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Malaysia urged to release detainees

For the last 19 years Malaysia's Internal Security Act (ISA) has been used arbitrarily to silence real and suspected political opponents of the government.

Under the Act more than 1,000 people are currently being detained without trial, of whom more than 50 have been held for periods longer than eight years, including one person now in his 15th year of imprisonment. Many of the detainees allege that they have been subjected to torture and ill-treatment.

An *AI* mission visited Malaysia from 18 to 30 November 1978 to investigate the working of the Act and the conditions of the detainees. The mission's report was released on 29 August.

The report calls on the government of Malaysia to repeal the Act and to investigate allegations of torture and ill-treatment of people held under the Act.

The report, based on the findings of the mission, focuses on the increasing use in recent years by the Malaysian government of the Internal Security Act, which was promulgated in 1960, to detain political opponents without trial for long periods. Among those detained under the Act are leading politicians, trade unionists and activists from nearly all of the country's opposition parties.

Inadequate medical conditions in the Taiping and Batu Gajah detention camps are highlighted in the report. Conditions of detainees at Batu Gajah are especially grim, with prisoners spending a minimum of 21 hours a day in their cells. A number of prisoners are in a state of serious ill-health and several cases of mental breakdown and suicide are known to have occurred. Protests, including hunger strikes, by prisoners against these conditions have been met with violent reprisals from the authorities.

Political prisoners in Malaysia are held initially for 60 days in solitary confinement, and in some cases have been subjected to psychological and physical torture. Several prisoners have continued to be held for periods of far longer than two months in solitary confinement and in one case, that of the writer, Samad ISMAIL, for more than three years.

The report makes 11 recommendations to the Malaysian government to correct abuses of fundamental human rights involving preventive detention, torture and inadequate prison conditions.

The Internal Security Act provides for imprisonment without trial for two years but detention orders are in many cases renewed for further two-year periods.

The *AI* mission delegates were assured in their discussions with Malaysian officials that political detainees held under the Act were not suspected of having engaged in violent political activity or terrorism□

Iraq: Executions and arrests

Twenty-one government officials, including five members of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, were executed after being sentenced to death on 7 August by a Special Court for allegedly plotting against the State. Thirty-three other defendants were given prison sentences ranging from one to 15 years.

The sentences followed reports that a wave of summary executions and arrests of high ranking government officials had swept the country after an alleged conspiracy to overthrow the government of President Saddam HUSSEIN in July.

AI condemned the executions, called on the government to stop eliminating its political opponents and expressed concern at the continuing large scale arrests taking place in Iraq.

AI also deplored the trial procedures of the Special Courts before which political opponents appear□



Six former Trotskyist sympathizers who had been imprisoned since the early 1950s in Shanghai were released in June at the same time as ZHENG Chaolin (August Newsletter). According to information received by *AI*, Zheng Chaolin's wife, WU Jingru, was released at the same time from the Pu Dong Factory. *AI* received this picture taken after their release.

Among the others released is JIANG Zhengdong, a 67-year-old former worker, whose case had been taken up by *AI*. The names of the others are not yet known, but several of them are believed to be from Wenzhou county in Zhejiang province. They are said to have been released in early June from the Pu Dong Labour Reform-Glass Factory in Shanghai□

Libya

Call for amnesty in September

September will mark the 10th anniversary of the 1969 revolution in Libya. At the end of August *AI* urged Colonel Mu'ammarr GADDAFI to grant a general amnesty to all political prisoners in the country.

In a cable to the Libyan leader, *AI* expressed its deep concern at the increasing number of people being detained for their political beliefs in Libya.

AI has adopted approximately 100 political prisoners in Libya, many of whom are serving sentences of life imprisonment. It believes, however, that the number of political prisoners in Libya exceeds this figure.

AI's cable reiterated the organization's request to send a mission to discuss with Libyan authorities the disturbing situation of political prisoners in the country. *AI* has already sent two missions to Libya, in 1970 and 1976, but has received no response to its request in May 1978 to send a third mission to the country. The last *AI* mission was received by Colonel Gaddafi who authorized the *AI* delegates to visit political detainees. However, the visit was not eventually permitted to take place. The mission's report, a copy of which was sent to the Libyan government, reiterated *AI's* concern that there had been specific violations of human rights in Libya.

