



# Amnesty International

## newsletter

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1977  
Prisoners of  
Conscience Year

## AI DEEPLY CONCERNED AT DEATHS IN CUSTODY IN UGANDA

AI cabled Ugandan President Idi AMIN Dada on 17 February to express serious doubts about official explanations for the deaths of Archbishop Dr Janani LUWUM and government ministers Charles OBOTH-OFUMBI and Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson ORYEMA. They were allegedly killed in a car accident on 16 February following their public denunciation and arrest on treason charges.

AI said that unconvincing official explanations had been offered on previous occasions after detainees and alleged conspirators had been summarily killed by Ugandan security forces.

News of the three deaths came one week after reports of widespread arrests in Uganda and two weeks after AI had called on the United Nations Human Rights Commission to launch an urgent international inquiry into gross violations of human rights in Uganda.

AI had sent a submission to the secretariat of the commission and to all member states asking them to introduce the report during the commission's discussions on Uganda at its session which opened on 7 February in Geneva (February Newsletter).

AI's submission detailed the removal of constitutional and judicial rights, with military tribunals empowered to impose death sentences for a wide range of political and economic offences. "Disappearances" or killings of prominent Ugandan civilians have included the chief justice, former cabinet ministers, doctors, church leaders, soldiers and police as well as journalists and sportsmen and countless ordinary citizens. AI has been unable to verify estimates of total killings since 1971, which range between 50,000 and 300,000.

AI's document says that torture is an almost routine practice in certain police and army detention centers. Many victims are killed under torture or shot.

The submission also reports on the inadequacy of "commissions of inquiry" carried out by the Ugandan government. The unsatisfactory findings of recent internal inquiries into the disappearance in 1976 of British-Israeli hijack hostage Dora BLOCH and of a Kenyan girl student Esther CHESIRE, and the alleged killings of Makerere University students, reveal the need for an impartial international investigation into these and other incidents.

AI cabled President Amin on 25 January, the sixth anniversary of his assumption of power, repeating its offer to undertake a fact-finding mission to Uganda.

The AI submission endorsed the recom-

mendation of the Sub-Committee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of 25 August 1976, that the UN Commission on Human Rights "make a thorough study of the human rights situation in Uganda, based on objective and reliably attested information and seek the cooperation of the government of Uganda for this purpose".

**INDIA RELAXES RESTRICTIONS BUT MANY DETAINEES ARE STILL HELD**  
Prime Minister Indira GANDHI of India announced on 20 January that elections to choose a new *Lok Sabha* (parliamentary lower house) would be held in March, that emergency regulations would be relaxed and press censorship withdrawn.

The government issued instructions to all 22 states to release political prisoners held under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and to allow public meetings and other political activities connected with the election. But it also said that imprisoned members of banned organizations would not be released.

Writing to Mrs Gandhi on 27 January, AI welcomed the government's decision to release political prisoners detained under emergency legislation. AI also asked Mrs Gandhi if members of banned parties would be released from detention without trial, whether cases of prisoners held under the Defence of India Rules (DIR) would be reviewed, and if the MISA and DIR legislation would be revoked in the near future.

AI asked the government to publish the names of the prisoners released, as well as the number of prisoners who do not qualify for release under the current program.

Since the government announcement, AI has received confirmation that a substantial number of political detainees held under MISA have been released. Many of them were arrested after the state of national emergency was declared in June 1975.

But AI has also received reports that a large number of political party workers

contesting the election remain in detention.

Opposition sources have indicated that between 6,000 and 32,000 political prisoners are still held.

AI is concerned that the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, under which political prisoners can be detained without trial for an indefinite period, and the DIR continue to exist. It has received a few, but significant, reports that some new arrests were made after the government announcement that political prisoners would be released.

### AI REJECTS IRANIAN ALLEGATIONS OF POLITICAL BIAS

On 2 February, AI rejected Iranian government claims that its objectivity was called into question "in view of its proven record of political bias against Iran".

At the same time, AI confirmed Iranian government reports that its national sections were conducting an international campaign and stressed that the campaign was solely concerned with drawing attention to human rights violations in Iran. AI said that such campaigns were an integral and valid part of its work.

The present campaign follows similar ones which had publicized recent human rights violations in countries such as the Soviet Union, Indonesia, The Philippines, Guatemala, Rhodesia and Uruguay.

