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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN 110 COUNTRIES

During the past year, which marked the 30th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, *AI* took action against violations of human rights in 110 countries.

The *Amnesty International Report 1978*, published on 31 January, indicates that consistent patterns of gross violations of human rights have not been eliminated and that new trends in repression have developed.

Kidnapping, torture and killing continue as a systematic method of wiping out opposition in certain Latin American and African countries. Emergency laws are still being used in Asia to detain political dissenters for lengthy periods without trial.

The confinement of dissidents in mental asylums in the USSR and Romania has been confirmed and documented. Terrorism in Western Europe has been met with harsh anti-terrorist laws which could open the door to an increase in violations of human rights.

The violations of human rights cited by *AI* range from the case of a Chinese youth sentenced to life imprisonment for producing a large wall poster calling for human rights in China, to the case of a peasant leader in the tiny Central American republic of El Salvador whose mutilated corpse was found by farmers hours after he had been detained by the country's National Guard.

AI also intervened in cases of kid-

nappings and executions committed by opposition groups. It appealed in April 1978 for the release of Aldo MORO, the former Italian Prime Minister who was kidnapped and subsequently murdered by the "Red Brigades". *AI* also appealed for the release of two kidnap victims in Northern Ireland, each believed held by opposing paramilitary groups in June 1978.

The *AI* report covers the period from 1 July 1977 to 30 June 1978. During these twelve months, the organization took up the cases of 4,726 known or possible "prisoners of conscience". In each case, the victims were believed or suspected to be in detention for the non-violent expression of their political or religious beliefs or because of their colour, ethnic origin or language.

AI's efforts to combat human rights violations during the year covered a wide front from the submitting of a statement on allegations of summary killings in Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to the writing of more than a million letters by *AI* members on behalf of political prisoners and victims of torture and the death penalty throughout the world □

A human rights appeal to Latin American bishops

The Roman Catholic bishops of Latin America have been urged to intervene personally in individual cases of political imprisonment, torture, disappearances and killings throughout the continent.

The appeal was contained in a public message from *AI* to the Third General Conference of Latin American bishops taking place in Puebla, Mexico, from 26 January.

At least 17,000 political prisoners are being held in Latin American prisons and detention centers and a minimum of 30,000 people have disappeared or have been assassinated for political reasons throughout the continent during the last decade. Many others have been forced into exile.

"The systematic practice of arbitrary detention, abduction and torture has exacted an appalling toll: thousands have been disfigured and disabled as a result of arbitrary and cruel treatment. Innumerable families have been split up or left destitute," said *AI* in its message.

In this context, *AI* said it welcomed the commitment to human rights expressed in the statement of His Holiness Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Pope has spoken out against "the use of physical and psychological torture perpetrated against prisoners or political dissenters" and has said that the "sequestration" of persons for political reasons and acts of kidnapping for material gain "dramatically attack family life and the social fabric".

In a document circulated to all bishops who will be attending the conference, *AI* said that "in some cases, local priests, ecclesiastical authorities and lay organizations have become the only voice left to speak on behalf of those who are unjustly imprisoned, the victims of torture and the families of those who have disappeared or died" □

Releases and new arrests in Indonesia

The Indonesian government announced in December 1978 the release of 4,288 political prisoners, most from the prison island of Buru (see photo, page 4).

According to the government, 5,924 prisoners remain on Buru and the total number throughout Indonesia is 10,239. However, *AI* believes the total is far larger than this and that new arrests of persons allegedly involved in the 1965 events continue. Recently the Indonesian press reported that for several years 6,000 "former" political

prisoners had been used as forced labour in state-owned plantations in North Sumatra.

Arrests of student leaders and Moslem activists continue. Eleven students released in Bandung in August 1978 were re-arrested in late October and charged with insulting the head of state and "spreading hatred against the government". Trials against these and some 20 other students scheduled to open in December have been postponed. The defence lawyers are calling for the release of the students on bail □

Kenya

All prisoners of conscience released

On 12 December 1978, the 15th anniversary of Kenya's independence, President Daniel arap MOI ordered the release of all political detainees in the country. Of the 26 persons held in detention, five had been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience: NGUGI wa Thiong'o, the writer (detained 1977), and parliamentarians George ANYONA (1977), John Marie SERONEY (1975), Martin SHIKUKU (1975), and Wasonga SIJEYO (1969).