AI continues to be gravely concerned at the way in which many opponents of Colonel Gaddafi's government are detained before being brought to trial. In some cases political prisoners are known to have been held without ever being charged or tried for as long as 2½ years.

The trials of many prisoners of conscience have taken place before the People's Court which was created in 1969 by a Revolution Command Council decree. The court is convened by decision of the government which also decides upon its composition. Every verdict passed by the People's Court is subject to "ratification" by the government which is empowered to reduce or increase sentences. There is no recourse to appeal against the verdict.

AI is equally concerned that the trial procedures followed by the People's Court do not conform to internationally recognized standards as laid down by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which the Libyan government ratified in 1970.

AI said it regretted the fact that Libya still retained the death sentence as a punishment for numerous offences including membership of any unauthorized political organization or any attempt to change the constitution or form of government □

Uruguay

Two presidents appeal for prisoner

Two Central American governments have offered political asylum in their countries to a Uruguayan who is serving a 14-year prison sentence in Uruguay. General Liber SEREGNI, a presidential candidate for the Board Front, has already completed six years of his sentence.

Presidents Aristedes ROYO of Panama, and Rodrigo CARAZO of Costa Rica requested the Uruguayan authorities to release General Seregni in July. President Carazo sent the former president of Costa Rica, Jose FIGUERES, as his personal emissary to Uruguay. The authorities, however, refused to see him. President Royo declared in a letter his "unconditional support for the

cause of human rights and in particular the release of General Seregni and other Uruguayan personalities".

General Seregni is adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience and his case was featured in the *January 1974* and *January 1976 Campaign for Prisoners of the Month* □

News of Past Campaigns

We have just heard that Mahanth THAKUR of Nepal (July 1979 *Campaign for Prisoners of the Month*) was released on 17 June. Please stop all action on his behalf.

Pakistan

Four executed

The four men sentenced to death with former Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali BHUTTO in March 1978 were executed on 25 July. They were Mian Muhammad ABBAS, Arshad IQBAL, Ghulam MUSTAFA and Rana Iftikar AHMAD (*May Newsletter*).

After receiving reports on 24 July of the announcement by prison officials that the four would be hanged the following day, *AI* cabled an urgent appeal to President General ZIA-ul-Haq to save their lives. But the sentences were carried out on the eve of the holy month of Ramadan, during which executions are forbidden under Islamic law □

Indonesia

Students convicted and sentenced

Sentences have been passed on seven of the 36 students who have been standing trial in eight Indonesian cities since last January on charges of "insulting the Head of State". The seven received prison terms ranging from one to 2 years. All have said they will appeal.

The charges were brought against the students following their participation in 1977-78 in a nationwide student movement protesting the political and economic failures of the government and calling on President SUHARTO not to stand for re-election in March 1978.

The prosecutors had demanded sentences ranging from 3 to 9 years' imprisonment, but those handed down so far have been much lighter.

One of the defence lawyers, Adnan Buyung NASUTION, pointed to a series of violations of the fundamental rights of his client Hery AKHMADI, and of other students on trial. Among other things, Mr Nasution said in a letter of protest to the Supreme Court that witnesses called by the defence were not permitted to appear, that the prosecution was allowed to introduce evidence illegitimately and that there was executive interference in the judicial process as evidenced by the imposition of press restrictions on coverage of the trials and tight security in and around the courts □

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.

Tsering DHONDUP, *People's Republic of China*

Tsering DHONDUP was arrested in 1966 in Lhasa and accused of being a "rightist" because he possessed old Tibetan photographs, including one of the 18th century Chinese Emperor Chien Lung. He was consequently jailed in Sangyip prison, north-east of Lhasa, the capital of the Autonomous Region of Tibet in the People's Republic of China.

