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*Amnesty International Briefing*

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# IRAN



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November 1976

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## IRAN IN OUTLINE

Iran, more commonly known to foreigners as Persia until recent times, lies between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and shares common frontiers with Iraq, Turkey, the USSR, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The capital is Teheran, whose population in 1976 was estimated to be nearly four million. In the same year the total population of Iran was estimated to be 34,588,000. The land area of Iran is 1,648,000 square kilometers.

Farsi is the official language of Iran, but there are a number of different linguistic groups. It is very difficult to obtain precise population estimates for each of these groups, but one source refers to 2,000,000 Arab dialect speakers and 4,000,000 Turki speakers while the official Iranian figure for the Kurdish population (excluding Kurdish refugees from Iraq) is 3,000,000. In addition to these there are several other smaller groups. The majority of Iranians are Shi'i Muslims.

Iran is in theory a constitutional monarchy with a partially elected parliament, but in practice the Shah has supreme authority. The present Shah is Mohammed Reza who came to the throne in 1941 following the abdication of his father, Reza Shah, the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty.

Iran is one of the world's leading oil producers: in 1974 oil revenues amounted to approximately 20,000 million US dollars. The increased oil revenue has enabled Iran to develop the rest of its economy, particularly the industrial sector which now predominates over agriculture in the formation of the gross national product. The majority of the population, however, is still engaged in agriculture.

Iran's international position has improved dramatically over the past ten years. Increased prosperity and the world demand for oil have had a notable effect on its relations with other countries, which are almost universally good. Although politically Iran is firmly committed to the Western bloc, the Shah has developed friendly relationships with the USSR and the People's Republic of China, and in October 1976 a 3,000 million dollar five-year trade agreement was concluded between the USSR and Iran.

Relations with some Arab states have been affected in the past by their disapproval of Iran's attitude to Israel, with whom Iran maintains normal trading links. Recently, however, Iran has tended to re-emphasize its Islamic connection with the Arab world and in March 1975 Iran and Iraq signed an agreement which brought to an end the conflict between the two countries.

The Shah's emphasis on rapid industrialization and his vast expenditure on defence has turned his country into one of the world's best customers. Principal imports, apart from military equipment, are industrial machinery and equipment, iron and steel goods, chemical products, synthetic fibres and foodstuffs. The Shah has also provided for Iran's future, when the oil runs out, by buying into international firms, such as Krupp, the West German steel and engineering empire.

## Iran

### 1. Introduction

The following human rights issues in Iran are of particular concern to Amnesty International:

- a) arbitrary arrest of suspected political opponents who are held incommunicado for long periods before being charged or tried;
- b) the use of torture;
- c) lack of legal safeguards and unsatisfactory trial procedures;
- d) executions and unofficial deaths.

### 2. The Political Context

Iran is a constitutional monarchy, based on the Constitution of 1906 which provides for a parliament, consisting of an elected *Majlis* (National Consultative Assembly) and, by a later amendment, a Senate, half of whose members are appointed by the Shah.

Parliament is theoretically sovereign but in practice the Crown is the sole source of authority. The present Shah came to power at a time when his country was occupied by the USSR and Great Britain because of its strategic importance, and even after the departure of the Allied forces in 1946 the Shah's position was weak. In August 1953 the Shah fled from Iran after a confrontation with Dr Mohammed Mossaddeq, the Prime Minister, but the army remained loyal, defeated Mossaddeq's supporters and arrested Mossaddeq. After only one week in exile the Shah was able to return to Iran. In the years that followed the Shah gradually increased his power until he achieved the complete control of the country which he has today.

One important instrument of the Shah's authority is the army, of which the Shah is commander-in-chief. The other, equally important, is the National Intelligence and Security Organization (SAVAK) which was formed in 1957 "for the purposes of security of the country and prevention of any kind of conspiracy detrimental to public interests..." The head of SAVAK is appointed by the Shah and wields almost unlimited power.

