my arrest. . . after being provided with an overall and slippers, I was questioned about political activities in which I was allegedly involved, together with the application of electric shocks by means of. . . the *picana*. . . . On 5 December. . . I was placed naked on my back. . . [on] the *parrilla*, which is a kind of metal bedstead to which one is tied by the feet and hands.

"A kind of tape is placed on the stomach, chest, between the testicles and legs and on the soles of the feet, through which the current is passed at times decided by the torturers, which is generally when the answers being given by the person being tortured are not deemed satisfactory."

He described also being tortured on the *silla eléctrica* and by means of a "*máquina*", machine. During one torture session, he said, the shocks were so powerful that he began to have heart trouble—and one of his torturers had to give external heart massage until he recovered. The torture then resumed.

Please send courteous letters expressing concern about continuing reports of torture in Chile and asking for the immediate and unconditional release of Germán Molina, Pablo Fuenzalida, Sergio Aguiló, Eugenio Díaz and Ramón Pina whom AI regards as prisoners of conscience; ask for Pablo Fuenzalida to receive prompt and adequate medical attention. Address your appeals to: General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte/Presidente de la República/Palacio la Moneda/Santiago/Chile □

Turkey Savage beating, sexual abuse in custody reported

More than 70 prisoners are reported to have died in custody in Turkey since the military coup there 16 months ago and reports of political prisoners being tortured have continued to emerge.

AI has repeatedly called on the Turkish authorities to halt the torture after receiving detailed reports of savage beatings, electric shocks, sexual abuse and a wide range of other tortures, including one known as "crucifixion", in which the victim is suspended from a cross, often before being given electric shocks.

In a news release on 22 January 1982, *AI* said it had urged the authorities to investigate the deaths of Bahadır DUMANLI on 3 January 1982 and his brother-in-law, Ataman INCE, on 26 October 1981 (see January, February 1982 *Newsletters*).

AI said that of 64 cases it had asked the authorities to investigate, replies had been received on 54; in two cases police officers were said to have been sent to prison for causing the deaths of prisoners. Trials were under way in 11 others and investigations were continuing in 14, according to the official responses. Of the other cases, the authorities said they had found no grounds for prosecution in 15; the people named were alive in four; there was no record of them being detained or of a case against them in eight. Two of the cases concerned events before the September 1980 coup.

Welcoming the steps to investigate these cases, *AI* stressed, however, that torture—described by prisoners as widespread and systematic—was still being reported regularly.

The Turkish authorities said last November that nearly 30,000 people were being held on politically related charges, including those who had been convicted and detainees not yet charged or awaiting trial.

AI emphasized the importance of protecting the rights and safety of detainees, particularly during the first 45 days when they can be held without charge □

Afghanistan: The caption to the front page picture in the February 1982 *Newsletter* stated that the gates of Pule Charkhi prison had been stormed in January 1981; it should have read January 1980 □

Guatemala: no let-up in killings, torture

The pattern in Guatemala of widespread arbitrary detention, torture and political murder of people opposed or imagined to be opposed to the government appears to be unchecked, according to reports continuing to reach *AI*.

Detentions are carried out without warrant and are rarely acknowledged by the authorities and those detained frequently "disappear" or are found dead with signs of torture on their bodies.

These human rights abuses are being perpetrated by both uniformed and plain-clothes members of the security forces.

In a written statement to the 38th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) in February, *AI* cited continuing reports of human rights violations in Guatemala. Most of the victims, it said, were from the urban and rural poor, but cases of unexplained detentions and political murders included also members of the clergy, teachers and university staff, students, doctors, trade unionists, journalists, community leaders and members of political parties.

AI's statement referred also to continuing reports of the involvement of the Guatemalan military in large-scale killings in the countryside. The killings, *AI* said, appeared to be part of a counter-insurgency practice which seemed to regard all civilians as supporters or potential supporters of the armed opposition in the country.

On 8 January 1982 Guatemalan paramilitary troops are reported to have killed 50 people in the town of San Pedro Sacatepequez, near the Mexican border: the bodies of 38 of the alleged victims were found with signs of torture and strangulation.