Tsering Dhondup was last heard of six years ago when he was reported to be working as a "prison labourer" in Sangyip—a prison said to be used mainly for political prisoners. The term "prison labourer" usually refers to former prisoners who at the end of their sentence are forcibly retained to work in penal establishments—often for an indefinite period.

At the time of his arrest Tsering Dhondup, a 45-year-old Tibetan, was known to be married with four children. It is likely that he has never been charged or tried. Until recently, people accused of being "rightists" were detained and subjected to compulsory labour without being tried by a court.

In April 1978 the government of the People's Republic of China adopted a measure by which the cases of people labelled as "rightists" in the past would be reviewed and those considered to have been "wrongly" classified as such would be rehabilitated. However, it is not known whether Tsering Dhondup's case has been reviewed during the past year.

Please write courteously-worded letters appealing for the immediate release of Tsering Dhondup to: His Excellency Hua Guofeng, Prime Minister, Peking, People's Republic of China.

Dimitrios DIKAS, *Greece*

A young Greek who has refused to perform compulsory military service as a result of his religious beliefs is being held in prison—despite having been granted a temporary military discharge for health reasons.

Dimitrios DIKAS, a 24-year-old bachelor, was called to perform military service—which is compulsory in Greece for all males between 18 and 40—on 25 November 1977. However, because he belongs to the Jehovah's Witness faith, which prohibits its adherents from taking up arms in the service of the state, he refused and was taken into the custody of the military police.

Under Greek law 731/77 which came into force in October 1977, citizens who object to military service on religious grounds may perform unarmed military service for 4½ years—twice as long as normal military service. This law was specifically framed to apply to Jehovah's Witnesses, the only known conscientious objectors in Greece. However, because Jehovah's Witnesses refuse to perform unarmed or armed military service, they continue to be imprisoned.

In spite of the fact that Mr Dikas suffers from bad health, he was taken to a disciplinary cell where he remained for 49 days. During this time his health deteriorated further and for 10 days he received injections from the unit's doctor twice a day. He was transferred to Avlona Military Prison in January 1978 and in May 1978 was judged to be fit for military service and sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment because of his refusal.

On 30 September 1978 the Commander of Avlona Military Prison signed a temporary discharge for Dimitrios Dikas in which it is stated that he had been judged "unsuitable due to his suffering from an old wound which caused severe organic disorders". Dimitrios Dikas was not, however, released from prison and is at present detained at Kassandra Agricultural Prison.

Please write courteously-worded letters appealing for the release of Dimitrios Dikas and all imprisoned conscientious objectors in Greece to: His Excellency Mr Constantine Karamanlis, Prime Minister, Athens, Greece.

Aida PAGOLA DE CASTELLA, *Uruguay*

A Uruguayan nurse is serving her second term of imprisonment for supporting the *Frente Amplio* (Broad Front), a coalition of the country's left and center parties which participated in the last elections in 1971. Almost all the parties involved in the coalition have now been declared illegal and many of its supporters have been arrested.

Aida PAGOLA, aged 56, was first arrested in April 1972 after she went to the barracks of the Eighth Cavalry Regiment in search of her sons who had been arrested. She was released in November 1973 and re-arrested in April 1974 when she was tried and sentenced to 8 years' imprisonment dating from 1974.

Señora Pagola was held in the barracks of the First Artillery Regiment and is reported to have suffered a stroke as a result of torture. She was later transferred to the barracks of the second battalion of the First Infantry Regiment, where she was held blindfolded and handcuffed in insanitary conditions. Her state of health continued to deteriorate and she was denied medical attention.

A few months later she was moved to the main women's prison, *Penal de Punta Rieles*, where she has remained ever since.

Aida Pagola has suffered a series of heart attacks in this prison and has had to be taken to the Military Hospital for treatment on several occasions. She is reported to be suffering from disease of the coronary arteries. The special diet she has to follow is often suspended and despite the fact that the doctor ordered complete rest, she is frequently forced to move around.

