

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Ill Treatment of Children/Fear of Reprisals

8 April 1993

**BRAZIL: At least 40 inmates at the Foundation for  
the Welfare of Minors (FEBEM)**

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Amnesty International is concerned about reports that on 30 March 1993 at least 40 children and adolescents, inmates at the State Foundation for the Welfare of Minors, Fundação Estadual do Bem - Estar do Menor, FEBEM, Sao Paulo, were subjected to beatings and other forms of ill-treatment by the guards. Amnesty International fears that the children and other witnesses who have denounced the beatings and ill-treatment may be subjected to reprisals.

According to information received by Amnesty International, on the afternoon of 30 March, there was a riot by a group of young offenders at the Tatuapé juvenile detention centre of the State Foundation for the Welfare of Minors, FEBEM, in the Eastern zone, *zona leste*, of the city of São Paulo. The riot was quashed by a joint force made up of FEBEM's security personnel, the São Paulo military police and members of a private security firm under contract to FEBEM.

In statements to human rights workers who visited the centre three days after the event, the young inmates reportedly denounced that they had been made to "run the gauntlet" (pass between two lines of batonwielding guards) and were beaten with truncheons and sticks by members of the security staff, the military police and the private security firm. Immediately after the riot was ended, the State Secretary of the Child, Secretaria da Criança, reported that no children had been hurt during the events. The following day, however, she conceded that four children and three members of staff had been slightly wounded in the incident.

Two days after the riot, members of the Public Prosecution Service for Children and Adolescents of São Paulo, Promotoria da Infância e da Juventude, who are conducting an investigation into the incident with a forensic doctor, visited the detention centre. They established that at least 40 and probably up to 80 young people had been injured in the riot and that six young inmates were in need of hospital treatment which they had not yet received.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Overcrowding and poor living conditions have resulted in frequent uprisings in juvenile detention centres in São Paulo. These have usually been followed by reprisals from the police and members of staff. In November 1992 public prosecutors requested the demotion of 30 members of staff of the Tatuapé detention centre accused of beating young inmates when they returned to the detention centre which had been partially destroyed in a rebellion the previous month. According to a public prosecutor, a youth of 16 years had his leg broken and needed six stitches to his mouth. The Chief of Security of Febem, who

commanded the security staff that quelled the March 1993 rebellion in Tatuapé, is under investigation for allegations of beatings and ill-treatment of inmates when he was in charge of security at other juvenile detention centre in 1991. Members of FEBEM's staff who had made these allegations have reportedly received death threats.

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters either in Portuguese, English or in your own language:**

- expressing concern at the reported beatings and other forms of ill-treatment of young people at the Tatuapé detention centre on 30 April 1993;
- requesting that the allegations be thoroughly and independently investigated and that those found responsible be brought to justice;
- requesting that steps be taken to ensure the physical safety of young people and members of staff that denounced beatings and other forms of ill-treatment at FEBEM.

**APPEALS TO:**

1) State Governor of São Paulo:

Exmo. Sr Governador de  
Estado de São Paulo  
Sr. Luiz Antônio Fleury  
Palácio dos Bandeirantes  
Av. Morumbi s/n  
05.598 São Paulo -SP  
Brasil

**Telegrams: Sr. Governador Estado de Sao Paulo**

**Faxes: +5511 8439271**

**Salutation: Vossa Excelencia/Your Excellency**

2) State Secretary of Public Security:

Exmo Sr. Secretário de Segurança Pública  
Estado de São Paulo  
Dr. Michel Temer  
Av. Higienópolis, No. 758  
01/238 São Paulo - SP  
Brasil

**Telegrams: Sr. Secretário Segurança Pública Estado de Sao Paulo**

**Faxes: +5511 826 2430**

**Telexes: +5511 21521**

**Salutation: Sr. Secretário/Dear Sir**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEAL TO:**

Pastoral do Menor (São Paulo)  
Praça da Sé 184 -10 Andar

CEP 01001 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 20 May 1993.