Citing this report, *AI* said similar large-scale killings were reported during December 1981 and January 1982 in the departments of Huehuetenango and El Quiché along the border with Mexico.

AI called for the proper investigation and ending of these human rights violations and said the persistence of the Guatemalan Government in refusing to conduct such investigations and to respond to the clearly expressed concerns of a wide spectrum of international opinion was "unacceptable".

AI said the Guatemalan Government had:

- failed to honour invitations to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to conduct an on-site investiga-

tion and had rejected the commission's report to the 11th General Assembly of the Organization of American States in December 1981;

- failed to respond satisfactorily to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and did not seem to have cooperated with the UNCHR.

Furthermore, *AI* said, the International Committee of the Red Cross had not been allowed to send observers to Guatemala.

AI called on the UNCHR to take all possible measures at the present session to respond to the violations of human rights in Guatemala effectively and as a matter of urgency □

Philippines Torture in 'safe house' alleged

Allegations of ill-treatment and torture have followed a series of arrests by the military authorities of students and people working for or associated with a human rights organization in Davao del Norte province, southern Philippines, during January 1982.

One of the tasks of the organization—the Davao Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace (EMJP)—has been to collect information on human rights violations in the Davao region.

All the arrests were carried out in the provincial capital, Tagum, by the Philippines Constabulary (PC), which falls under the Ministry of Defense.

Seven arrested

On 16 January the PC arrested seven people at the home of an EMJP researcher, Puring TRINIDAD, and her husband Rolly Trinidad, an agriculturalist. The other five were: Hermenegildo FLORIDA, an agriculturalist; Tarcinita BIZAR, a teacher; Lourdes SAMSON, an EMJP worker; Leonor SEVILLA, a parish worker, and a farmer, Elias KASILAK.

Rolly Trinidad and Hermenegildo Florida were taken to an unidentified place of detention known in the Philippines as a "safehouse", where they are reported to have been interrogated under torture. After two days they were taken to the PC Region XI Headquarters, Camp Catitipan, where the others, four of them women, were being held.

The four women are reported to have been intensively interrogated and badly humiliated by the military authorities in Camp Catitipan—including being forced to stand naked during interrogations. One of the women subsequently had a nervous breakdown.

The seven detainees were not allowed access to their lawyers until 22 January, five days after their detention, after a writ of *habeas corpus* had been

submitted to the Supreme Court. The court set a hearing for the petition for 9 February, later postponed to 19 February.

Four other people associated with the EMJP are reported to have been arrested in Tagum on 21 or 22 January: Grace NUNEZA, Prudencio QUINO, Gerri SAABEDRA and Bernard ACIBIDE. Their arrest is said to have followed a "confession" by a tortured detainee.

A number of students are reported to have been arrested in the city at about the same time. Two of them are said to have been tortured: Melvin PELOTOS and Herminio KAHANAP.

AI has received persistent reports of detainees being tortured in Military Region XI, which covers Davao del Norte and four other provinces in the south. In Davao del Norte government forces are trying to confine the population in "supervised hamlets" as part of an effort to isolate members of the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

In June 1981 *AI* appealed on behalf of Benjamin DE VERA, a detainee accused of being an NPA leader. After his arrest on 10 June he was reported to have been suffocated until he lost consciousness and badly beaten. In August 1981 another detainee accused of NPA membership, Felix OCIDO, was reported to have been badly beaten while held at the PC barracks in Tagum; he spent two days in hospital afterwards □

Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in January 1982 of the release of 53 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 44 cases.

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amnesty international supplement

The security forces in El Salvador have been carrying out a systematic and widespread program of torture, "disappearances" and individual and mass killings of men, women and children. The victims have included not only people suspected of opposition to the authorities, but thousands who were simply in areas targeted for security operations, whose death or mutilation seems to have been completely arbitrary. Testimonies received daily by AI implicate all branches of the Salvadorian security services in such violations of human rights—both military and police units as well as paramilitary squads acting with their explicit or implicit warrant—and the violations have occurred on such a scale that there can be no question that they constitute a gross and consistent pattern of human rights abuses.