Two other cases were being investigated by *AI*: Lawrence MWANZIA (1972) and Michael Koigi WAMWERE (1975). Most of the other detainees were arrested during 1975 or early 1978

At the time of his inauguration as president in October 1978, and again on 12 December, President Moi called on *AI* to "leave Kenya alone and concentrate on human rights in southern Africa". Immediately after the announcement of the releases, *AI* cabled President Moi welcoming this as a "timely gesture" for the 30th

anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and called it "an outstanding example for all other governments throughout the world". Kenya is now among the few states in Africa which have no political prisoners.

The Kenyan government has always maintained that detainees were not ill-treated. However, a memorandum written by six former detainees in prison in early 1977, published in the *Kenya Weekly Review* of 29 December 1978, describes the "horrible" conditions of detention.

Some of those released have called in press interviews for the end of indefinite detention without charge or trial. It is not yet known whether the released parliamentarians will be permitted to re-enter political life, but another *AI* investigation case, parliamentarian Chelagat MUTAI, freed in August 1978 after serving her sentence, has been allowed to stand for election again □

Chile

Twenty five bodies found in mine

Twenty five corpses have been found in an abandoned mine about 50 kilometers from Santiago, Chile. The discovery was made on 30 November 1978 by a group of investigators which included members of the Church hierarchy and editors of two Chilean magazines.

Responding to a request from the *Vicaría de la Solidaridad*, the human rights organization of the Roman Catholic Church in Chile, the Supreme Court on 6 December 1978 appointed Judge Adolfo BANADOS of the Court of Appeals in Santiago to head an investigation. The judge has said he will treat this as a murder case.

Preliminary reports indicate that

several bodies had bullet marks in the skulls. Spent cartridges were also found in soil covering the bodies. Two of the dead were women.

The discovery highlighted again the problem of disappeared prisoners in Chile. Among the bodies might be some of the estimated 1,500 prisoners who have disappeared since 1973.

On 7 December, *AI* cabled the Minister of Justice and the President of the Supreme Court of Chile calling for an impartial investigation to identify the bodies. *AI* urged that international observers, including the International Red Cross, be present at the investigation □

Congo

President urged to release detainees

On the 9th anniversary of the formation of the *Parti Congolais du Travail*, the ruling party in the Congo, *AI* appealed to President Yhombi OPANGO of the People's Republic of the Congo to release more than 25 detainees who have been held without charge or trial since August 1978.

At the time of their arrest, the President announced that a plot against the government had been un-

covered, and that there would be "neither pardon, nor classical trial" for them (October 1978 *Newsletter*).

AI has since received reliable information that the detainees are being held in harsh conditions and that many have been subjected to torture. In addition, medical treatment and visits from families have reportedly been refused □

Vietnam

Trial of Buddhist monks

Six Buddhist monks whose cases had been taken up by *AI* were tried in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) in early December 1978.

They were accused of "working against the revolution and against the revolutionary government, sabotaging the people's solidarity bloc, making counter-propaganda and sabotaging security and order". In addition, they were accused of failing to vacate an orphanage they had previously administered in Ho Chi Minh City after being ordered to leave by a state court.

Two of the monks, Thich THANH THE and Thich QUANG DO, were acquitted of the charges against them, while two others, Thich HUYEN QUANG and Thich THUYEN AN, received suspended sentences. Two other monks, Thich THONG BUU and Thich THONG HUE, received prison sentences of 2 and 3 years' respectively.

A seventh monk, Thich NHAT THIEN, received a sentence of 7 years' imprisonment for allegedly being involved in the evacuation of Vietnamese orphans to the United States in April 1975.

AI has written to the Vietnamese government for further details of the charges against the monks and the sentences imposed on them □

Iraq

Former ambassador charged

A former Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations, Abdul Karim Sattar AL SHEIKHLY, is reported to have been sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment on charges of "conspiracy against the state".

A prominent member of the ruling Iraqi Baath Party and, most recently, Iraq's ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Al Sheikhly was one of 22 Iraqi ambassadors summoned to the capital, Baghdad, ostensibly to attend a conference in February 1978.