Please write courteously-worded letters appealing for the immediate release of Aida Pagola de Castella to: Sr Presidente de la República del Uruguay, Dr Aparicio Mendez, Casa de Gobierno, Plaza Independencia, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Regional inter-governmental mechanisms for the protection of human rights exist today only in Europe and the Americas. In recent years, various attempts have been made to explore possibilities for setting up similar mechanisms in other regions. In May of this year the Union of Arab Jurists agreed to a Draft Arab Covenant on Human Rights. Although the draft is designed to promote wider discussion of the issue and has no legal status, it is a significant indication of the needs felt by jurists within the Arab world. The draft was adopted at a symposium on "Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Arab Homeland". The following article highlights some of the topics discussed at the symposium of particular interest to *AI*.

Arab jurists call for human rights

Strong voices were raised at the recent Symposium of Arab Jurists held in Baghdad, Iraq, demanding safeguards for human rights in the Arab world.

Sponsored by the Union of Arab Jurists, the symposium on "Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Arab homeland" was held from 18 to 20 May 1979.

Among those attending the symposium were representatives of Arab jurist associations, the United Nations, the Arab League, and international non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights, including *AI*.

The Union of Arab Jurists, formed in 1975, is an international non-governmental organization that aims to bring together associations not only of practising lawyers but of all members of the legal community within the Arab world.

The Permanent Bureau of the Union, meeting in Cairo, Egypt, in March 1977, adopted a resolution containing a number of objectives to which *AI* is also committed. The resolution, *Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in the Arab World*, called on all governments in the region to respect freedom of opinion, thought, expression and association. It called for the release of all political detainees and urged support for the 1977 international campaign for the release of all political detainees throughout the world. It also recommended the Union's participation in the *AI* Stockholm Conference on the abolition of the death penalty, which was attended by a number of leading Arab jurists.

The topics discussed by this most recent of the Union's symposia included:

- conditions of human rights in Arab countries, including exceptional legislation and courts restricting human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- political detainees and prisoners;
- torture and other inhuman practices;
- freedom of opinion and the press;
- women's rights;
- promotion and education of human rights and related international law in the Arab world;
- means of providing and protecting human rights in the Arab world.

A memorandum, prepared by a preparatory committee, served as a



basic working paper for the symposium. The memorandum summarized what it called "obstacles" hindering rights and freedoms in the Arab world in three points:

- shortcomings of the Arab states in the field of rights and freedoms;
- state of emergency and its negative effects on the rights and freedoms;
- detentions because of political views.

The memorandum stated that "these obstacles clearly indicate that the Arab homeland is suffering a crisis in the field of rights and freedoms that could only be remedied by enabling man in this homeland to exercise all his rights and freedoms in a full manner".

In the Final Communiqué the symposium recommended that a draft proposal of an Arab Covenant of Human Rights—which the symposium adopted—should be submitted to Arab groups working on human rights for their comments and observations before the document is put in its final form for ratification by Arab states. The proposed Covenant states that:

- every human being has an inherent

right to life. This shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life;

- if the law of a country permits the imposition of the death penalty for the most serious crimes, this penalty can only be carried out pursuant to a final judgement rendered by a competent court;
- no one shall be subjected to physical or moral torture, nor shall he be subjected to cruel and degrading treatment.

The symposium also recommended the creation of a permanent non-governmental Arab Committee to defend human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Arab world. The Committee would include representatives of popular and professional institutions as well as prominent figures known for their struggle for the cause of rights and freedoms. It would also:

- endeavour to have all Arab states ratify the projected Arab Covenant on Human Rights and follow up the implementation of its provisions;

Draft Arab Covenant on Human Rights

The symposium affirmed the need for all Arab States to agree to a binding regional human rights treaty. The symposium adopted a 31-article draft. The following articles are of direct concern to Amnesty International.