AI has repeatedly drawn attention to human rights violations in El Salvador carried out under the juntas in power since General Carlos Humberto Romero was overthrown in October 1979. It has repeatedly appealed to the authorities to investigate and account for the arbitrary detention or the "disappearance" or murder of priests, trade union leaders, church workers, teachers, academics, peasant families and community workers as well as the "disappearance" and killing of patients abducted from hospital sickbeds by security agents. In no single instance have the authorities issued a satisfactory response.

On 3 January 1982 Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas of San Salvador stated that he estimated that 11,723 non-combatants had been killed in El Salvador during 1981. In July 1981 the Centre of Information and Documentation of the University of Central America in San Salvador estimated that some 6,000 civilians had been killed in the first six months of the year. In the same month another Roman Catholic source put the death toll in the previous 18 months at 22,000. Day by day further killings are attributed to the security forces, in the towns and cities and in the countryside. In December 1981 it was reported by the news media that hundreds of civilians had been massacred by government forces in the province of Morazán.

Reports about these atrocities have continually reached AI from a large number of sources, including individual eyewitnesses, church and other officials working with both foreign and Salvadorian aid and charitable organizations, a wide range of foreign observers and dozens of foreign journalists covering events in El Salvador.

An AI mission which visited refugee camps outside El Salvador during August 1981 was able to confirm much of the information already gathered. Short excerpts from sample testimonies collected by that mission are reported here for the first time, as well as extracts from other testimonies.

Atrocities in El Salvador

First-hand accounts of atrocities alleged to have been committed by El Salvador's security services have been collected by an AI mission which visited refugee camps and interviewed refugees in Mexico, Honduras and Costa Rica. People who said they had fled El Salvador in fear of their lives were interviewed in seven camps visited by the delegates.

Their ages ranged from 12 to 70 years and they gave detailed accounts of violations which, they said, were carried out by uniformed Salvadorian soldiers and security agents as well as paramilitary units acting in conjunction with or with the complicity of regular military and security services. The refugees said these violations included the deliberate mutilation of peasants and displaced people (internal refugees) of all ages and the machine-gunning from military helicopters



Salvadorian mother and child... refugees in a camp in Honduras

of fleeing women and children.

The refugees spoke of attacks which had occurred inside El Salvador and they also gave detailed accounts of incidents in which, they said, Salvadorian troops had crossed into Honduran terri-

tory and, with the cooperation of Honduran military personnel, had removed men, women and children from refugee camps. The bodies of some of these victims were later reported to have been seen in El Salvador by other fleeing villagers who eventually reached Honduras.

Testimony collected by the AI delegation covered the period from early 1980 to August 1981. These testimonies, as well as information received since then from a wide variety of sources about the atrocities, which led the refugees to flee their homes, were remarkably consistent regarding both general patterns of repression, as well as specific atrocities suffered or witnessed—even in cases where those interviewed had no means of communicating with each other (some of the camps were accessible only by light aircraft). Further, the scars on the bodies of many victims appeared to bear out what they said had happened to them.

Here are samples of what the refugees say happened to them in 1981:

- "The soldiers burned our house in June. . . They killed my niece, pregnant with her first child. . . and threw the foetus to the dogs. . . Yes the same happened to my two sisters. My friend told me. She saw them on the road with their stomachs cut open."

- "In my village the *guardia* [National Guard] took away my cousin to get her money because she had some money. Her husband went to try and find her and they cut his head off and hung both of them up in the road. . . I brought their children here with me."

- "It was the *guardia*, they killed my father; they cut his throat; then they raped me, all of them—they raped my 15-year-old daughter too—and they slashed at my throat too and threw me on top of him to die. They said they were doing this because I liked Mgr Romero [Archbishop Romero of San Salvador, murdered in his cathedral in March 1980]. They covered us with a blanket and left us there like animals. I heard my father die. He drowned in his own blood while I lay on top of him, but I could do nothing. He was 72. I was eight months pregnant. Here is the child. In the morning friends took me to my sister, and I recovered and now we have come here."