The suppression of political opposition is carried out by SAVAK with extreme ruthlessness using a system of informers which permeates all levels of

Iranian society and which has created an atmosphere of fear remarked on by visitors to Iran and emphasized by opponents of the regime outside the country. SAVAK's activities extend beyond Iran to all countries which have sizeable Iranian communities. In particular, Iranian students studying abroad are subject to surveillance; Amnesty International (AI) is aware of instances in which students have been arrested and imprisoned upon their return to Iran, presumably because of their participation in political activities while abroad. There have been many reports of the activities of SAVAK officials attached to Iranian embassies and in August 1976 the Swiss government expelled an Iranian diplomat accredited to the United Nations in Geneva because he was involved in "prohibited intelligence activities".<sup>1</sup>

Because of the fear created by SAVAK's activities, precise information about political prisoners in Iran is difficult to obtain, although sufficient material has come out of Iran over the past two decades to convey a picture of extreme political repression. In 1975 the last pretence of political freedom was removed by the abolition of the token opposition *Mardom* Party and the introduction of a one-party system with the formation of the *Rastakhiz* (National Resurgence) Party. When announcing the formation of the new party at a press conference, the Shah declared that those who refused to support it could either leave the country or go to prison.<sup>2</sup>

In 1963 the Shah introduced his "White Revolution", which included plans for land reform (a program to achieve peasant ownership of the land), worker shares in industry, nationalization of some natural resources, a literacy campaign and the emancipation of women.

### 3. Legal Situation

#### (i) Legislation under which prisoners are held

Among the numerous articles of the Iranian Penal Code and the Military Penal Code and Procedures under which political prisoners are held, those listed below are the most commonly used.

*Iranian Penal Code.* Articles 1-7 of the Act for the punishment of persons acting against the security and independence of the State (1931) provide for the punishment of persons "forming or belonging to organizations opposed to the monarchy, or having a collectivist ideology"; "working for the separation of part of the State"; "taking armed action against the government"; "making propaganda inside Iran on behalf of people committing the above crimes or acting against the constitutional monarchy outside Iran". Sentences under these articles range from 3 years' imprisonment to death. A report in *Kayhan*, one of Teheran's largest daily newspapers, on 20 August 1975 stated that penalties for some of the above offences were to be increased. In practice this would mean that an Iranian who returned to Iran from abroad could be sentenced to life

imprisonment, solely for participation in political activities outside Iran. The maximum penalty provided for this offence previously was 10 years' imprisonment. It is not known at this time whether these proposed changes in the law have yet come into force.

Articles 61, 62 and 63 of the Iranian Penal Code provide for sentences ranging from 2 years' imprisonment to death for anyone who "assists a foreign state to attack or enter Iranian territory or who has communication with an enemy of Iran which benefits the enemy politically or militarily".

Articles 64, 65 and 66 deal with espionage offences, all punishable by a mandatory death sentence and articles 67 and 68 deal with lesser espionage offences punishable by sentences of between 2 and 10 years. Articles 69, 70, 72, 73 and 79 provide for punishments ranging from 11 days' imprisonment to death, depending on the seriousness and the effectiveness of the offence, for actions concerning the internal security of the state. These include "persuading the people of Iran to take arms against the national government"; "persuading the people of Iran to fight between each other"; "destroying any ship, ammunition dump or other government property"; "persuading the Iranian people by speech, written or printed material to act against the security of Iran internally or externally". Conspiring unsuccessfully to persuade the people of Iran to fight between each other is also an offence punishable by 1 to 6 months' imprisonment. Quite apart from the shortcomings of the legal system, detailed below, this legislation is so loosely interpreted that it can be used to punish even the mildest opposition to the regime.

*Military Penal Code and Procedures.* Articles 316-320 provide for the trial and punishment of those "participating in, or plotting, the assassination of the Shah or Crown Prince"; "causing or intending to cause any overthrow of the established government, or disturbance of the hereditary throne, or provoking the people to take up arms against the authority of the state". All these offences are punishable by a mandatory death sentence.

#### (ii) Legal/administrative detention procedures

a) *Arrest process.* SAVAK is responsible for the internal security of the state. Its functions include repressing the activities of illegal organizations, preventing plotting against the national security and insuring against the formation of new groups which advocate policies contrary to the Constitution of 1906. To this end it is empowered to act as the sole investigator of all alleged political crimes and to initiate the bringing of charges against involved persons. SAVAK can directly order the arrest of any person suspected of political crime, and in practice no recourse to any court for approval is necessary. The Military Justice and Penal Law of 1938 does provide that where the investigator orders an arrest, the agreement of the Office of the Military Prosecutor (an entity independent of SAVAK) must be secured within 24 hours. Suspects also have the