Commenting on reported Iranian threats to boycott products, services and organizations from the Netherlands because AI's Netherlands Section was holding a conference on Iran later in February, AI said that the conference was only one event in the international campaign. All AI's national sections had been asked to arrange publicity of all kinds for the briefing paper describing human rights violations in Iran, which was published on 28 November 1976. Reports that the conference had been transferred to the Netherlands from another country were totally untrue.

Implications that AI supports terrorists were repudiated. AI emphasized that it worked for the release of prisoners of conscience who have not advocated or used violence. AI stressed that no one should be tortured and welcomed a report in a Teheran newspaper that the Shah had ordered the practice of torture to be abandoned.

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## AI rejects Iranian allegations of political bias

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AI said its concerns in Iran were the imprisonment of non-violent political opponents of the regime, the lack of legal safeguards and unsatisfactory trial procedures, the use of torture and frequent executions.

## 178 SENTENCED IN MOROCCO TREASON TRIAL

Sentences ranging from 5 years' to life imprisonment were imposed on 178 left-wing opponents of the government of King Hassan II of Morocco on 15 February. After a six-week trial in Casablanca, 44 defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment, 110 received between 10 and 30 year sentences and the remaining 24 defendants were each jailed for 5 years. Additional 2 year sentences were imposed on many defendants who had protested in court at the conduct of the trial.

Those sentenced to life imprisonment include Abraham SERFATY, an AI-adopted prisoner. One of the most radical political leaders in Morocco, Mr Serfaty has already spent more than two years in prison since his arrest in November 1974.

During the trial, many of the defendants were removed from the court after staging a 48-hour hunger strike in protest against the harassment of defence lawyers and irregularities in trial procedures. They were not in court to hear judgement given and sentences passed.

AI had sent Jean HOSS of Luxembourg to observe the trial during January (February Newsletter).

## AI ASKS POLAND TO INVESTIGATE MALTREATMENT ALLEGATIONS

AI asked Minister of Justice Włodzimierz BERUTOWICZ of the Polish People's Republic on 12 January to undertake a public inquiry into numerous allegations that detained workers had been maltreated. AI also asked Mr Berutowicz to investigate complaints of irregularities in legal procedures against the workers.

On 30 November 1976, 65 workers from Radom had complained to Prosecutor General L. CZABINSKI that they were maltreated after their arrest on charges relating to a workers' demonstration in June. They also claimed that the security forces had extracted statements from them after extensive maltreatment.

Mr Czabinski told the Polish parliament (*Sejm*) on 4 January that the workers' complaints were unfounded. He alleged that the signatories were criminals or had been paid to sign the document.

Since then, 172 leading scientists and artists in Poland have petitioned deputies in the *Sejm* to investigate the complaints of the Radom workers.

## AI CONCERNED AT DETENTIONS IN EGYPT

AI wrote to President Anwar SADAT of Egypt on 8 February expressing concern at the continuing detention of journalists, lawyers, students and members of the Progressive Unionist Party. They were among people arrested following demonstrations on 18 and 19 January, even though they were reportedly not actively involved. The demonstrations took place throughout Egypt after the government had announced cuts in food subsidies. Many people were wounded or killed and numerous buildings damaged.

In its letter, AI also urged President Sadat to reconsider his intention of introducing penalties of up to life imprisonment with hard labour for demonstrators, strikers and members of illegal political parties, as well as for saboteurs. AI asked President Sadat to release all detainees not directly involved in acts of sabotage and urged that in the meantime all detainees be allowed their full legal rights and proper treatment in prison.

AI attached a list of 148 names of detainees which it had received at that date.

### Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in January of the release of 112 prisoners and took up 158 new cases.

## PRISONERS RELEASED AFTER 19 YEARS' DETENTION IN PARAGUAY

Three detainees who have been imprisoned in Paraguay since 1958 were among five long term detainees released at the end of January. Antonio MAIDANA, Alfredo ALCORTA and Julio ROJAS were believed to be the longest serving political prisoners in Latin America.

They were all members of the central committee of the banned communist party and were tried and sentenced to short terms of imprisonment in 1958. However, they were not released when their sentences expired and their detention continued for more than 18 years.

Also released at the same time were Ananias MAIDANA Palacios and Gilberta TALAVERA de Verdum. Señor Maidana Palacios, a member of the communist party, had been detained without formal charge or trial since June 1959. Señora Talavera was first arrested in 1958 with her husband, an alleged guerrilla, who was killed in front of her shortly afterwards. After 9 years' imprisonment, Señora Talavera was released, but redetained in December 1974. She is now 70 year old.

Harsh prison conditions, combined with routine maltreatment and torture, led to a serious deterioration in the health of all five prisoners.