Five of the ambassadors are reported to have been arrested and tried in Baghdad, but only Al Sheikhly is known to have been imprisoned.

Precise information about his detention and trial are not available, since all political cases in Iraq are tried *in camera* by special courts.

AI is investigating his case □

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.

Alfonso Avelino FERNANDEZ CABRELLI, Uruguay

Alfonso Avelino FERNANDEZ CABRELLI, a well-known municipal lawyer, historian, and journalist, has been held by Uruguayan authorities since 1976, charged under article 58 of the military penal code with "offences that affect the morale of the Armed Forces".

Fernández Cabrelli, who has been detained in the *Cárcel Central* of the Police Headquarters in Montevideo, has not been sentenced. In an official communiqué dated 9 September 1976 the authorities charged that Fernández Cabrelli had attempted in his book *Los Orientales* (published in 1971) to "influence the reader's subconscious" by distorting historical events in Uruguay and drawing parallels between the 19th century hero of Uruguayan independence General Artigas, Camilo Torres, and "Che" Guevara. The authorities further state that the book contains numerous passages which "strongly criticize the measures taken by the Uruguayan government to preserve our national values and to protect against marxist penetration".

Fernández Cabrelli, 60, was the director of the monthly magazine *Para Todos* (For Everyone) which published 19 issues from February 1971 until November 1972, when it was banned by the authorities. He was also the director of the series "Grito de Asencio" which included several political and historical publications, among them "Torturas Uruguay 70", "Artigas", "Militares y Pueblo" and "Citas del Prócer". Since June 1973, 26 national newspapers and five local newspapers, as well as numerous magazines and trade union publications, have been closed by the Uruguayan government.

Please write courteously worded

letters appealing for the immediate release of Alfonso Avelino Fernández Cabrelli, to: Sr Presidente de la República, Dr Aparicio Méndez, Casa de Gobierno, Montevideo, Uruguay.

TAN Hock Hin, Malaysia

TAN Hock Hin has been detained for 11½ years without trial in Malaysia under the country's Internal Security Act. Before his arrest in July 1967, he was a schoolteacher and legislative councillor in Penang. He was formerly assistant secretary general of the Labour Party of Malaya.

Tan Hock Hin was arrested for taking part in demonstrations against United States intervention in Vietnam and for protesting the government's 1966 decision to ban the United Malayan Estate Workers' Union. The government held that such activities were "prejudicial to national security" and "promoted Communist United Front activities".

Under Malaysia's Internal Security Act, which came into force in 1960, a person served with a detention order can be held for up to two years without trial. These orders are renewable. Eighty nine prisoners, including Tan Hock Hin, have been held for more than five years without trial under the Act. Some political prisoners have been detained for up to 14 years.

Detention orders are subject to review by an Advisory Board. The Board, however, has no judicial status. It can only make recommendations to the Minister of Home Affairs, who has discretionary authority to extend detention without trial. Because they have no confidence in the Advisory Board, none of the detainees at Batu Gajah Prison, where Tan Hock Hin is held, has agreed to appear before it since 1967.

Like other political prisoners in Malaysia, Tan Hock Hin has never been formally charged, and consequently has had no opportunity to challenge the government's allegations in open court.

All prisoners at Batu Gajah Prison have been locked in solitary confinement for 21 hours a day since March 1977. They are allowed visits only once every three weeks. Medical facilities at the prison are believed to be inadequate.

Please send courteously worded appeals asking for Tan Hock Hin's immediate release, to: Datuk Hussein Onn, Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Prime Minister's Office, Jalan Datuk Onn, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and to: Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, Minister of Home Affairs, The Ministry of Home Affairs, Jalan Datuk Onn, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Miloslav CERNY, Czechoslovakia

Miloslav CERNY, a 48-year-old worker, has been sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment for allegedly writing and publicly displaying leaflets critical of the government's harassment of the human rights movement, "Charter 77".

In July 1977, the District Court in Liberec, Northern Bohemia, convicted Cerny of "incitement" under article 100 of the Czechoslovak penal code. He is being held in Mirov prison.

Before he was transferred to Mirov prison, Miloslav Cerny was reported to be in solitary confinement in a dark underground cell in the Plzen-Bory prison. He has not been allowed to write to his family, and their letters do not reach him. His sister is permitted to visit him once every three months.