right, under article 10 of the Supplementary Constitutional Law of 8 October 1907 to be informed of the charges against them within the same 24-hour period. However, in no cases known to AI have either of these requirements been fulfilled and from what is known of SAVAK's interrogation procedures it is considered most unlikely that a suspect is actually informed of the charges against him or her until just before the case comes to court. At no stage does a suspect have access to a lawyer of his or her own choice and in all cases which have come to the attention of AI prisoners have been held incommunicado until they have been brought to trial or released.<sup>3</sup> SAVAK conducts the entire investigation into each case and prepares the file which forms the entirety of the prosecutor's case at trial. As SAVAK controls the investigatory process, the accused will not stand trial until the case file is satisfactorily complete, which usually results in long periods of pre-trial detention for the accused, awaiting the successful production of evidence. There is no independent control of the way in which SAVAK obtains this evidence and it is not subject to any time limit for the preparation of a case.

b) *Conduct of trials.* All trials of political prisoners are held before military tribunals, with attendant military counsel for the prosecution and defence. As noted above, during the investigation stage of proceedings, the accused has no right to consult with defence counsel or any other person. Upon completion of the SAVAK investigation, the accused is allowed access to defence counsel 10 days before trial. Defendants are asked to choose their defence counsel from a short list of persons presented to them by the tribunal; these are usually retired military officers who need not be learned in law. If the accused refuses to make a choice, the court directly appoints counsel for the defence. Proceedings before military tribunals are usually held *in camera*. Since March 1972 no foreign lawyers or journalists have been admitted to political trials in Iran and the information available to AI concerning the conduct of trials is based on observers' reports of trials prior to that date. The court itself is composed of four serving officers, sitting without a jury in apparent contravention of article 79 of the Supplementary Constitutional Law of 8 October 1907, which provides: "In political and press offences, a jury must be present in the courts."

The accused has no right to demand that witnesses against him or her be called and has no right of cross-examination. The only witnesses heard by the tribunal are the defendants themselves. The prosecutor proceeds by reading into the evidence the findings of the SAVAK investigation, including confessions, if any. AI observers have reported instances of defendants repudiating their confessions in court on the grounds that these have been obtained as a result of torture. The prosecution is not required to produce in court evidence referred to in the SAVAK files and the defence is not allowed to introduce evidence to support the defence case other than the testimony of the defendant. In practice the defendant is assumed guilty and

AI knows of no case of a defendant being acquitted, although defendants who recant before the court may receive short sentences, or have their sentences reduced on appeal.

The Military Court of Appeal, to which convicted persons have recourse, has the power to confirm, reduce or increase sentences and may even impose the death penalty in cases where the tribunal of the first instance thought it unwarranted. After the Military Court of Appeal has reached its decision (usually within a few weeks of the lower court sentence) defendants' legal remedies are effectively exhausted. Appeals to the Shah for clemency sometimes result in the reduction of death sentences to life imprisonment. However, in January 1976, only one of ten people sentenced to death who appealed to the Shah had his sentence commuted. In cases where the death penalty is imposed executions usually take place within days of conviction.

c) *Release process.* The release process in Iran is as arbitrary as that pertaining to arrest. There appears to be no possibility of remission of sentence for political prisoners and prisoners are very often kept in detention long after their sentences have expired. AI has been informed that one section of Qasr prison in Teheran is kept aside for people whose sentences have expired, but who have not been released. Amnesties are often declared to mark anniversaries and traditional celebrations, such as the birthday of the Shah and the Iranian New Year, but it is not known that political prisoners are ever included in these amnesties. A total of nearly 1,200 prisoners were reported to have been released in amnesties in the 12 months between 1 June 1975 and 31 May 1976, but no information as to the identity of these prisoners is available. Prisoners are sometimes released before trial if they agree to make a public recantation on television and recantation appears to be the only way of obtaining a reduction of sentence and early release.

### (iii) *International legal instruments*

Iran was one of the 44 states which voted in favour of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948, and in April 1968 the Shah spoke in support of the declaration when opening the International Conference on Human Rights in Teheran. Furthermore, Iran has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which is a treaty binding upon the parties to it under international law. By ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Iran has committed itself to guaranteeing the rights recognized by the covenant, which include the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty; the right to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of one's defence; the right to communicate with counsel of one's own choosing; the right to be tried without undue delay; the right to examine, or have examined, the witnesses against one and to obtain the attendance and examination of

witnesses on one's behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against one. The right of the individual to be protected from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is, of course, stipulated by the covenant and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Iran has not ratified the Optional Protocol to the covenant, which would permit individuals to have complaints regarding violations of their human rights examined by the Human Rights Committee. Iran is presently a member of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, represented by Manouchehr Ganji, who is also a member of the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities, and has been elected to the Human Rights Committee established under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

As stated in *Iran: Trial Procedures for Political Prisoners*, an Amnesty International report published in August 1972, "the repudiation by its domestic practice of the principles of human rights publicly espoused by Iran is unfortunately manifest."