'Death squad'

- "Thirty heavily armed men wearing army combat vests, but masked with hoods lettered 'death squad' came to my village and seized and killed a number of *campesinos* [peasants]. They went then to the neighbouring village of Santa Helena, seized Romilia Hernández, aged 21, raped and then decapitated her. Her relatives buried her head; the rest of her body was burned by her murderers. The head had been left in front of her relatives' house. The members of the 'death squad' were evacuated that day by a Salvadorian army helicopter."

- "My brother-in-law went to the *Banco de Fomento* [development bank] to get some seeds. He had just arrived in my town two months ago, after he had fled from his own town. The military said he was sending arms. . . The *guardia* turned him over to the military. The family went to look for him at the military post. They said he was innocent, but the *guardia* had turned him over for money, as he was well-off. His wife went to look for him. They cut off her head. The couple left four children, three are still in Chalatenango. I don't know how they are surviving. One is here with me."



Rows of tents in a camp for Salvadorian refugees near La Virtud in Honduras; 20 to 30 people are housed in each tent.

- "I am from Santa Barbara canton in Tecoluca, San Vicente department. On 14 February 1981, various members of the army came to the village accompanied by men in civilian clothes. They went directly to the Rodríguez house. They opened the door by throwing several grenades at it. As soon as they entered they killed José Martín Rodríguez, 70 years old, with a machete. His wife, Gregoria Suria, aged 65, begged them not to kill her husband, telling them that he was old and not involved in anything. The soldiers, however, took her and cut her fingers off with a machete, then stabbed her numerous times. After killing her, they proceeded to kill Iñez Rodríguez, aged 35, the daughter of Don Chepe. The young granddaughter of Don Chepe, Norma Pineda, aged six, upon seeing that they were coming after her, succeeded in jumping out of a window and began running away. However, a soldier shot and killed her. The other grandchildren of Don Chepe had hidden under beds. When they were discovered by the soldiers, they tried to flee and some of them escaped by hiding in the mountains. The young boy, Mario Eliseo Rodríguez Pineda, because of his young age, was not able to flee and was killed with a machete."

The violence detailed in these testimonies and in others received by *AI* appears to be part of a program of terror directed at the Salvadorian peasant population in certain areas by the security forces. The violations escalated sharply in March 1980, at the time of the government's declaration of

agrarian reform and its imposition of a state of siege.

Between 9 March and 17 March 1980, *AI* received reports of 80 people, including at least 28 children, being killed in Cuscatlan department alone. The authorities maintained that the troops were acting in compliance with others to occupy plantations expropriated under the agrarian reform. However, official forces attacked villagers supporting non-violent opposition peasant unions, such as the Christian Federation of Salvadorian Peasants, *Federación Campesina Cristiana de El Salvador*, (FECCAS) and the Union of Rural Workers, *Unión de Trabajadores del Campo*, (UTC). Land seized was handed over to members of ORDEN, a movement organized in the 1960s to carry out a clandestine "counter-terror" campaign against government opponents and now renamed the *Frente Democrático Nacionalista*, National Democratic Front.

Villagers killed

The kind of action being taken against non-violent villagers following the declaration of the agrarian reform in March included the following: a circle of fire was reported to have been lit around a village in the department of Chalatenango to prevent local people from escaping; troops then entered the village, killing some 40 people and abducting many others.

Other reports of troops operating openly with ORDEN, shooting and abducting peasants, raiding villages and

Killings at the Lempa River

"We soothed the babies. . . while the helicopter tried systematically to massacre us all, riveting the river up and down, both shores, with machine-gun fire. . . ." US field-worker.

In March 1981, heavy fighting in the north of El Salvador again caused thousands of civilians—in Cabañas province—to flee into Honduras, this time across the Lempa River. A refugee from Cabañas told *AI's* mission that he and his fellow-villagers had been forced to flee because of continued killings by the security forces: ". . . on 28 February 1980 they penetrated the Cabañas zone where they killed seven *compañeros*, humble peasants who were working cultivating. . . On 18 June a force of. . . *guardia*, police and soldiers came in and assassinated 23 *compañeros*. On 29 July they returned. . . and assassinated 18 *compañeros* and *compañeras*, among them a young woman who was seven months pregnant, called Adelaida Alemán. After they killed her they sliced open her belly and took the child out and they cut him up with a *corvo* [curved knife] and threw him to the dogs. . . . On 13 August they came back and assassinated five *compañeros*. . . [and] also raped seven young women of between 14 and 30 years of age; they raped them and even hung them up by their necks.