PREAMBLE:

The Arab States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the inherent worth of the human individual, realizing the responsibility of the individual and his duties to other individuals and the community to which he belongs, the Arab Nation having been favoured by the Almighty as the cradle of religions and birthplace of civilizations which enhanced the value of the human individual and asserted his right to live in liberty and dignity, the Arab Nation being proud of its achievements across its long history in establishing human values which played a major role in disseminating centers of education between the East and the West and thus forming a focal center for all those in search of education and wisdom, the Arab Nation across its frontiers, striving for the safeguarding of its beliefs, believing in its unity as a nation, struggling for its freedom, defending the right of nations to self-determination and the protection of their national wealth, and recognizing the right of the individual to liberty, justice, equality, sovereignty of law and equality of opportunity; whereas it is impossible for the individual to achieve progress or development except through activities based on faith in these values, their guarantee, implementation and enjoyment of their benefits.

Recognizing the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the provisions of the two international covenants on human rights and the adherence of the international community to these covenants, and whereas the Arab States Parties to this Covenant recognize the necessity of ensuring the rights and basic freedoms for every individual living in the Arab Nation, such rights and basic freedoms which should not be violated but should receive full respect and be implemented in every policy, administration or legislation.

Agree to the following articles:

Article 5

1. Every human being has an inherent right to life. This shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.
2. If the law of a country permits the imposition of the death penalty for the most serious crimes, this penalty can only be carried out pursuant to a final judgement rendered by a competent court, such a penalty shall not be imposed for crimes committed by

persons below 18 years of age and above 70 years of age, and shall not be carried out on pregnant women, and in any case no death penalty shall be imposed for political crimes.

Article 6

1. Every person has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. Anyone who is deprived of his liberty by arrest or detention shall be entitled to take proceedings before court in order that the court may decide without delay on the lawfulness of his detention and order his release if the detention is not lawful.

2. Anyone who has been the victim of unlawful arrest or detention shall have an enforceable right to compensation.

Article 7

1. No one shall be subjected to physical or moral torture, nor shall he be subjected to cruel or degrading treatment. Extraordinary circumstances such as state of war or danger of war or internal political instability or any other state of general emergency shall not furnish grounds for justifying torture or other similar cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

2. Each State shall undertake the necessary effective measures to prevent acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and shall consider these acts or practices in any form a crime worthy of punishment, and those who suffer from such crime or their inheritants are entitled to a just compensation.

Article 29

The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to deliver periodic reports on the implementation of the provisions of this Covenant to the Committee as set forth in article 30.

Article 30

The Standing Committee on human rights of the Arab League shall be entrusted with the follow-up of the implementation of the provisions of this Covenant and examination of the periodic reports delivered by the States Parties. It shall also look into the individual and collective complaints submitted with regard to violations to the provisions set forth in this Covenant □

- receive complaints of individuals and groups concerning violations of human rights;
- send inquiry missions to Arab states to investigate violations of human rights in order to defend and protect victims.

Lastly, the symposium's Final Communiqué urged all Arab states to:

- abolish the continued existence of the state of emergency in some Arab states, and not to resort to this measure unless in cases of extreme emergency;
- abolish exceptional courts under whatever names, and to depend on the normal process of independent courts;

- refrain from arbitrary detention for any reason, and to release all political detainees and prisoners;
- abolish the death penalty and to improve prison conditions;
- consider torture as a crime and that any person committing, practising or ordering it or taking part in it should be punished □

Sri Lanka New detention powers introduced

Wide powers of detention without trial under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Bill, have recently been introduced in Sri Lanka.

In August *AI* cabled the President of Sri Lanka, Mr Julius Richard JAYAWARDENE, expressing concern at the introduction of the new legislation and at reports of the arrest and "disappearance" of young Tamils.

Following the declaration of a state of emergency on 11 July in the Jaffna district of Sri Lanka, where much of the Tamil minority lives, the Sri Lankan parliament passed a bill on 19 July providing the government with wide powers to detain people suspected of committing acts of violence and "unlawful activity". The largest parliamentary opposition party, the Tamil United Liberation Front, which campaigns for the establishment of a separate Tamil state, boycotted the National Assembly session.

Under the provisions of the new bill, the Minister of Justice has powers

to arrest and detain people for up to 18 months without trial. There are no safeguards to protect the physical integrity of detainees, such as having to produce them before a magistrate within 24 hours of arrest. The new bill makes any "unlawful activity", which is widely defined in the bill, an offence retroactively, and denies bail to people accused of having committed any offences under the act.