#### 4. Number and Analysis of Prisoners

It is impossible to give a reliable estimate of the number of political prisoners in Iran due to the lack of detailed information about arrests and releases. In October 1976, the Shah himself, when asked about the total number of political prisoners in his country, stated that there were perhaps three thousand.<sup>4</sup> The deputy director of SAVAK, Parviz Sabeti, stated in an interview in September 1976 that there were 3,200 political prisoners.<sup>5</sup> Estimates made by foreign journalists and Iranian exile groups range from 25,000 to 100,000.

Lack of information also makes it impossible to provide a statistical analysis of prisoners in Iran. Those imprisoned because of their opposition to the Shah's policies include Muslim dissidents, members of ethnic minority groups (Kurds, Baluchis, Azerbaijanis, etc.), and Marxists, but the distinctions between these groups are often blurred, so that the Muslim dissidents, for example, may be motivated by their opposition to western capitalism, rather than by purely religious objections, and the Kurds may have leftwing views, as well as a desire for a degree of autonomy. The Shah implies in interviews that all political prisoners are terrorists, but although there is urban guerilla activity in Iran many political prisoners known to AI have clearly not been involved in violent opposition. These include theologians, writers, theatre directors, actors and university teachers. Because of the lack of legal safeguards for political prisoners in Iran, there can be no certainty that all those convicted of violent political crimes are in fact guilty.

#### 5. Location of Prisons

Before trial, political prisoners are detained in one of two prisons in Teheran:

the Committee Prison (which takes its name from the Joint Committee of SAVAK and Police) and Evin Prison. After trial, prisoners are transferred to other prisons, either in Teheran or in the provinces. These include Qasr prison, in Teheran; Ghezel Galeh prison, Teheran; Borazjan prison, Bandar-Abbas prison, Adel-Abbad prison and Shiraz prison in Shiraz, Booshenr prison, Zahedan prison, Mashed prison, Semnan prison, Ahvaz prison, Rasht prison, Arak prison, Tabriz prison, Mahabad prison, and Rezaia prison. In addition to these there are in every provincial capital and large city Joint Committee of SAVAK and Police prisons which are used for interrogations. As well, in large and medium-size cities there are police prisons where political prisoners are detained at times of large scale arrests.

#### 6. Prison Conditions

AI has never been given an opportunity by the Iranian authorities to visit prisons in Iran. The following information has been provided by former prisoners and the families of prisoners.

Prisoners held in pre-trial detention in the Committee and Evin prisons have no contact with other prisoners, or with the outside world, and are subjected to torture. They are locked up in small, damp cells with only a straw mattress on which to sleep. In these prisons, as in others, the extremes of temperature in Iran are an important factor. Lack of heating in the winter or cooling in the summer create extra hardship frequently remarked upon by prisoners. Washing facilities are inadequate and opportunities for washing are infrequent. Food rations are small and inadequate and no opportunities are provided for exercise. Papers, pencils and books are not allowed and prisoners are not given an opportunity to join communal prayer.

After trial, prisoners may be transferred to any of the prisons mentioned above, regardless of where their families live. This means that in many cases prisoners are not able to see their families for very long periods of time, and even when members of families have travelled long distances to visit prisoners they are still restricted to 15 minutes' visiting time, or less. Food is usually inadequate and of poor quality and this often leads to malnutrition, food poisoning or chronic illness. Medical treatment is practically non-existent and prisoners are hardly ever seen by a doctor, sent to hospital or allowed to receive medicines. Discipline is severe and in cases of indiscipline prisoners may be put into solitary confinement for anything up to three or four months. Maltreatment and torture do not always cease after trial and in some cases prisoners who are regarded as being difficult are sent back to the Committee or Evin prisons for further torture. Former prisoners have stated that they are convinced that the harsh conditions and maltreatment are intended to break the prisoner, with the aim of making him or her recant. This view is supported by the appearance on television, from time to time, of political prisoners who repudiate their previously-held opinions and express their support for the Shah's policies.