"On 3 September they returned and killed another five *compañeros*. . . . Then in March [1981] they came back. . . . Then we had to flee to Honduras because of the repression which was too much with the



The Lempa River, flowing between El Salvador and Honduras

mortars and the bombings and they tracked us by land."

A US field-worker for the Roman Catholic charitable organization CARITAS and other foreign aid workers, doctors, priests and nuns who were in the area at the time of the Lempa River incident told *AI* how they were attacked by helicopter as they tried to carry refugees across the river. The CARITAS worker said she had swum across with little children on her back, some of them so small they had to be tied to her. She continued:

"We had been swimming about an hour when the helicopters returned. I was on the Honduran side. Everyone ran for shelter. . . We soothed the babies. . . while the helicopter tried systematically to massacre us all, riveting the river up and down, both shores, with machine-gun fire. . . . The helicopter came very low one time—almost touching the tree tops—we could see a man at the machine-gun. . . Some panicked

and ran. As soon as they ran the helicopter would spot them and turn around for another round. I felt like we were live bait especially when the children ran from one rock to another."

Another witness, who told *AI* that most of the Salvadorian refugees killed were women and children, said: "When they arrived at the Río Lempa, which forms the border between El Salvador and Honduras, they were met by strong fire from machine-guns, bombs from a helicopter and a hail of mortar fire."

"We and refugees on both sides of the river hid under the stones. Two young girls were machine-gunned to death. One woman was killed two metres from a priest helping people cross. At least 11 children and eight adults drowned in the river."

Two hundred people are estimated to have been killed in the attempted crossing.

destroying crops were received from Suchitoto township and Morazán Department. Groups of displaced people fleeing such violence began to arrive at the Archdiocese of San Salvador on 7 March 1980. Within five days more than 800 people had arrived from the departments hardest hit by violence in that period: Cuscatlán, Cabañas and Chalatenango.

Soon hundreds more refugees from every department in the country had arrived in San Salvador, even though people seeking to flee areas of fighting were not permitted to move freely within the country. (Nor are they safe once having reached the relative safety of the centres set up by the Archbishopric to house them. Security

forces are reported to have removed displaced people from these centres and summarily executed them.)

One centre was visited in July-August 1980 by a three-member team under the auspices of the Social Justice Commission of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, California. The mission witnessed massive search and seizure operations by the military in the surrounding countryside which, it said, had left hundreds dead, and recorded testimonies of abuses carried out against the civilian population by security units.

Dozens of peasants fleeing those same areas reached San Salvador at the same time as a foreign church delegation was visiting the capital. In talks

with the delegates, these internal refugees stated that it was the uniformed soldiers of the armed forces that were directly involved in the atrocities.

One young peasant said that in March 1980, 12 people had been killed in his village in Aguilares. He described how they had died: "The torturers scraped the skin off their faces and gave long shallow cuts with machetes along their arms. They cut their fingers lengthwise. If you see the backs of the corpses, they are purple with boot-prints. . . . This has been done by the National Guard."

A US congressional delegation—including Congresswoman Barbara Mikulski—which visited Honduran

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Continuing record of detentions and killings

In the six and a half months from August to mid-February 1982 *AI* initiated actions on behalf of 284 people reported to have been detained by the authorities in El Salvador. By mid-February 27 are reported to have been released (including a group of 25 members of a local branch of the coffee workers trade union) and at least six were found dead.

The authorities have acknowledged holding only four of the remaining 251. *AI* knows of eight people among the 251 who have either been seen in prison or been seen taken to a prison, but of whom the authorities deny any knowledge.

Two of those who had been killed were Julio César MONTERROSA, aged 27, a music teacher, and his brother, Gilberto, a student. Their bodies, mutilated by bullet and knife wounds, were found on the highway to Comalapa in the department of La Paz on 8 January.

Other members of the family were arrested at the same time, including the music teacher's 18-year-old wife, Flor de María VELASCO, who was five months pregnant. She and the others were still missing by mid-February.

