

PUBLIC

AI Index: AMR 19/19/00

25 July 2000

Further information on UA 134/00 (AMR 19/13/00, 25 May 2000) - Death Threats/Fear for Safety

BRAZIL Brother Henri de Rosiers, 70]human rights defenders and
 Anilson Russi]lawyers with the *Comissão*
 Ana de Sousa Pinto]Pastoral de Terra (CPT),
 Airton dos Reis Perreira]Pastoral Land Commission

A senior police officer has attacked Brother Henri de Rosiers in the press, after the church mission he works for published a report denouncing police torture of prisoners. Brother Henri has already been named on a death list, and this public attack may put him and other mission staff at greater risk from death squads, which reportedly act with police acquiescence.

The director of the Pará State Civil Police was quoted in the press calling Brother Henri "radical, out of control, unbalanced" ("*radical, descontrolado, desequilibrado*"), and accusing him of involvement in the murder of a landowner, for some days after the report was published on 12 July. The report, by the *Comissão Pastoral de Terra* (CPT), Pastoral Land Commission, documented a number of cases of torture and brutality committed by the force.

Brother Henri was the lawyer who prosecuted a powerful local landowner for the murder of land activist Expedito Ribeiro de Souza, president of the *Sindicato de Trabalhadores Rurais* (Union of Rural Workers), in February 1991. The landowner was convicted on 6 June 2000 and sentenced to 19 and a half years' imprisonment. The trial and conviction of a landowner for the murder of a land activist is unprecedented in Brazil, where those responsible for ordering such crimes are traditionally protected by the state authorities. The 10-year campaign to secure this conviction is a testament to the struggle of the CPT against impunity. The efforts of UA appeal writers over many years on similar cases have also played a significant role in creating the climate that has enabled a successful prosecution in this case.

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

- expressing grave concern that the director of the Civil Police has attacked Brother Henri de Rosiers in the media, with the clear intention of discrediting his work and that of the CPT;
- expressing concern that this attack may act as an incitement to the death squads that have already made plain their intention to attack Brother Henri and other CPT staff;
- calling on the Pará authorities to publicly repudiate the statements of the director of the Civil Police, and acknowledge the legitimacy of the human rights work of the CPT;
- asking what steps have been taken to investigate the existence of a death squad "death list" naming Brother Henri and others;
- expressing concern the authorities' continuing failure to effectively combat death squad activity in Pará.

APPEALS TO: (for all numbers, if voice answers, say "fax, por favor," and wait for the tone)

Governor Pará State

Exmo. Sr. Governador do Estado do Pará

Sr. Almir José de Oliveira Gabriel

Palácio dos Despachos

Rod. Montenegro KM 9
66823-010
Belém - PA
Brazil

Telex: 038 91 1012 gopa br

Fax: + 55 91 248 0133

Salutation: Vossa Excelência/Your Excellency

Secretário de Segurança Pública do Estado do Pará
Dr. Paulo Celso Sette Câmara
Rua Arcipreste M. Teodoro 305
66023-700
Belém - PA
Brazil

Fax: + 55 91 225 2644

Salutation: Vossa Excelência/ Your Excellency

Minister of Justice

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

Fax: + 55 61 224 2448/322 6817

Salutation: Vossa Excelência/Your Excellency

COPIES TO:

Pastoral Land Commission
Comissão Pastoral da Terra
Rua Pau Brasil 40
Caixa Postal 57
Xinguara, 68555-000, Pará
Brazil

COPIES 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 5 September 2000.