On several occasions their weak condition was aggravated by hunger strikes undertaken to protest against their detention.

In March 1976, Señores Maidana, Alcorta, Rojas and Maidana Palacios were interned in a police clinic after a prolonged hunger

strike left them very ill. A doctor's report at that time said they were all "suffering from hypertension, stomach ulcers, haemorrhoids, anaemia and other ailments. They have not seen daylight for more than a decade and are almost blind".

AI cabled President Alfredo STROESSNER of Paraguay on 7 February, welcoming the releases and urging his intervention in favour of ten other detainees known to be held without charge or trial for more than 10 years.

At the same time AI cabled the presidents of the Paraguayan senate and chamber of deputies, expressing the hope that the newly-elected constituent assembly would urgently consider the country's human rights situation and the fate of long term prisoners.

The new constituent assembly has been elected to consider a change in the country's constitution. This would allow President Stroessner's re-election for another two five-year terms of office.

## FOUR KILLED IN DISTURBANCES AT INDONESIAN DETENTION CENTER

Four prisoners were reportedly killed and 18 others injured in Indonesia, following disturbances in a detention center at metropolitan police headquarters in Jakarta in February.

Police claimed that the incidents were planned by several prisoners. Their leader was described as a man previously detained for his alleged involvement in the attempted coup of 1965.

AI cabled President SUHARTO of Indonesia on 10 February expressing its concern over the deaths and urging a full government inquiry.

## FORMER OFFICIALS SENTENCED TO DEATH IN MALAWI

Former cabinet minister Albert MUWALO and Focus GWEDE, former head of the Malawi security police, were sentenced to death on 14 February following their conviction on treason charges at a traditional court in Blantyre. They allegedly plotted the assassination of President Hastings Kamuzu BANDA of Malawi and the overthrow of the government.

Before his arrest in October 1976, Mr Muwalo was one of the most senior ministers in the Malawi government. He was widely regarded as a close confidant of President Banda.

AI urged President Banda on 15 February to commute the death sentences.

AI's briefing on Malawi, published in August 1976, estimated that there were more than 1,000 detainees in the country. Since the arrest of Mr Muwalo and Mr Gwede, unconfirmed reports suggest that several hundred detainees may have been released.



# Prisoners of the Month Campaign

Participants in the campaign are reminded that appeals must only be sent to the officials named at the end of each case. In *no* circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner. It is important for the prisoner that messages to the authorities are worded carefully and courteously and that they are never sectarian.

## Ibrahima LY, Mali

Ibrahima Ly, a 40-year-old mathematics professor at the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*, was arrested in Bamako on 8 June 1974. Along with 14 other people, he was accused of writing and distributing a tract entitled *La Faree Electorale du 2 Juin 1974*. The tract urged the people to vote "no" in a referendum called by the Military Committee for National Liberation (CMLN) to approve a new constitution. This event was supposed to be the first step towards the restoration of civilian government.

The CMLN came to power in 1968 after a military coup headed by Colonel Moussa TRAORE, which overthrew the government of the civilian President Modibo KEITA.

The 1974 constitution incorporated two articles which provoked particular opposition. Article 76 prohibited any person who had held any political or economic responsibility under President Keita's government from engaging in political activity. Article 78 provided for the constitution to come into effect only when the military committee handed over power to a civilian government—which was expected to be within five years.

Mr Ly, together with the others arrested with him, was reportedly ill-treated during interrogations and before his transfer to a prison in the far north of Mali.

After ten months' detention, they were brought to trial in April 1975 and charged with subversion in connection with the production and distribution of the pamphlet.

Most of the accused, including Ibrahima Ly, were sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment. Mr Ly is believed to be serving his sentence at Niomo prison, where he was transferred from Bamako in 1976.

*Please send courteously worded letters (in French if possible) appealing for the release of Ibrahima Ly to: Son Excellence Colonel Moussa Traoré, Président du Gouvernement et Chef de L'Etat, Bamako, Mali.*

## Jeno GORDOS, Yugoslavia

Jeno GORDOS, a chemical laboratory technician, was arrested in Subotica (Vojvodina province) in January 1976 for "hostile propaganda".

He was reportedly an active member of Yugoslavia's Hungarian minority in the autonomous province of Vojvodina, which until 1918 formed part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From 1972 to 1975 he worked as laboratory technician in a Swiss hospital. On his return to Yugoslavia he set up a Hungarian language theatre in Senta and studied Hungarian literature.