Among others still missing by mid-February was Antonio HUSMAN, a Salvadorian national who had been living in the USA for 10 years and was arrested on 24 April 1981 when he returned to El Salvador to obtain an immigration visa from the US Embassy in San Salvador.

The following list of cases illustrates varied occupational backgrounds of people reported to have been detained by the authorities since August 1981 and still said to be missing by mid-February 1982.

Gisela GALLARDO Rodríguez, aged 25, a **medical student**, abducted from her home on 20 August by members of the army; María Elisabeth GUSMAN de Quezada, **employee of the National University of San Salvador**, arrested at her home on 1 September; Eliodoro MARTINEZ Ventura, aged 30, **radio technician**, arrested on 29 September; José Efraín SANCHEZ Chávez, aged 42, **painter**, arrested on 29 September; Carlos Antonio AGUILAR, aged 19, **tailor**, arrested on 30 September; Victor Manuel RAMOS Gutierrez, aged 20, **bus conductor**, arrested on 17 October 1981 by National Police in Milingo canton, in the jurisdiction of Ciudad Delgado; Luís Alonso MEJIA, aged 38, **labourer**,

detained on 27 November by members of the army as he waited at a bus stop on his way to work; Salvador CRUZ Vásquez, aged 33, **musician**, detained on 1 December in San Salvador; Aida Telma MURCIA, aged 34, **baker**, detained on 2 December in her bakery in San Salvador by members of the security forces in plain clothes; Inocente ALVARADO Martínez, aged 54, **campesino**, arrested on a farm in San Vicente by uniformed soldiers; Julio Eduardo ALVARADO Sandoval, aged 20, **carpenter**, arrested on 9 December at a bus stop in Mejicanos by soldiers of the First Infantry Brigade

who are reported to have turned him over to the National Police; Transito REYES Rivera, aged 21, **shoemaker**, arrested on 10 December near the health clinic in Mejicanos; Juan Francisco CISNEROS, **nurse**, arrested at his home in San Salvador; Eduardo DIAZ Valencia, aged 15, **schoolboy**, arrested on 14 December at his home in San Salvador; Pablo Dagoberto CRUZ Peña, **bricklayer**, arrested on 2 January 1982 in San Salvador by uniformed members of the National Police; Salvador Alberto PALACIOS, aged 45, **teacher**, arrested in late January at his school in Quezaltepeque.

Fleeing Salvadorians killed at Sumpul River

"We were attacked from all sides. Two olive-green helicopters attacked us from the air and more than 500 National Guardsmen blocked all exits." Survivor.

It was only some months after the event that reports began to leak out about hundreds of killings in May 1980, when refugees, mainly women and children, were reportedly killed by Salvadorian troops as they tried to cross the Sumpul River into Honduras. Honduran troops allegedly blocked the refugees' way. Those who died were part of a group of thousands of *campesinos* from the department of Chalatenango who had been pursued for several days by the Salvadorian National Guard, regular army soldiers and members of ORDEN.

One survivor told *AI*: "We were attacked from all sides. Two olive-green helicopters attacked us from the air and more than 500 National Guardsmen blocked all exits. The only way we could escape was by crossing the Río Sumpul in the direction of Honduras. During this attack, more than 25 people were machine-gunned. When I entered the swollen river, I saw seven children who had drowned being dragged downstream."

Initially, both governments denied that the incident had occurred, but a denunciation of the killings by local priests was supported by the Honduran Bishops Council and confirmed by Salvadorian and Honduran human rights groups and

eye-witnesses. Some time afterwards the Salvadorian Government claimed that there had been clashes between government and guerrilla forces in the area, but the evidence painstakingly collected by local priests was that atrocities had been perpetrated against non-combatant civilians, the majority of them women, children and old people. The priests said at least 100 children, 150 women, 50 elderly people and 25 older men and boys had been among the refugees who died trying to cross the Sumpul River. According to the priests' survey, the number of deaths approached 600.