In its cable *AI* also expressed concern at the reported arrest of several Tamils since early July, and in particular at the disturbing reports that at least three Tamils have "disappeared". The bodies of two of them, Mr Visvajothy RATNAM, alias INBAM, and his brother-in-law Mr SELVARATNAM, were found under a bridge near Jaffna on the morning of 19 July. *AI* has asked the government to conduct a formal inquiry into their death. *AI* has also expressed great concern about a report that another Tamil from Jaffna, Iyathurai INDRARAJA, died on 20 July after being taken into police custody □

Hong Kong Marxists held for 'unlawful assembly'

On 5 June four residents of Hong Kong were sentenced to terms of imprisonment on charges of "unlawful assembly". They are: LEUNG Kwok-hung, a 20-year-old garment worker, who is reported to have been sentenced to 2 months' imprisonment; CHANG Chun-wah, a 23-year-old student (3 months); WONG Chung-ching, a 21-year-old shopkeeper (3 months) and HOU Man-wan, a 30-year-old delivery worker (2 months).

The four are members or sympathizers of a group called the Revolutionary Marxist League (RML) which, on 5 April 1979, had organized a rally to protest against the repression of the "democratic movement" in the People's Republic of China (PRC). According to information received by *AI*, the rally had been officially authorized; at the end of the rally representatives of the RML went to the Hong Kong offices of the PRC news agency to hand over a letter of protest—for which

they were arrested and charged with "unlawful assembly".

In the past few months several people have been convicted of "unlawful assembly" in Hong Kong under the Public Order Ordinance, which apparently regards any gathering of three or more people as "unlawful assembly". The four are the first to have been sentenced to imprisonment under the Ordinance.

In a letter to the governor of Hong Kong on 6 July, *AI* appealed for the release of the four and for a review of other cases where people have been convicted of "unlawful assembly" since February 1979. *AI* expressed concern that the Public Order Ordinance permits arrest and prosecution for the peaceful exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms and urged that it be reviewed to bring it into line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights □

Chile 'Death squad' issues threats

One morning three years ago, Pedro SILVA BUSTOS left his home and has never been seen again since. He has become one of the estimated 1,500 "disappeared" political prisoners of Chile since September 1973.

On 14 July the wife of Señor Silva Bustos received the following message: "It is useless for you to try and discover where your husband is; we killed him in April 1977 and threw his body, together with many others, into the sea. We killed him because he was a communist and a traitor to his country. You yourself are also as good as dead."

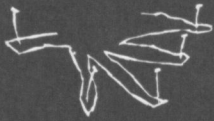
Similar threats have been received during the past few months by the families of other disappeared prisoners, among them the wife of José Arturo WEIBEL NAVARRETE, former vice-president of the now illegal communist youth organization. In every case the message was signed "CC", or Comando CAREVIC, named after Luis Carevic, a Chilean Secret Police (CNI) officer killed last April when a bomb exploded near the premises of a CNI office. The authorities claim that the bomb was placed there by opponents of the government, but unofficial sources have alleged that the explosion was the work of the CNI themselves. At the time, the government was preparing an anti-terrorist law, finally passed on 25 April. Soon afterwards the *comando* threatening the families of disappeared prisoners started using the name of the dead officer, Luis Carevic.

The threats appear to be the work of a "death squad", which may be commencing operations. Similar illegal squads, condoned by governments, have been active for some time in other Latin American countries.

AI has requested the Chilean government to conduct a full investigation into the threats, to protect the families of disappeared prisoners and to provide satisfactory information about the whereabouts of their missing relatives □

Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in July of the release of 84 prisoners under adoption or investigation and took up 119 new cases.



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.

Singapore

Tortured trade unionist in hospital

HO Piao, a trade unionist who has been detained without trial in Singapore for the past 16½ years, has been recently subjected to torture. As a result of his ordeal, he has required hospital treatment.