Documents confiscated at Mr Gordos'

house after his arrest included a copy of *Nemzetör*, a newspaper published abroad by intellectuals of Hungarian origin, which draws attention to the Hungarian cultural heritage and language and contained Hungarian poetry.

The Hungarian newspaper *Magyar Hirlap* reported that Mr Gordos was tried in October 1976 together with teacher Karoly Vicei, on a charge of circulating hostile propaganda. The charge specified that he had been in contact with *émigré* organizations in Munich, Paris and Toronto while in Switzerland, and that he possessed propaganda material hostile to Yugoslavia and other socialist countries. He was also accused of popularizing and spreading nationalist ideas.

The sentence passed on Mr Gordos is not yet known, but he is at present imprisoned in Subotica. His health is reportedly poor and he is believed to be under considerable nervous stress.

*Please send courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Jeno Gordos to: President Josip Broz Tito, Beograd, SFR Yugoslavia.*

## Calixto RAMIREZ, Paraguay

Calixto RAMIREZ, a peasant farmer and member of the Ruling Colorado party, has been held in detention in Paraguay for almost 12 years. He is one of the numerous long term political prisoners in Paraguay who have never been formally charged nor brought before any judicial authority.

He was arrested in 1965, allegedly for his refusal to sell his sugar cane harvest at prices lower than those established by law.

Following his arrest, Señor Ramirez was subjected to brutal torture at the *Departamento de Investigaciones de la Policia* (political police headquarters) in Asunción.

It is common practice in Paraguay for prisoners to be transferred frequently from one police station to another and Señor Ramirez was no exception. He is presently held in Emboscada, a new prison camp 40 kilometres from Asunción, to which most political prisoners in Paraguay have been transferred recently.

Señor Ramirez has gone on at least four hunger strikes in protest against his detention. In 1972, he and other long term political prisoners joined in a hunger strike which ended after 90 days, when the authorities assured them they would be released.

In July 1974, Señor Ramirez again went on hunger strike. This time he and other prisoners wrote to the minister of the interior asking to be released or to go into exile. Stressing that they had been denied a legal hearing, the signatories of the letter declared: "... if this were possible, we would

have been freed a long time ago, because we are certain we have not violated the laws of the country and still less made any attempt against public security".

The repeated hunger strikes, combined with maltreatment and harsh conditions of detention, have led to a serious deterioration in Señor Ramirez' health. As well as a lung ailment, he suffers from partial paralysis in one leg and damaged eye-sight and hearing.

Apart from his confinement to a police clinic in July 1974 after a hunger strike, Señor Ramirez has been consistently denied access to proper medical treatment.

He is 36 years old and married, with one daughter born shortly after his arrest.

*Please send courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Calixto Ramirez to: Exmo Señor Presidente de la Republica del Paraguay, Gral. de Ejercito, Alfredo Stroessner, Palacio de Gobierno, Asuncion, Paraguay.*

## News of Past Campaigns

*AI*-adopted prisoner Marshall Julum SAKYA of Nepal was released on 25 January, according to the Royal Nepalese Embassy in Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr Sakya was first arrested in 1960 under the Public Security Act, following the late King Mahendra's coup d'état which removed the National Congress government. He was released and re-arrested three times.

His latest period of imprisonment began in 1973, when he was arrested in connection with a meeting organized by Ram Raja Prasad Singh, a prominent member of the banned Congress Party (December 1976 *Prisoners of the Month Campaign*).

Mr Sakya is a founder member and executive committee member of *AI*'s Nepal Section.

Another member of *AI*'s Nepal Section executive committee, Purusottam BASNET, was also reportedly released towards the end of January. He was arrested under the security act in 1974.

Reverend Canaan BANANA, former vice-president of the African National Council (ANC), was detained by Rhodesian authorities in Salisbury on 25 January. His arrest took place after he issued a statement on behalf of the newly-formed People's Movement. This condemned Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian SMITH's rejection of British government proposals for a constitutional settlement in Rhodesia. Under the Emergency Powers Regulations, Reverend Banana may be held without charge for an indefinite period.

Reverend Banana was previously detained from mid-1975 to January 1976 (November 1975 *Prisoners of the Month Campaign*). He was then released into restriction at his Bulawayo home until October 1976, when the restriction order was lifted so that he could attend the Rhodesian settlement talks in Geneva as a member of the ANC delegation led by Bishop Abel MUZOREWA.

