

7 September 2000

Further information on UA 157/00 (AMR 19/11/00, 13 June 2000) - Fear for safety

BRAZIL Eduardo Bernardes da Silva (m), Amnesty International worker
Human rights and gay rights groups in São Paulo, including
Tortura Nunca Mais, ACAT and Associao da Parada GLBT
Renato Simões (m) and Ítalo Cardoso (m), politicians known for their human
rights work

A neo-nazi group has sent parcel bombs to the home of São Paulo Amnesty International worker Eduardo Bernardes da Silva, and to the organizers of a Gay Pride march. The group has also written to prominent politicians, threatening to "exterminate" certain minority groups and those defending their rights. Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of people targeted by the group.

Eduardo Bernardes da Silva received a suspicious package at his São Paulo home on 5 September. He opened it partially and found a device covered in swastikas. Police confirmed that it was a bomb and destroyed it in a controlled explosion.

The next day a similar bomb was sent to the offices of the *Associação da Parada GLBT*, an association which organizes an annual Gay Pride march, reportedly by the same group.

On 5 September the neo-nazi group also sent letters to two prominent São Paulo human rights commission members, Renato Simões and Ítalo Cardoso, threatening to "exterminate" gays, Jews, black people and *nordestinos* (people from the impoverished northeast of the country), as well as those seeking to protect their rights. The group said it intends to target a number of human rights organizations on or around Brazil's Independence Day on 7 September, including *Tortura Nunca Mais* (No More Torture Group), Action by Christians against Torture (ACAT), Amnesty International and gay and lesbian groups. One letter reportedly read "*Nao esqueça que temos proteção de gente muito poderosa... O que o GRADI vai fazer? Nos prender? Estamos com muito medo. Seus babacas*" - "Don't forget that we have the protection of some very powerful people.. What are the GRADI [police hate crime unit] going to do? Capture us? Oh, we are really scared. You idiots".

This is the second time Amnesty International in São Paulo has faced a neo-nazi bomb attack. On 27 September 1999, a group calling itself the *Frente Anti-Caus (FAC)*, Anti-Chaos Front, planted a bomb in the organization's São Paulo office (see UA 157/00, AMR 19/11/00, 13 June 2000). A letter was attached to the bomb, attacking the organization's work in defence of gays and blacks. After this, Eduardo Bernardes da Silva began to receive telephone threats, and once a car attempted to force his motorcycle off the road as he was on his way home.

Despite leaving São Paulo for long periods of time, Eduardo Bernardes da Silva has continued to receive death threats, for example when he was temporarily transferred to the Porte Alegre Amnesty International office. On 23 June 2000, the Amnesty International wrote to the Minister of Justice asking the federal authorities to intervene, and expressing concern at claims that the police had told a neo-nazi group where Eduardo Bernardes da Silva was. Amnesty International has received no official response from the Minister of Justice.

A newly created police unit for hate crimes, *Grupo de Repressão e Análise dos Delitos de Intolerância* (GRADI), was assigned to the case. However, their investigation has failed to produce any positive results and protection for those at risk has been extremely limited. Amnesty International believes that the failure of the official investigation has left all those threatened in grave danger.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes/express/ airmail letters in Portuguese or your own language:

- expressing grave concern for the safety of all human rights activist in São Paulo, particularly those working with black, Jewish, gay and *nordestino* communities;
- calling for the authorities to guarantee the safety of those at risk, with their agreement;
- expressing concern that the authorities have so far failed to respond adequately to the neo-nazi death threat campaign against Amnesty International representatives and other groups;
- calling for a swift and effective investigation into the recent parcel bomb and death threats, as well as into the long-running hate campaign against Amnesty International and other groups, with the result made public and those responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President of Brazil

Fernando Henrique Cardoso
 Presidente da República Federativa do Brasil
 Gabinete do Presidente
 Palácio do Planalto, 3º andar
 70150 900 - Brasília - DF - Brazil

Salutation: Vossa Excelência/Your Excellency

Fax: + 55 61 411 2222/411 2243

Minister of Justice

Exmo. Sr. Ministro da Justiça do Brasil
 Dr. José Gregori
 Ministério da Justiça
 Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco 23
 70064-900 - Brasília - DF - Brazil

Salutation: Vossa Excelência/Your Excellency

Fax: + 55 61 224 2448/322 6817

São Paulo Public Security Secretary

Secretário de Segurança Pública do Estado de São Paulo
 Dr Marco Vinicio Petrelluzzi
 Secretaria de Segurança Pública
 Av. Higienópolis 758, Higienópolis
 01238-000 - São Paulo - SP - Brazil

Salutation: Exmo. Sr. Secretário/Dear Sir

Fax: + 55 11 3823 5708

São Paulo State Governor

Dr Mário Covas
 Palácio dos Bandeirantes
 Av Morumbi 4500, Morumbi
 05698-900 - São Paulo - SP - Brazil

Salutation:Vossa Excelência/Dear Governor
Fax: + 55 11 3745 3301

COPIES TO:

Renato Simões, Comissão dos Direitos Humanos, Palácio 9 de Julho, Av. Pedro Álvares Cabral, snº, 2º Andar - Salas 2016 - 2158, Parque Ibirapuera, 04097 900 - São Paulo - SP - Brazil

and to diplomatic representatives of BRAZIL accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 19 October 2000.