According to information received by *AI*, Ho Piao was in June 1979 taken from his place of detention, the Moon Crescent Detention Center, to an interrogation center known as the Whitley Road Holding Center. There he was interrogated for long hours in an extremely cold room. During the interrogation, Ho Piao had cold water poured on him and was physically assaulted. Following the interrogation, he was admitted to Changi Prison Hospital.

Ho Piao, 41, was one of 150 politicians, students, journalists, trade unionists and other opposition figures arrested on 2 February 1963 in what the government termed "Operation Cold Store". Those arrested had expressed opposition to the merger of Singapore with the Federation of Malaysia on the terms proposed. At the time, Ho Piao was paid secretary of the now banned National Seamen's Union. He is the only "Operation Cold Store" detainee still in prison today. Two others, Said ZAHARI and Dr LIM Hock Siew, were released from prison in November 1978 to confinement on two islands offshore Singapore. They are still regarded by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.

AI has received reports on previous occasions that Ho Piao had undergone long periods of solitary confinement and had suffered beatings. In 1970-71, he took part in a 100-day hunger strike in protest against attempts by the authorities to compel political prisoners to undertake forced labour. In August



Ho Piao (left) in detention

1978, he was one of 12 prisoners removed from Moon Crescent to the Whitley Road Holding Center where they were beaten for their participation in a hunger strike against worsened prison conditions.

In June this year, at the trial of a prison warder and a prison rehabilitation officer, it was alleged that Ho Piao and LEE Tse Tong (another long-term detainee, in prison since October 1963) had "indoctrinated" the two prison officers. Ho Piao's maltreatment in the same month may possibly have been related to the charges against the prison officers.

Please write courteously-worded letters urging the immediate release of Ho Piao. Express concern that he has continually been subjected to physical and mental pressures during his period in detention and request that immediate steps be taken to stop this practice. Write to: His Excellency Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office, City Hall, Singapore 6, Republic of Singapore; and to: His Excellency Chua Sian Chin, Minister of Home Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Eu Tong Sen Street, Singapore 1, Republic of Singapore.

USSR

Prisoner seriously ill in camp

Igor OGURTSOV, a 42-year-old orientalist, is critically ill in a corrective labour colony in the Soviet Union.

Mr Ogurtsov, now in his 12th year of detention, is serving a 20-year term of imprisonment and exile for "treason" and "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda".

Igor OGURTSOV was arrested in 1967 for his activities as the leader of a political group in Leningrad. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment to be followed by 5 years' internal exile. The first seven years of his sentence he served in Vladimir prison, which is notorious for its harsh regime.

This is one of the longest sentences of imprisonment for any political prisoner in the USSR known to *AI*. The very length of his sentence causes concern in view of the severity of conditions of imprisonment there. Prisoners are permanently subjected to undernourishment, inadequate medical care and exhausting labour in difficult conditions.

According to recent reports, Mr Ogurtsov's health is in constant decline. He is reported to be suffering from calcium deficiency leading to softening of the bones, prolapse (displacement) of the stomach and pancreas and infectious mononucleosis. His condition is aggravated by the inadequate diet and lack of medical treatment. He is reportedly being made to work a full eight hour day as a furnace-stoker in the labour camp.

Under article 100 of the RSFSR (Russian Republic) Corrective Labour Code, prisoners are entitled to release from imprisonment on grounds of ill health.

Please write courteously-worded letters requesting that Igor Ogurtsov be given all necessary medical treatment and urging his immediate release on humanitarian grounds. Write to: Director of Perm 35, Captain Polyakov: USSR, RSFSR, 618810 Permskaya oblast, Chusovskoy raion, p/o Vsesvyatskoye, Uchr VS 389/35 Nachalniku Kapitanu Polyakovu.

Ethiopia Appeal for long-term prisoners

Fears for the lives of at least 26 prominent longterm political prisoners in Ethiopia were raised in mid-July after reliable sources reported that the prisoners had "disappeared" from an Addis Ababa prison.

According to the reports, food brought in daily for the prisoners has been refused by prison authorities. In previous cases when food was returned it meant that the prisoner had been killed.