## IMPRISONED PRINCESS DIES IN ETHIOPIA

Princess Ijegayehu ASFA-WOSSEN, daughter of the exiled crown prince of Ethiopia, died on 31 January in an Addis Ababa police hospital following an abdominal operation for a complaint contracted in custody.

She had been detained with other women relatives of the deposed Emperor HAILE SELASSIE since the Provisional Military Administrative Council (*Derg*) came to power in September 1974. It is probable that poor conditions of imprisonment contributed to her fatal illness. Several other detained women have suffered physical and psychological illnesses and medical treatment is inadequate.

About 100 women and girls, aged from 12 to 80 years old, are detained at Akaki prison in Addis Ababa. They include royal relatives, wives of former government officials and relatives of suspected members of the underground leftwing Ethiopian People's Revolutionary party.

*AI* cabled Ethiopia's head of state on 2 February expressing concern at the circumstances of Princess Ijegayehu's death, and appealed for the release of all women political prisoners on humanitarian grounds.

An *AI* appeal for women detainees in Ethiopia will be timed to coincide with International Women's Day, 8 March.

## AI URGES LIBYA TO COMMUTE DEATH SENTENCES

*AI* urged President Mu'ammur AL GADDAFI of Libya on 18 January to commute death sentences passed on 23 officers on 25 December 1976. The officers were among about 75 military personnel tried by a secret military tribunal in December on charges of attempting to overthrow the government in August 1975.

No executions have been carried out in Libya since Colonel Gaddafi came to power in 1969, although the Libyan penal code contains capital offences and a number of death sentences have been passed.

## MINISTERS SAY 'NO KURDISH POLITICAL PRISONERS IN IRAQ'

One of Iraq's ministers of state, Aziz AKRAWI, told *AI* in January that, contrary to "hostile propaganda", there were no Kurdish political prisoners in Iraq. But he did confirm that four Kurds, including Shihab NOURI, were executed in November 1976 (January *Newsletter*). This is the first official confirmation of the executions.

Mr Akrawi claimed that the four had been found guilty of engaging in acts detrimental to the state, and that they had been allowed both Arab and Kurdish defence lawyers.

*AI* Secretary General Martin ENNALS and Middle East researcher Katrina MORTIMER

met Mr Akrawi and Babakr AL BISHDARI, president of the autonomous regions' legislature and newly-appointed minister of labour and social affairs, at the Iraqi Embassy in London on 24 January. The two ministers were part of a Kurdish delegation visiting London.

During the meeting with *AI* and in a subsequent radio interview, Mr Akrawi said that an *AI* mission to Iraq would be welcomed.

Since December 1975 *AI* has repeatedly asked the central Iraqi authorities for permission to send a high level mission to the country, but so far no reply has been received.

## EIGHT FARMERS CONDEMNED TO DEATH IN PDRY

Eight farmers in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) were sentenced to death in January on charges of spreading hostile rumours and of taking part in demonstrations. It is not yet known if the sentences have been carried out. The farmers were accused at a people's court on 20 January of demonstrating on 16 November 1976 against a government decision to restrict the consumption, sale and purchase of *qat*, a narcotic shrub. Two other farmers were sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.

The country's March 1976 penal code does not appear to make demonstrating against government decisions a capital offence. Article 65 of the penal code states: "The death penalty is prescribed for the most dangerous crimes and shall be pronounced only exceptionally when the security of the society requires it and when there is no hope of reforming the offender".

On 27 January, *AI* urged PDRY President Salem RUBIA ALI to commute the eight death sentences.

## NEW POLICE CHIEF PROMISES "CLEAN UP" OF MEXICO CITY POLICE CORRUPTION

The new police chief of Mexico City, General Arturo DURAZNO, has publicly promised to "clean up" police corruption in the capital.

He said recently that the commander of the local police force responsible would be dismissed if any prisoners were beaten, even if he were not directly involved.

Both political and common-law prisoners are beaten as a routine in Mexico. In some cases maltreatment amounts to severe torture.

## NEW ARRESTS IN SINGAPORE

Late in February, 10 persons were arrested in Singapore in connection with alleged pro-communist activities. The 10 men are held under the Internal Security Act, which allows indefinite detention without trial.

Many of those arrested are former political

prisoners who spent many years in detention without trial in the 1960s. One of the arrested G. RAMAN, is well known as one of the few lawyers willing to work for the legal defence of political prisoners in Singapore.

The government alleges that Mr Raman and the others have been responsible for distributing "distorted" information about Singapore to communists in western Europe who are "working against the interest of Singapore". The arrests follow widespread criticism of the government of Prime Minister LEE KUAN YEW. This criticism has focused on the Singapore government's policy of detaining men and women without trial.