Miloslav Cerny suffers from nervous and physical exhaustion. He has been an epileptic for over 20 years. Denied special medicines by the prison doctor, Cerny has had several epileptic fits in prison. In an effort to prevail upon the prison doctor to give him the vital medicines, he went on a 20-day hunger strike last year, which has aggravated his condition.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Miloslav Cerny, to: Dr Gustav Husak, President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Praha-Hrad, Czechoslovakia; and to: JURr Jan Nemeč, Minister of Justice of the Czech Socialist Republic, Praha 2-Nove Mesto, Vysehradská 16, Czechoslovakia.

During the year 1977–78, the Amnesty International movement continued to gather momentum. At the end of 1978, there were 2,237 AI groups in 36 countries and more than 200,000 members and supporters in 111 countries. But the struggle to prevent violations of human rights and to protect the victims and their families was far from over. The following article presents a brief survey of the organization's latest annual report.

Amnesty International Report 1978

The *Amnesty International Report 1978* describes human rights violations of concern to AI in 110 countries. The incidence and severity of violations vary considerably from country to country, as does the availability of accurate and up-to-date information on them. The relatively closed or isolated nature of some countries—Albania, Algeria, the Arabian peninsula, Burma, the Central African Empire, Democratic Kampuchea (Cambodia) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), for example—makes it difficult for AI to provide comprehensive or detailed reports.

Nevertheless it is difficult to identify any type of political system which is not covered in the report's catalogue of political imprisonment, torture and executions during 1977-1978.

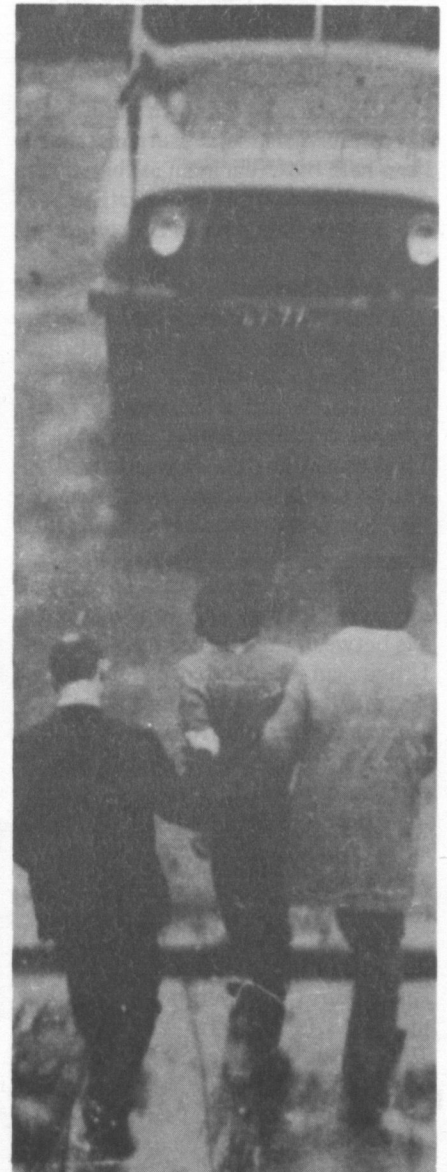
During the period covered by the report a number of governments ordered the collective release of political prisoners by amnesty or other means—among them Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Paraguay, Rhodesia, Syria, Tanzania, Vietnam and Yugoslavia. In some cases it was difficult to assess the effects of such release programs. Available information suggests that some amnesties left many prisoners of conscience still imprisoned, for example in Indonesia, Rhodesia, Syria and Yugoslavia, whereas others were evidently far-reaching, for example in Haiti, Mali, Spain and the Sudan.

Fair trial denied

In many countries of the *Middle East and North Africa* political prisoners frequently had no access to fair trial and often received no trial at all.

World attention focused on the Arab-Israeli conflict and some human rights violations were directly connected to that conflict. For example, AI continued to work for Palestinians who were convicted or detained without trial by Israel for their critical attitude toward Israel's presence in the Occupied Territories rather than for violent activities. In Egypt, a number of people who distributed leaflets criticizing President Anwar Sadat's November 1977 visit to Israel were detained.