AI was unable to confirm the reports of the "disappearances" but cabled Lieutenant Colonel MENGISTU Haile Mariam urgently requesting assurances of the prisoners' safety and information about their whereabouts. By early August no reply had been received, but new reports suggested that these prisoners might have been transferred to Gode prison in the Ogaden. AI was also investigating reports of the release of other long-term detainees, including some women.

The "disappeared" prisoners, whose names are known to AI but cannot be published for fear of reprisals, were all prominent in government or non-government circles during the former government of Emperor HAILE SELASSIE, which was overthrown in the 1974 revolution. They have been held for four to five years with about 300 others in the dank, unlit cellars of the military government's headquarters in the former Menelik Palace. At least 12 have died largely from the inhumane conditions to which they are subjected—almost 24 hours a day confinement underground without fresh air or daylight, denial of all visits, and inadequate medical treatment. None has been charged or tried, although several were reported to have been exonerated of responsibility for the 1973-74 famine after a 1974 Commission of Inquiry.

Please send courteously-worded letters urging that these and all other prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia be released on humanitarian grounds. Write to: Lieutenant-Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, Head of State and Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia □

Nine prisoners of conscience released in Tunisia

Nine prisoners of conscience in Tunisia were released by presidential amnesty on 3 August. They included Habib ACHOUR, former secretary general of the General Union of Tunisian Workers, who was serving a sentence of 10 years' imprisonment in connection with the general strike on 26 January 1978. (March Newsletter).

Among the other released prisoners were Gilbert NACCACHE, Rachid BELLALOUNA, Ahmed Ben Othman

REDDAOUI, Nouredine BEN KHADER and Abdullah ROUISSI, who were originally arrested and tried by the State Security Court in 1968. The five still had between five and 13 years of their sentences to serve at the time of their release.

All those who benefitted from the amnesty are now living under "restricted residence" in designated towns and according to some sources must report to the police twice a day □

Argentina Human rights bodies raided

Argentine security officers on 10 August raided the offices of three leading human rights organizations and confiscated documentation on people who have disappeared.

AI said that the raid was a "deliberate act of intimidation" and called on the government of Argentina to stop the harassment of human rights organizations in the country.

AI believes that the raid may have been intended to prevent or discourage human rights groups and relatives of missing and detained persons from presenting information to a forthcoming mission of the Organization of American States (OAS), scheduled to visit Argentina from 6 to 20 September to investigate allegations of human rights abuses.

AI urged the responsible Argentine authorities to return all documents seized during the raid—which was ordered by Federal Judge Martin ANZOATEGUI—to their respective owners. AI also called on the Argentine government to guarantee that there would be no retaliation against anyone testifying before the OAS mission.

The organizations raided on 10 August were the *Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos*, the *Liga Argentina por los Derechos del Hombre* and the *Comisión de Familiares de Desaparecidos por Razones Políticas*. The three together with other human rights groups in the country have, since the military coup of 2 March 1976, worked ceaselessly for the defence of human rights. In May 1979 the *Asamblea Permanente*

published a list of over 5,400 names of persons who, according to its records, have disappeared since the military coup.

AI has also received information that a second raid on the same organizations took place on 14 August. A fourth human rights organization, the *Movimiento Ecueménico por los Derechos Humanos* was also raided □

STAFF NEWS

Clayton YEO, former Head of the Europe region of the Research Department at the International Secretariat, has been appointed Deputy Head of Research. A Canadian, he has worked at the International Secretariat since 1974 and will continue to retain some research responsibility for the Soviet Union.

Malcolm TIGERSCHIOLD has been appointed Head of the Coordination Unit—responsible for membership affairs and for development of the movement in new areas. A member of AI since 1969, he has been working in the Swedish Section secretariat since 1974. He hopes to take up the post by the end of 1979.

The new Regional Liaison Officer for Asia, Sreelata DA COSTA, a member of the Indian Section of AI, has begun work at the International Secretariat. Before taking up her new post, she was working in the Indian Institute of Public Opinion in New Delhi and has previously travelled and worked in Europe and Southeast Asia □

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