## GDR PROTESTERS STILL DETAINED

A number of German Democratic Republic (GDR) citizens who protested last year against the expulsion of songwriter Wolf BIERMANN remain in detention (January *Newsletter*).

About 100 GDR citizens signed petitions against the expulsion and several reports estimate the total number of arrests to be around 50.

Since its appeal to the GDR authorities in December 1976 for the release of those arrested, *AI* has adopted nine of the detained persons as prisoners of conscience. They are Robert HAVEMANN (still under house arrest), Jürgen FUCHS, Thomas AUERBACH, Thomas GRUND, Reinhard KLINGENBERG, Bernd MARKOWSKI, Lutz RATHENOW, Christian KUNERT and Gerulf PANNACH.

## NEW BROCHURES FOR PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE YEAR

*AI* has published two illustrated brochures in connection with POC Year 1977:

"Parliamentarians in Prison" and "Religious Persecution and Political Imprisonment". Both brochures provide background information on each topic; representative cases, some with photos, are provided for both groups of prisoners.

The brochures, which also contain the POC Year petition, are aimed at drawing support for *AI*'s work from parliamentarians and from religious bodies.

English-language brochures are available from your national section or from Promotion Department (London Liaison), 53 Theobald's Road, London WC1X 8SP. French and German editions from national sections (where relevant) or from Promotion Department (Main Office), Amnesty International, P.O. Box 1341, Luxembourg.

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## UK Renounces N Ireland Torture Techniques

The United Kingdom Attorney General Samuel SILKIN announced on 8 February that his country would not use again five contested interrogation techniques. Mr Silkin was presenting his government's case on the use of torture in Northern Ireland to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (October 1976 *CAT Bulletin*).

On the second day of the preliminary three-day hearing, during which the court considered which of the complaints brought by Ireland would fall under its competence, Mr Silkin said:

"The Government of the United Kingdom have considered the question of the use of the five techniques with very great care, and with particular regard to article 3 of the convention. They now give this unqualified undertaking that the five techniques will not in any circumstances be reintroduced as an aid to interrogation".

The "five techniques" used by UK security forces in Northern Ireland in 1971 included hooding, prolonged periods of standing with the fingers pressed against a wall, loud electronic noise, deprivation of sleep and a limited diet of bread and water. The European Commission on Human Rights decided last year that the techniques amounted to torture and therefore violated article 3 of the European convention which prohibits torture (October 1976 *CAT Bulletin*).

The Irish government decided to refer the matter to the European court—the first time that an inter-governmental case has been brought to the court in its 18-year existence.

In renouncing the techniques, the United Kingdom answered one of the main Irish demands—that there should be a legally binding prohibition of any future use of the five techniques. Mr Silkin also argued that the court should declare the case outside its competence because use of the techniques stopped in 1972 and the British government:

"...do not contest the facts as found by the commission in relation to allegations under article 3 or the commission's analysis of those facts or the commission's conclusions".

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## IRISH POLICE ACCUSED OF BRUTALITY

Serious allegations of ill-treatment and torture were levelled against the Irish *Garda* (police) by the *Irish Times* (Dublin) on 14-16 February.

The newspaper claimed in a series of articles that brutal interrogation methods had been increasingly used during the past few years against people suspected of serious, and mostly politically motivated, crimes.

The articles alleged that a special group of *gardai*, based in Dublin and known as the "heavy gang", was mainly responsible for the ill-treatment which reportedly intensified after the Emergency Powers Act was introduced last October. Under this legislation, police can detain suspects without charge for seven days, rather than the normal 48 hours.

Police interrogation techniques allegedly included three of the "five techniques" used by British security forces in Northern Ireland some years ago: standing sreadeagled against a wall for prolonged periods, and deprivation of food and sleep. In addition, victims were

reportedly subjected to beatings and various psychological tactics including disorientation and threats.

The *Garda* has rejected the charge that a special unit existed which systematically used violence, but said the allegations would be fully and impartially investigated.

The Irish government's reaction was not known as this *Newsletter* went to press, but a debate in parliament was expected later in February.

*AI* wrote to the Irish government in May 1976, calling for an independent investigation into allegations that police brutality occurred in April (June 1976 *CAT Bulletin*). The government replied that such a course of action was not considered necessary or appropriate.