However, by far the greatest number of human rights violations in the Middle East and North Africa related to issues not at the center of world attention. Some examples: In Iraq, alleged communist party members were executed as were suspected



Releases and Arrests. *Top left*, an Indonesian prisoner released from Buru Island in December 1977 is re-united with his daughter who has become a teenager during her father's detention. *Bottom left*, a military raid on the San Salvador University campus (1977). *Right*, KGB agents lead away Soviet civil rights activist Alexander Podrabinek, author of "Punitive Medicine", in May 1978. Three months later he was sentenced to 5 years' internal exile.

Kurdish dissidents, many of whose relatives were also imprisoned. Hundreds of people were arrested in Tunisia for trade union activities. In Morocco, people of Saharan origin remained in detention on account of their ethnic origin. In Syria, alleged sympathizers of the Iraqi Baathist Party, marxists and Moslem Brethren were imprisoned. In Iran, people in leftwing and religious opposition alike were imprisoned, while in Algeria former President Ahmed Ben Bella spent his 13th year under house arrest.

Terrorism laws

Several countries in *Western Europe*—the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom—have introduced special legislation to deal with terrorism. During the year under review, no one imprisoned under such legislation was adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience.

However, the report describes *AI*'s concern that such legislation, by simplifying or removing some of the protections normally available for individual rights, increases the possibility of maltreatment of arrested suspects, circumvention of norms of fair trial or imposition of "cruel, inhuman or degrading" conditions of imprisonment.

Imprisoned dissenters

All of the countries of *Eastern Europe* and the USSR retained legislation (usually under the rubric of "crimes against the state") prescribing imprisonment for exercising the rights of freedom of conscience in ways disapproved of by the authorities and for trying to leave the country without official permission. Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania and the USSR also imprisoned dissenters on criminal charges ostensibly not related to the political motivations for their imprisonment, for example "parasitism", "hooliganism", "espionage".

The USSR and Romania are two countries where *AI* has established beyond doubt that prisoners of conscience are labelled mentally ill and forcibly confined to psychiatric hospitals for political rather than authentic medical reasons.

Victims abducted

With regard to *the Americas*, the report draws attention to the continuing torture and/or killing of people said to be suspected of leftwing sympathies who have been abducted by government authorities or paramilitary groups. Killings after abduc-

"AI is not a do-gooder for all possible causes. . ."

Extracts from the Preface to the *Amnesty International Report 1978* by Thomas Hammarberg.

There is a tendency to weave a myth around *AI*.

AI is not a do-gooder for all possible causes; it has a restricted mandate. It works for the release of prisoners of conscience and against torture and executions, but is not involved in work against unemployment, starvation or other social diseases.

This is not because we ignore the importance of all the other rights, but because we recognize that we can only achieve concrete results within set limits.

In fact, we believe that there is a close relation between different rights. When exploited people cannot make their voices heard, both political and socio-economic rights are violated.

AI neither understands nor accepts the attempts sometimes made to create a conflict or a contradiction between these two sets of rights.

Nor do we accept a contradiction between the rights of peoples or nations on the one hand and the human rights of individuals on the other. Human rights have many times been violated in the name of so-called higher interests, such as the "nation",

the "party" or the "struggle". But experience shows that these causes undermine themselves if they need the support of terror. Basic human rights must stand above all other political ambitions and should be respected under all circumstances and in all situations.

Our basic approach to governments is always the same: we seek a dialogue. We are willing to talk as long as this might help our aims. We are not negotiating—we have nothing to "sell"—but we want discussions within our mandate and opportunities to present our facts and recommendations. This means that we do not fight governments as such. Neither do we propose boycotts or cuts in aid. That kind of economic pressure is not within our mandate and is not our way of working.

We are not publishing any list of the worst violators, any "ranking list"—*AI* does not work in that way—but this *Report* gives a horrifying account of how the leaders of too many nations continue to condone or instigate terrorist methods against their own citizens. And remember: all governments in the United Nations have pledged their respect for the principles dealt with in this *Report*.

To keep them to their pledge is one reason why an organization such as *AI* is needed.

tion remained a major *AI* concern in Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, some parts of Mexico, Nicaragua and Uruguay.

