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KENYA

Democracy activists and lawyers arrested

FORMER government ministers Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia, who have led recent calls for a multi-party system in Kenya, were arrested in Nairobi on 4 July. Gitobu Manyara, editor of the *Nairobi Law Monthly*, human rights lawyer John Khaminwa (a former prisoner of conscience), and Raila Odinga, another former prisoner of conscience and son of former Vice-President and opposition figure Oginga Odinga, were among others also arrested. All five were placed in administrative detention without charge or trial under the Public Security Regulations.

A rally planned by Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia before their arrests was banned: demonstrators who still gathered on 7 July at Nairobi's Kamakunji area were tear-gassed and beaten by riot police. Anti-government rioting spread to other towns for several days. At least 30 people were killed, mostly shot by the police, and over 1,500 arrested.

Others later arrested included three former prisoners of conscience — George Anyona, a former member of parliament, Edward Oyugi, professor of educational psychology, and Ngotho Kariuki, a former university dean. They were charged with sedition, as were 29 people arrested for possessing cassettes of popular songs criticizing President Moi's government.

AI called for the release of the five administrative detainees and other prisoners of conscience and appealed for prisoners not to be tortured or ill-treated.

On 25 July, John Khaminwa, Gitobu Manyara and another lawyer, Mohamed Ibrahim, were released, but Gitobu Manyara was immediately rearrested and charged with sedition. AI appealed again for his unconditional release. □

BRAZIL



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BRAZIL: An estimated audience of 60 million viewers in Brazil saw the launch in June of AI's latest briefing, as interviews with Bacre Waly Ndiaye (above left), Vice-Chair of AI's International Executive Committee, and footage of cases referred to in the report were broadcast on prime-time television news programmes. All the major regional and many local papers carried positive coverage of the news conference and report, *Beyond the Law: torture and extrajudicial executions in urban Brazil*.

The briefing deals with routine torture of criminal suspects by police, violence against common prisoners and killings by death squads, whose targets increasingly include street children. Following publication of the report, President Collor de Mello, in an address to the nation, vowed that "Our society will not tolerate violence and we

will not allow the 'new Brazil' to live with any form of disrespect for human rights".

The picture above shows Bacre Waly Ndiaye with Wolmer do Nascimento of the National Street Children's Movement (*Movimento Nacional dos Meninos e Meninas da Rua*) in a refuge for children in the Vila Nova shanty town in Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro. Duque de Caxias is one of the most violent towns in Brazil. On average, according to Rio de Janeiro human rights organizations, three or four young Brazilians a week are violently killed in Duque de Caxias.

On the wall of the refuge is a list giving the names of some of the 165 children from Duque de Caxias who died violently between January 1987 and July 1988 — many at the hands of death squads. Few of the cases have been investigated by police. □

PERU

Massacre in Cuzco

BETWEEN 23 and 28 April, 13 people were killed and eight "disappeared", including an unidentified eight-year-old girl, after being detained by members of the Peruvian army operating in the departments of Cuzco and neighbouring Apurímac. The girl is said to have been taken hostage when troops failed to find her father.

According to reports, some 20 mounted soldiers from the army headquarters in Antabamba, Apurímac, crossed into the province of Chumbivilcas, Cuzco, and detained at least 22 people as the patrol moved through four local communities. Towards the end of the operation, once back in Apurímac, the soldiers detained three more people. During the patrol the soldiers are said to have tortured the detainees, including raping a number of women.

On 26 April six of the soldiers reportedly took 11 of the detainees to a remote area called Ccapalluwo where they were shot and buried. Two further men died as a result of injuries sustained under torture. Four detainees were released.

Reports indicate that two local judges refused to investigate the massacre, despite numerous complaints to the authorities by relatives, representatives of the local church, municipality, peasant organizations and Peruvian human rights groups. However, an investigation was eventually initiated and the exhumation of 11 bodies took place on 6 May. These were taken to Santo Tomás, Chumbivilcas, for autopsy and allegedly showed marks consistent with their having been tortured, including burns, and multiple gunshot wounds.

The Attorney General's office is reportedly investigating the legality of the detentions in the Cuzco department. The 13 people killed and five of the "disappeared" were detained in an area which is not an emergency zone, by troops based in Apurímac, a department under state of emergency and military control. □

INDIA

Government qualifies lifting of ban on AI visits

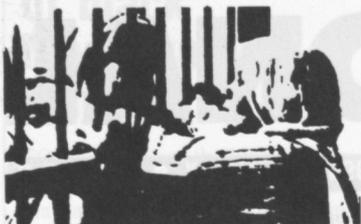
AI is seeking clarification from the Indian Government about the terms of its latest announcement on 3 July which said the organization could only enter India for private visits and meetings with government officials to discuss "general issues".