## 7. Allegations of Torture

Although article 131 of the Iranian Penal Code expressly prohibits torture, the practice of holding prisoners incommunicado for long periods before trial, together with the importance for the prosecution of obtaining a confession, creates a situation in which prisoners are very likely to be ill-treated, and all the information received by AI over the past decade confirms that torture does invariably occur during the period between arrest and trial. All observers to trials since 1965 have reported allegations of torture which have been made by defendants and have expressed their own conviction that prisoners are tortured for the purpose of obtaining confessions. Alleged methods of torture include whipping and beating, electric shocks, the extraction of nails and teeth, boiling water pumped into the rectum, heavy weights hung on the testicles, tying the prisoner to a metal table heated to white heat, inserting a broken bottle into the anus, and rape.

Maitre Nuri Albala in his report on his mission to Iran in January/February 1972 on behalf of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, describes an exchange between a defendant, Massoud Ahmadzadeh, and the prosecutor in which Ahmadzadeh stated that his confession had been obtained by torture. During the course of the trial Ahmadzadeh, thinking that Maitre Albala was a foreign journalist, suddenly pulled off his sweater and showed the lawyer appalling burns on his stomach and back which appeared to be several months old. During a subsequent conversation with another defendant, Nasser Sadegh, Maitre Albala was told that Massoud Ahmadzadeh and other defendants had been burned by being placed on a table which was then heated to white heat, and that one of those so treated, Badizadeghan, had since then been paralysed in the lower limbs and could move only by crawling forward using his upper arms. Nasser Sadegh also said that he saw one prisoner, Behruz Tehrani, die near him in the torture room.

A recent, detailed account of his own torture and that of other prisoners has been given by Reza Baraheni, a released prisoner now resident in the United States of America.

Most of the horrible instruments were located on the second floor. I was not taken there, but the office of my interrogator, Dr Rezvan, was next to this chamber, and one day when he was called to another office for some sort of consultation, I walked into the room, glanced round it and then went back. It resembles an ancient Egyptian tomb and is reserved for those suspected of being terrorists or accused of having made attempts on the life of the Shah or a member of the Royal Family. Not every prisoner goes through the same process, but generally, this is what happens to a prisoner of the first importance. First he is beaten by several torturers at once, with sticks and clubs. If he doesn't confess, he is hanged upside down and beaten; if this doesn't work, he is raped; and if he still shows signs of resistance, he is given electric shock which turns him into a howling dog; and if he is still obstinate, his nails and sometimes all his teeth are pulled out, and in certain exceptional cases, a hot iron rod is put into one side of the face to force its way to the other side, burning the entire mouth and the tongue. A young man was killed in this way....<sup>6</sup>

Allegations of deaths under torture are not uncommon. One instance is cited above; another is the death of Ayatollah Haj Hossen Ghafari Azar Shari, a religious leader in the city of Qom, who was arrested in August 1974 and died on 28 December 1974, following torture. Nine deaths which were announced in April 1975 of political prisoners who had been in prison since 1968 and were allegedly "shot while trying to escape" may have been due to torture. The official account of the deaths contained discrepancies and the families were never allowed to have the bodies for burial.

The renewed use of torture, after trial and conviction, is alleged to take place in Iran. In the case referred to above, the nine prisoners who died were part of a much larger group of prisoners who had been brought to Teheran from other prisons and were allegedly being tortured to persuade them to give support to the Shah's newly announced one-party state.

When questioned about the use of torture in his country, the Shah has never denied that it occurs. In a recent interview reported in *Le Monde* on 1 October 1976, the Shah replied to a question about the use of torture by saying: "Why should we not employ the same methods as you Europeans? We have learned sophisticated methods of torture from you. You use psychological methods to extract the truth: we do the same."

## 8. Released Prisoners

Prisoners who have recanted may eventually be judged to have expiated their crimes and be allowed to live a normal life, but most released prisoners are kept under surveillance and suffer constant harassment from SAVAK, which extends to the treatment of their families. They are unable to obtain employment without the permission of SAVAK and this permission is rarely granted. Prisoners tried by military tribunals automatically suffer the loss of their civil rights for 10 years, regardless of the length of their sentence.