In testimonies collected by the priests, witnesses described how Salvadorian soldiers and ORDEN members had gathered children and babies together, thrown them into the air, and then slashed them to death with machetes. Some infants were reportedly decapitated and their bodies slit into pieces and thrown to the dogs; other children who couldn't swim were reported to have drowned after Salvadorian soldiers threw them into the water. Some witnesses who survived by hiding in the river described how bodies of children, some of them headless, floated down the bloody river throughout the night after the attack.

All units named in reports of human rights abuses

El Salvador's security forces

In addition to its regular armed forces, El Salvador also relies on special security forces to protect national security, including the National Guard, which combines both police and military functions, the National Police and the Treasury Police. All of these units have repeatedly been named in reports of human rights violations received by AI.

The authorities continue to maintain that any abuses committed were carried out at lower levels by security or armed forces personnel exceeding their authority. They have also on several occasions stated that officers or troops implicated in abuses have been removed from duty, or rotated to non-combatant positions, although by mid-February 1982 no names or details of those involved have ever been made public.

On occasions when security rather than regular military units have been implicated in human rights abuses, the Salvadorian authorities have at times attributed responsibility to "renegade" units.

One of the units regularly implicated in human rights abuses is the Treasury Police. On 7 April 1981, for example, more than 20 people, including several youths, were found dead

Soldiers of the Atlacatl Brigade, a special new unit trained by US military advisers. The brigade has repeatedly been named in reports of massive killings of non-combatant peasants.



after they had been taken from their homes in Soyapango, San Salvador department. Local residents said some of the victims had been shot on the spot by the Treasury Police. Some of the bodies were found at some distance from the victims' homes, with their hands bound. Initially, the official explanation was that the deaths had occurred in a shoot-out with the police, but officials later conceded that "individual units" of the Treasury Police had been involved.

The Treasury Police have repeatedly been implicated in human rights violations since then—but there have been no investigations of either the 7 April or subsequent incidents.

The Atlacatl Brigade, a special new unit trained by US military advisers, has also repeatedly been named and implicated in massive killings of non-combatant peasants in the Salvadorian countryside. This brigade has been named in reports of killings of hundreds of peasants in Morazán in December 1981.

Paramilitary unit

A major Salvadorian force operating in the countryside in conjunction with regular army and security units is ORDEN (now renamed *Frente Democrático Nacionalista*, Democratic Nationalist Front), a nominally civilian paramilitary unit established in 1967 and estimated to have between 30,000 and 80,000 members, many of whom are thought to be off-duty or retired security service personnel. The authorities have claimed that ORDEN's operations ended with its official disbandment in October 1979 and that any atrocities perpetrated by paramilitary groups in the countryside are carried out by independent extremist groups or "death squads" out of its control. But there are reports indicating that the unit remains in existence and that the so-called "death squads" are in fact members of ORDEN or other off-duty or plain clothes security personnel acting in close conjunction with regular military and security units □



A Salvadorian military helicopter. . . helicopters have been mentioned in a number of accounts of human rights violations by the security forces: for instance, survivors of killings at the Lempa and Sumpul Rivers reported that refugees had been machine-gunned from helicopters. A US field-worker who was at the Lempa River incident reported: "The helicopter came very low one time—almost touching the tree-tops—we could see a man at the machine-gun. . . . As soon as they [refugees] ran the helicopter would spot them and turn around for another round [of shooting]." A refugee interviewed by AI told of a Salvadorian army helicopter evacuating a "death squad" which had attacked his village.

Atrocities in El Salvador

Continued from page 3

refugee camps in January 1981, was told:

- "This woman was forced to flee in November 1980 and she was one of the last people from her village to flee. She was nine months pregnant. She had her baby in the mountains on her way out to Honduras.

"The army was setting up guns, heavy cannon artillery on hills around their village, bombing the villages and forcing the people away. As soon as the child was born, she could hear shots in the distance, and they were killing a woman from her village. She quickly tied herself together and took the child and ran up into the mountains. . .

"They continued hiding on the mountainside and the army kept on coming. The children got ill. She had seven children. They couldn't go back anyway. If people were caught in the village, they would kill them. Women and children alike. She said that with pregnant women, they would cut open the stomachs and take the babies out. She said she was very afraid because she had seen the result of what a guard had done to a friend of hers. She had been pregnant and they took the child out after they cut open her stomach. And where she lived they did not leave one house standing. They burned all of them."