During the period under review the organization stepped up its efforts regarding some 1,500 people who have "disappeared" in Chile since 1973.

It was common for governments implicated in such human rights violations to deny any complicity but at the same time to condone them by reference to "national security" and the "struggle against terrorism". State of siege-type legislation remained in force in a number of Latin American countries as did short- and long-term political imprisonment under direct official authority.

The report cites official sources in Cuba as saying that there were 3,200 political prisoners in that country in early 1978. Many of these had been

imprisoned since the early 1960s.

AI had 15 prisoners in the United States of America under adoption as prisoners of conscience or under investigation. The report notes that these prisoners were all convicted of or awaiting trial for criminal charges which bore no ostensible relation to what *AI* believed or suspected to be the underlying reasons for their imprisonment: the prisoners' beliefs or their ethnic origins.

Thousands held

Alleged "rightists" or adherents of former governments in *Asia* were imprisoned in Democratic Kampuchea, Laos, the People's Republic of China and Vietnam. There have been continuing allegations of widespread killings in Democratic Kampuchea. In Laos, the People's Republic of China and Vietnam, thousands remained in detention under "political re-education".

Elsewhere, for example in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan, persons suspected of involvement in opposition remained imprisoned after many years—many of them without ever having been tried. Throughout the region various forms of emergency legislation remained in force under which real or suspected dissidents could be subjected to administrative detention without court proceedings.

Detention without trial

The governments in southern *Africa* continued to imprison suspected supporters of various black nationalist movements. In Rhodesia/Zimbabwe detention without trial remained the most common form of imprisonment. Although 700 of 950 known detainees were released in early 1978, new detention orders continued to be issued, and more than a thousand convicted political prisoners remained imprisoned. In South Africa, detention without trial and banishment remained common. *AI* recorded cases of torture and other ill-treatment in both countries.

Elsewhere in Africa, government actions led to the imprisonment—often without trial—of suspected rivals of those in authority. In Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Somalia and Zaire, persons thus detained were executed after trial or summarily killed. In Ethiopia, thousands of people suspected of opposition to the authorities were killed in a program of “revolutionary terror”. In Uganda, where *AI* said that the practice of murder by security forces had, at times, reached “massacre proportions”, members of the Lango and Acholi tribes were killed because of their tribal origin.

The death penalty

The death penalty was retained by most states in the world and was meted out for a broad range of criminal and political offences.

At the time of writing the report, 464 prisoners were on “death row” in the United States of America. France and Turkey were the only member states of the Council of Europe where death sentences were carried out. All communist states retained the death penalty, despite the fact that most were pledged to abolish it. In some countries (in Africa, Asia and the Middle East), the death penalty was carried out on political offenders. In some countries of Africa and Latin America, execution of the death penalty was supplanted by extra-judicial killings□

Poland

Officer imprisoned under censorship law

Henryk JAGIELLO, a Sub-Lieutenant in the Polish navy, has been convicted of “dissemination of false information” after copies of dissident papers were found in his flat. This is the first case of imprisonment for circulating dissident material in Poland on these specific charges known to *AI* since August 1977.

At the time of his arrest in the autumn of 1978, Jagiello was found to have in his flat a number of copies of two dissident papers, *Opinia*, produced by the Human and Civil Rights Defence Movement and *Bratniak* (The Hostel), a student magazine published by the Student Solidarity Committee. The papers, both started in 1977, report on cases of persecution and violations of human rights in Poland.

According to the editorial boards of the two papers, Jagiello is not known as an active distributor of the papers nor as an active supporter of

the human rights movement in Poland.

Jagiello was tried at the military court in Gdynia on 30 November 1978. The hearing itself took place *in camera* but the verdict was announced by a court with one of Jagiello's relatives present. Although the State Prosecutor had demanded 2 years' imprisonment, Jagiello was sentenced to one year.

It seems that the court looked upon the possession and distribution of dissident material by a member of the armed forces as a hostile act against the state. In December 1978, a speaker for the Central Committee of the Polish Worker's Party had stated in Warsaw to representatives of the foreign press that circulation of such material in Poland is not regarded as a criminal offence.