## 9. Capital Punishment

Judicial execution is common in Iran and since the beginning of 1972 well over 300 executions of people tried by military tribunals have taken place. In the first nine months of 1976, 22 executions of political prisoners were announced by the Iranian authorities. Many of those executed are alleged by the authorities to be drug smugglers: on 14 July 1974 the Iranian government announced that 239 drug smugglers or pedlars had been executed in the past two and a half years. But owing to the inadequacy of the trial procedures in Iran, AI regards with considerable reservation the official description of all those sentenced to death by military courts as either drug smugglers or terrorists.

Executions of common criminals sentenced by civil courts also take place. AI has no figures for these executions but the Teheran newspaper *Kayhan* reported on 24 November 1975 that: "According to statistics from the Criminal Court of Teheran, 20% of murderers are executed...."

In addition to the execution of political prisoners who are tried and sentenced to death, many political activists are killed in the streets or during police raids, while "resisting arrest". In the period January to October 1976 69 such deaths were reported by the Iranian media, which quoted official statements.

#### 10. Violations of Human Rights

In addition to the violations already referred to there is little respect demonstrated for human rights in many other areas of Iranian life. Freedom of speech and association are non-existent. The press is strictly censored and has been dramatically curtailed in recent years since the Shah decreed that every newspaper with a circulation of less than 3,000 and periodicals with a circulation of less than 5,000 should be shut down. Trade unions are illegal and workers' protests are dealt with severely, sometimes resulting in imprisonment and deaths. Political activity is restricted to participation in the *Rastakhiz* Party. Some Iranians have difficulty in obtaining, or are refused, passports. This restriction on freedom of movement applies especially to released political prisoners and members of their families. Academic freedom is also restricted and students and university teachers are kept under surveillance by SAVAK. A recent account concerns a professor of literature who was harassed, beaten, arrested and tortured because his courses had been deemed as not conforming to the "ideology" of the "White Revolution" of the Shah, in that he had failed to refer to it.<sup>7</sup>

#### 11. Action by Amnesty International

AI observers attended six trials of political prisoners in Iran between 1964 and 1972, when foreign observers and journalists were refused admittance to political trials following adverse reports on the conduct of such trials. All AI observers have criticized the trial procedures for political prisoners in Iran and have reported allegations of torture made by defendants. Since 1972 no response has been received from the Iranian authorities to AI requests for the admittance of observers to trials, the most recent of which was made in January 1976.

In 1970 and 1972 the Secretary General of AI visited Teheran and discussed AI's concerns with the Iranian Prime Minister, Mr Amir Abbas Hoveida, and others.

AI press statements concerning Iran have included an appeal for the amnesty of political prisoners to mark the 2,500 anniversary of the foundation of the Persian empire and a call for an enquiry into the deaths of nine political prisoners (seven of whom were adopted by AI) in April 1975. In August 1972 AI published a report on *Trial Procedures for Political Prisoners* and Iran was one of the countries covered in the *Amnesty International Report on Torture*, 1973.

Since the establishment of AI's Campaign for the Abolition of Torture, several urgent action campaigns have been organized on behalf of prisoners reported to be undergoing torture. On many occasions appeals have been made to the Shah for the reprieve of prisoners sentenced to death.

In October 1976 AI had 114 Iranian cases under adoption or investigation.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, 31 August 1976

<sup>2</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, 4 March 1975

<sup>3</sup> Two recent accounts of arrest and subsequent interrogation are Reza Baraheni, "The Shah's Executioner", *Index on Censorship*, Spring 1976, and Eric Rouleau, "Iran: mythes et réalités", *Le Monde*, 5 October 1976

<sup>4</sup> *Le Monde*, 1 October 1976

<sup>5</sup> *Washington Post*, 3 September 1976

<sup>6</sup> Reza Baraheni, "The Shah's Executioner", *Index on Censorship*, Spring 1976

<sup>7</sup> Eric Rouleau, "Iran: mythes et réalités", *Le Monde*, 5 October 1976

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These papers are intended to summarize available information on political imprisonment, torture and capital punishment in a single country or territory governed by a specific political authority. They are designed to be concise and factual and are written primarily for reference purposes.

Since AI is limited by its statute to act only in specific human rights situations, reference is made to the political, economic and social situation in each country *only where this has direct relevance to particular human rights problems*. The information contained in each paper is accurate at the time of publication.

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**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL** opposes torture and capital punishment in all cases and without reservation. It advocates fair and early trials for all political prisoners and works on behalf of persons detained without charge or without trial and those detained after expiry of their sentences.

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL** seeks observance throughout the world of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

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