Writing to Prime Minister Liam COSGRAVE about the current allegations on 16 February, *AI* stressed that an independent investigation should now be initiated in accordance with the 1975 United Nations declaration on torture, which the Irish government supported.

## TRADE UNIONISTS TORTURED IN SPAIN

Twelve members of an unofficial Spanish trade union were tortured at the *Jefatura Superior de Policía* (chief police station) in Barcelona during February. The 12, all members of the *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo* (CNT) were among a group of 46 anarchists arrested by the *Guardia Armada* (civil police) at an open but unauthorized meeting in a Barcelona cafe on 30 January.

On 5 February the police gave evidence in court against 23 of the original 50 detainees. All 23 were released unconditionally on 8 February without having to testify, after the judge found that there was no worthwhile evidence against them. A further group of 11, which included two Italians, was presented to the court on 10 February. At least six of these 11 have been released unconditionally because no evidence could be found against them.

The torture of the 12 detainees remaining in custody reportedly began on 9 February. It included beatings with fists and truncheons while victims were wrapped in towels to avoid leaving marks. Others received kicks in the spine. Most of the detainees were hung by the hands from hot water pipes on the ceiling. Those hung in this way include one known by name—Manuel GARCIA IGLESIAS.

Lawyers and a doctor were refused admission at the police station when they attempted to see another detainee, Isaac GARCIA BARBA, who was reportedly suffering from two broken ribs. Miguel PINERO was particularly harshly treated, allegedly because the police wished to prove that he possessed materials associated with terrorist activities.

On 11 February *AI* issued a news release to draw attention to the torture of the 12 detainees. On 14 February, seven of the 12 torture victims were still detained at the police station, along with two newly-arrested detainees.

## BISHOPS DENOUNCE SOUTH AFRICAN TORTURE

Southern African Roman Catholic bishops condemned South Africa's "social and political system of oppression" and called for an investigation into alleged police brutality when they met at a conference in February.

The bishops, from South Africa, Botswana and Swaziland, issued a statement on 10 February commenting on police actions to quell violence in the black townships since June 1976. It said:

"In the struggle, which has reached new intensity since June 1976, we are especially perturbed by what appears to be reliable

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# appeals

## Aldo Silva ARANTES, Brazil

Aldo Silva ARANTES was arrested in São Paulo on 16 December 1976 along with other alleged members of the banned maoist communist party *Partido Comunista do Brasil* (PC do B). The authorities acknowledge six detentions, but Senhor Arantes is the only detainee whose identity has been revealed.

The prisoners were first taken to an army barracks in Rio de Janeiro, where Senhor Arantes was allowed to see relatives and lawyers only after several weeks incommunicado. The most severe torture suffered by Senhor Arantes reportedly took place at the barracks before the prisoners were transferred back to São Paulo.

On 28 January lawyers and relatives visited Senhor Arantes at the army's investigative section DOI-CODI (Department for Operations and Information—Commando for Internal Defence Operations) in São Paulo. Evidence of beatings was clearly visible on Senhor Arantes' arms and feet. He was covered with bruises and wounds and had difficulty in walking and sitting. Senhor Arantes said he had been tortured for 12 hours the previous day.

Two French lawyers, Louis JOINET of the Central Administration of Justice in Paris and Mario STASI of the French Bar Association, travelled to Brazil and compiled a report on the case early in February.

This report formed the basis for a complaint made by the lawyers about the torture of Senhor Arantes to a military court. The court rejected their complaint on 10 February and also refused the lawyers' request for an independent medical examination.

This case is the first of its kind reported in São Paulo since January 1976, when Brazilian President Ernesto GEISEL replaced the local army commander.

The reported torture of Senhor Arantes increases fears for the safety of the people arrested with him.

*Please send courteously worded letters urging an independent medical examination of Aldo Silva Arantes, and requesting the publication of the names of all prisoners arrested in São Paulo on 16 December, to:*

General Dilermando Gomes Monteiro, Comandante do II Exército, 1600 Ab. Soares, São Paulo, Brazil; *and to:* Ilmo. Senhor Governador do Estado do São Paulo, Paulo Egidio Martins, Palácio dos Bandeirantes, Av. Morumbi, São Paulo, Brazil.

## URGENT ACTIONS

A survey on the effectiveness of the 149 urgent action appeals launched by *AI* during 1976 has shown that the situation of the prisoners concerned improved in about 50 per cent of the cases taken up.

In a large number of cases torture has stopped, prisoners released, death sentences commuted, incommunicado detentions lifted or dangerously ill prisoners given medical attention.