AI has adopted Jagiello as a prisoner of conscience□

South Korea

Appeal for release of leading poet

On 22 December 1978, *AI* called on the government of the Republic of Korea to release immediately and unconditionally the leading Korean poet, KIM Chi-ha, who *AI* regards as a classic prisoner of conscience.

The appeal followed the South Korean government's announcement the same day of an amnesty for 107 political prisoners scheduled for 27 December 1978. Although Kim Chi-ha was not included in the announced releases, his life sentence was reduced

to 20 years' imprisonment.

No details of the amnesty affecting political prisoners are yet available, apart from confirmation of the release of the opposition leader and former presidential candidate KIM Dae-jung.

AI cabled the government asking for information on the remaining political prisoners to be amnestied, and urged it to ensure that Kim Dae-jung's release was unconditional and without any restrictions of his rights□

Uganda

AI denies ‘praising’ President Amin

Ugandan Radio reported on 4 January that President Idi AMIN had received a letter from a member of *AI* praising him for bringing economic stability to Uganda and leading the country to a “sophisticated industrial economy”. *AI* replied that it had no knowledge of any such letter.

Numerous letters have been sent recently by *AI* groups urging President Amin and senior members of the military regime to eliminate the use of torture and the practice of arbitrary killings by the security forces.

There does not appear to have been any significant improvement in the human rights situation in Uganda.

President Amin's so-called “Human Rights Committee” even includes Major Farouk MINAWA, Director of the notorious State Research Bureau, responsible for the worst atrocities in the country.

AI has no confidence in the recent amnesty offered by President Amin to Ugandan exiles and believes it would not yet be safe generally for Ugandan refugees to return home.

AI hopes the United Nations Commission on Human Rights meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, in February and March will urgently pursue its decision last year to take measures to protect human rights in Uganda□



amnesty international

campaign for the abolition of torture

appeals

Amnesty International opposes the torture of prisoners in all cases, wherever and whenever it is practised. Any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is a violation of the international human rights standards unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. International appeals can help to alleviate the plight of prisoners being subjected to cruel treatment. Your letters should follow carefully the instructions given below.

Argentina

Couple held in secret detention camps



Juan Raúl Bourg and Alicia Rodríguez de Bourg (right) pictured with three of their children.

Despite denials by government officials, evidence both from public and unofficial sources indicates that an Argentine farmer and his wife were abducted from their home by armed plainclothesmen in October 1977 and tortured. It is believed that they are still being held in secret detention camps.

On 5 October 1977, a group of armed men in civilian clothes arrived in several cars at the farm of Juan Raúl BOURG in the outskirts of Mar del Plata, Argentina. The men, who claimed to work for the federal police, said they sought information about Raúl's tenants who lived on a farm near General Pirán. Raúl was taken away for questioning.

Two days later, the same armed men came to the farm and promised

Raúl's wife, Alicia, that she could see Raúl if she would accompany them. She went with them and, like her husband, has never returned. Both abductions were witnessed by the couple's five children and several relatives.

The authorities have consistently denied the arrests of Raúl and Alicia when questioned by relatives, and the courts have turned down writs of *habeas corpus* on the grounds that the couple are not in official detention.

The official denials, however, are contradicted in a communiqué of the armed forces, published in the newspaper *El Día* on 8 October 1977, in which the army announced extensive raids in the countryside and the discovery of a "subversive cell" operating from a rented farm near General Pirán.

Chile

Prisoners illegally interrogated

Chilean political prisoners are being illegally interrogated in prison by agents of the *Central Nacional de Informaciones* (formerly the DINA) in violation of established judicial procedures, according to reports reaching AI.

Political prisoners in the *Penitenciaría de Santiago* and other Chilean prisons are also being subjected to increasing harassment by prison guards.

Prisoners' provisions, tools, and clothing are reportedly being stolen by guards, and the detention of political prisoners in special punishment cells, sometimes for apparently trivial offences, is becoming common.

In these small, dark cells, each prisoner is provided with only a thin blanket for warmth, guards continually pour water on the floor making it impossible to lie down, and the diet is wholly inadequate. Some prisoners in punishment cells have been denied visits from their lawyers.

Please send courteously worded letters expressing concern about reports of harassment of political prisoners and requesting assurances that legal and sanitary standards will be respected in prison. Write to: Sr Alberto Herrera Feliú, Alcaide de la Penitenciaría de Santiago, Pedro Montt 1920, Santiago, Chile.