Relatives killed

- **María, aged 45:** "She says many of her family were killed, so many were killed that she doesn't even remember their names. She personally saw children around the age of eight being raped, and then they would take their bayonets and make mincemeat of them. With their guns they would shoot at their faces.

"She said: 'Even going to the mountainside, you weren't safe, for the military has huge machines, and set up mortars on the mountain and shoot at the villagers.

"The Army would cut people up and put soap and coffee in their stomachs as a mocking. They would slit open the stomach of a pregnant woman and take the child out, as if they were taking eggs out of an iguana. That is what I saw. That is what I have to say."

- **A man, no age given:** "Two of his neighbours belong to the paramilitary organization, ORDEN. He knows personally of several assassinations that they committed. And he was afraid that if they went to the town where

CIVIL CONFLICT

AI is aware that these human rights violations are occurring at a time of civil conflict between guerrilla groups and the Salvadorian authorities. It is also aware of reports of abuses having been committed by non-governmental forces. After careful study of all available information AI has concluded that the great majority of the reported violations, including torture, "disappearances" and cold-blooded murder, have been carried out by the security forces and have been directed against non-combatant civilians not involved in guerrilla activities.

the [ORDEN] commandant was, they would also be murdered in the same way, so they fled."

"What is he afraid of here?"

"He is afraid that they will use the military helicopters that the United States is giving and cross the Honduran border.

- **Woman, aged 34:** "In her town, the army took off three boys from a bus and took them to a little canyon and killed them. She saw them when they took them off the bus and then they covered them with dirt and stones and sticks. . . .

"And once she saw them kill six women. First they killed two women and then they burned their bodies with firewood. She said, one thing she saw was a dog carrying a newborn infant in its mouth. The child was dead because it had been taken from the mother's womb after the guard slit open her stomach."

Machine-gunned

US Congresswoman:

"How were the other two women killed?"

"First, they hung them and then they machine-gunned them and then they threw them down to the ground. When we arrived the dogs were eating them and the birds were eating them. They didn't have any clothes on. They had decapitated one of the women and put a gun up her anus. They found the head somewhere else. Another woman's arm was sliced off. We saw the killings from a hillside and then when we came back down we saw what had happened. . . ."

In September 1981, another US Congresswoman, Patricia Schroeder, testified to a Congressional Committee

about a visit that she had made to El Salvador earlier that month. Congresswoman Schroeder said she had collected evidence suggesting that the pattern of atrocities carried out by the official security and armed forces continued as before. She told the Congressional Committee that Salvadorian Government soldiers would routinely round up, shoot, bayonet, dismember and disembowel their own civilian populations. She stated: "A member of our delegation asked a Salvadorian military official 'Who is responsible for these grotesque mutilations?' He casually told us that his men were responsible and that it is simply a way of terrifying the Salvadorian people so that they will not have contact with anyone other than the army. These are civilians whose bodies are dragged into the middle of the town as a warning to others."

US Senate hearings

In testimony before the 1981 US Senate hearings on El Salvador, Richard Millet, Professor of History at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, Illinois, called to testify as an expert witness, stated that in 1980 President Duarte had noted that: "For 50 years the army has been trained to act as a repressive instrument, a force for terror. The army has been taught to understand that anyone opposed to their way of thinking is a communist, and they have been taught to do what comes naturally to them—get rid of communists."

CIVILIAN-MILITARY COALITIONS

El Salvador has been ruled by a series of civilian-military coalitions since President Carlos Humberto Romero was overthrown in October 1979. Decree Law 507, passed on 3 December 1980, revised the administration of justice and eliminated guarantees—recognized in the constitution—of fair trial procedures in cases of charges related to security offences.

Martial law and a curfew, under which troops have consistently shot to kill, came into effect on 10 January 1981.

A state of siege originally declared on 6 March 1980 for a period of 30 days has been renewed every month since then. However, in preparation for the elections scheduled for 28 March 1982, political parties recognized as participants in the election have been exempted from the state of siege provision.