While many factors may have contributed to such improvements, they are encouraging signs that this kind of *AI* action can be effective.

## United Kingdom renounces Northern Ireland torture techniques

*Continued from page 1, column 2*

The Irish government has asked the court to reconsider the European commission's findings on several other complaints which the commission rejected. They included charges that internment itself constituted a breach of the convention and that detention procedures discriminated against Northern Ireland's Roman Catholics.

In addition, the Irish government also wants the European court to go further than the commission which ruled on only 16 of 228 cases of alleged ill-treatment and torture brought against the United Kingdom. Of the 16 cases, 11 were upheld by the commission. The Irish government is pressing for a ruling that torture and ill-treatment continued from 1971 until 1974.

Ireland's Attorney General Declan COSTELLO urged the court to consider ordering the United Kingdom to prosecute the police and military personnel responsible for the abuses.

Mr Silkin assured the court that the men in question were subject to the normal judicial processes. He added that the British government had no intention of punishing those men involved in the use of the five techniques or in the separate cases of ill-treatment because of lack of sufficient evidence.

The court decided in an interim ruling on 15 February that it could pass judgement on those parts of the case uncontested by the British government. It also ruled that it had jurisdiction over the more than 200 other cases of alleged ill-treatment between 1971 and 1974.

The court is to reconvene for substantive hearings in April.

## PHILIPPINES DETAINEE DIES AFTER INTERROGATION

The death of a young Filipino girl social worker in detention was reported on 28 January by The Philippines newspaper *Bulletin Today*. Purificacion PEDRO, aged 28, had been detained by the Bataan Philippines constabulary unit at the provincial hospital and interrogated by an investigation team reportedly led by Colonel Miguel AURE, commanding officer of the 5th Constabulary Security Unit. The team ordered Miss Pedro's relatives from the room where she had been treated for a bullet wound received when soldiers arrested her.

The team reportedly interrogated Miss Pedro during the afternoon of 23 January. Later Colonel Aure told her relatives that she was no longer allowed to see visitors.

During the evening a relative found Miss Pedro dead in a bathroom, with an "electric wire" round her neck. The official report stated that Miss Pedro died from asphyxiation by strangulation, but her friends say that though the electric wire was tied to a towel rack, Miss Pedro's feet firmly touched the floor.

Her relatives have questioned the official explanation of suicide, while her friends have expressed the need for an investigation into the circumstances surrounding her death.

## Bishops Denounce South African Torture

*Continued from page 1, column 3*

reports of police brutality. We realize that a situation of violence breeds atrocities on both sides, but we are speaking of seemingly systematic beatings and unjustifiable shootings during disturbances and of coldblooded torture of detained persons. . . We call for an investigation and resolve to collaborate with others intent on bringing the truth to light".

The bishops gave their support to the "black consciousness" movement which, they said, worked for "the promotion of human dignity and legitimate aspirations of an oppressed people".

South African Justice Minister James KRUGER immediately denied the bishops' allegations, saying they had produced insufficient evidence for their charges.

*AI* has received reliable reports that at least 13 black political detainees died in police custody during 1976 alone. Police sources claimed that most of them committed suicide.

Mr Kruger said at the end of January that the suicides occurred among hardcore members of the banned African National Congress who, he claimed, were under instruction to commit suicide rather than face interrogation.

Another young African, Matthews MABELANE, fell to his death from the 10th storey of the Johannesburg police headquarters on 15 February. He had been detained under the Terrorism Act. Police said he tried to escape.

On the same day, Mr Kruger reportedly refused to answer six opposition questions in parliament concerning the number of deaths, injuries, detentions and subsequent court cases resulting from last year's rioting.

On 16 February, *AI* publicly requested permission of the South African government to send a medical mission to investigate alleged ill-treatment and torture.

## TANZANIAN OFFICIALS RESIGN AFTER POLICE BRUTALITY

Two government ministers and two regional commissioners in Tanzania resigned on 24 January after assuming responsibility for torture and killings carried out by police in the northern Mwanza and Shinyanga regions over the past two years.

President Julius NYERERE accepted their offers of resignation and stated that, in doing so, he wished to establish the principle of political responsibility of office holders. He commended the minister of state in the president's office, the minister for home affairs and the commissioners of the two regions for their "selfless act", which he called a "sign of maturity in leadership". He said there was no question of the officials' personal involvement in the incidents.

The president directed that legal steps be taken immediately to prosecute those police officers responsible for the atrocities. He set up a special commission last year to investigate police conduct in the area.