Raúl Bourg was seen at the infirmary of a military base in Mar del Plata recovering from torture, according to unofficial reports in late 1977. In August 1978, further unofficial information indicated that Raúl and Alicia were still alive and being held in secret detention camps in the interior of the country.

Please write courteously worded letters asking the Argentine authorities to acknowledge that Juan Raúl Bourg and his wife Alicia Rodríguez de Bourg are in official detention, to provide information on their place of detention and legal situation, and to guarantee their physical safety in detention. Write to: Exmo General Roberto Viola, Comandante en Jefe del Ejército Argentino, Casa Rosada, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

AI mission report

Permanent measures recommended for the protection of human rights in India

India should remove provisions for preventive detention from her constitution, urged AI in a report published on 10 January.

The country's constitution allows for individuals to be held without trial on the recommendation of the government if there is not sufficient evidence to bring charges against them in court.

Based on these constitutional provisions, preventive detention laws, first introduced by the British colonial administration, are in force today in five Indian states.

Under preventive detention laws, at least 40,000 and perhaps as many as 100,000 political prisoners were held without charge or trial in Indian prisons during the 1975-1977 emergency, when constitutional guarantees against arbitrary arrest were suspended.

The AI report is based on the findings of a mission to India from 31 December 1977 to 18 January 1978, which was led by Professor James FAWCETT, President of the European Commission on Human Rights.

Political prisoners

At the time of the mission, the AI delegates estimated that there were at least 500 and perhaps as many as 1,000 political prisoners being held in the country. All were alleged to be sympathizers with or members of extreme leftwing groups, commonly known as 'Naxalites'. Some had been held more than six years without trial.

AI welcomed an official reply from the government of India which it has published as an appendix to the AI report. The government says that the current number of imprisoned 'Naxalites' is 373.

Many of these prisoners have been convicted or accused of involvement in violent activities. AI's concern with such prisoners is that they should have fair and prompt trials. The AI report urges the government to speed up trial proceedings for all political prisoners and to issue directives to state governments recommending that all political prisoners not tried within a reasonable period be released or granted bail, pending trial.

During their stay in India, the AI

delegates interviewed seven people who alleged that they had been tortured in the period between 1970 and March 1977. The interviews confirmed allegations that political prisoners in India had been subjected to torture during the 1975-1977 emergency.

AI has received no allegations of torture of political prisoners since the general elections of March 1977. However, the report concludes that there is a general pattern of police intimidation of suspects following arrest. Since March 1977 there have been at least two reports of serious police brutality against criminal suspects, resulting in their death in custody,

Deaths investigated

The AI mission also investigated allegations that political prisoners had been killed or tortured to death in the



Archana Guha, a former headmistress interviewed by the AI mission, is now totally paralysed from the waist down as a result of treatment during police interrogation. Although she was not known to be active in politics, she was arrested in July 1974 and savagely beaten and burned by inspectors at Calcutta's Lal Bazar Police station. Although she progressively lost the use of her legs in custody, she was not taken to hospital until 18 months after her arrest. Her detention order was revoked in May 1977.

states of West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh prior to March 1977. Police and government officials in the two states have said the deaths occurred during armed encounters or while prisoners were attempting to escape from prison.

On the basis of the mission's findings, AI is recommending that the government establish an independent, effective inquiry commission on a national basis to investigate such allegations whenever they occur and that full investigations should be instituted into the conduct of individual police officers who are alleged to have been involved in the killings.

The report also urges the government to:

- direct state governments to repeal existing laws for preventive detention;
- allow all arrested persons immediate access to their families and lawyers of their choosing;
- establish a code of conduct for police officials;
- abolish the death penalty.
- bring prison conditions into line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and set up effective, non-official visitors boards to visit regularly all Indian prisons, including those in which political prisoners are held;
- to ratify the two international human rights covenants and the optional protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The 84-page report welcomes the steps taken by the current government towards restoring the rule of law in India since assuming office in March 1977. In a statement issued with the report, AI said, "We hope the publication of this report will contribute to discussions now taking place in India about the need for long-term, structural measures which are essential if human rights are to be protected and enforced effectively" □

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