This announcement by the Home Ministry follows a previous

announcement on 28 June which said that all restrictions on AI visits to any part of India were lifted.

On 2 July, the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had called on members of the Youth Congress Party to prevent AI from entering India and visiting Jammu and Kashmir. □

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.

IRAQ

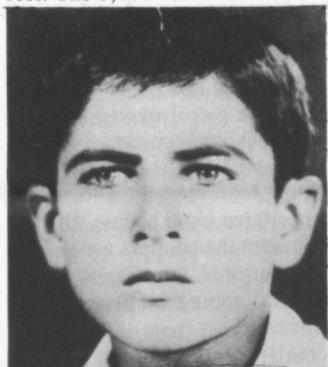
Zikri Nafkhash Mustafa, Nabi Muhammad Shukur, Jabbar Rashid Shifki and Ja'far Tamar Mahmud: aged between 19 and 22, they were among a group of 315 Kurdish children and youths who were between eight and 15 years old at the time of their "disappearance" in August 1983. They were among some 8,000 male Kurds who were reportedly arrested solely because they belong to the Barzani clan.

Children and young people in Iraq have become the innocent victims of a policy of political repression. Their "disappearance" has sometimes taken place on a large scale, with hundreds reported missing since their arrest. The 8,000 Barzani Kurds are

retaliation for the KDP's military actions and that they were arrested solely because of their membership of the Barzani clan.

To date the Iraqi authorities have not accounted for the fate or whereabouts of those detained. Their relatives fear that many of them may have been secretly executed.

■ Please send courteous appeals for their immediate release and the disclosure of their whereabouts to: President Saddam Hussain/President of the Republic of Iraq/Karadat Mariam/Baghdad/Iraq. □



Zikri Nafkhash Mustafa, aged 12, before his "disappearance"

from the regions of Barzan and Merga Sur in Arbil province. These four were among whole families who were forcibly resettled by the Iraqi authorities in 1976 and 1977 into four "housing complexes" in Arbil province: Qoshtapa, Diyana, Harir and Bahark. Iraqi forces are believed to have carried out widespread arrests in these housing complexes in August 1983. Some 8,000 males aged between eight and 70 were arrested, forced into military vehicles and removed from the area.

Some of those arrested were close relatives of Mus'ud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). The arrests occurred shortly after armed conflicts between Iraqi and Iranian forces in July 1983 which led to the occupation by Iranian forces of Iraqi territory at Haj Omran.

The KDP was held by the Iraqi authorities to be responsible for assisting Iranian forces to military victory at Haj Omran. This has led to fears that the arrest of the 8,000 Kurds was carried out in

TIBET

Ngawang Buchung: a monk from the Drepung monastery on the outskirts of Lhasa, Tibet, he has been sentenced to 19 years' imprisonment for organising a "counter-revolutionary clique", spreading "counter-revolutionary propaganda" and "engaging in espionage".

On 30 November 1989 the Lhasa municipal Intermediate People's Court held a "mass rally" to sentence 10 Drepung monks, arrested on 15 January 1989, for their activities in support of Tibetan independence. Ngawang Buchung was officially described as the leader of a "reactionary organization" which had printed and distributed leaflets to further the goal of Tibetan independence and "splitting the motherland". Two of these are a Tibetan translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and a manifesto advocating a constitutional democracy for Tibet after Chinese

withdrawal. He was also one of three monks who allegedly "collected intelligence and passed it to the enemy (the Indian-based Tibetan government-in-exile), seriously undermining national security".

The prison sentences — the longest to be handed down to pro-independence demonstrators since the current wave of protests began — came soon after the award



Ngawang Buchung

of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama. The award was accompanied by Chinese denunciations of his and the government-in-exile's role in encouraging pro-independence protests in Lhasa, including the sending of "special agents" to act as *agents provocateurs*.

Monks from the Drepung monastery have been at the forefront of demonstrations in Lhasa. Ngawang Buchung was one of 21 who led a peaceful march on the municipal government offices on 27 September 1987 — an event which marked the beginning of the current wave of pro-independence protests instigated by monks and nuns. He was subsequently detained without charge for four months.

■ Please send courteous appeals for his immediate and unconditional release to: Li Peng Zongli/Guowuyuan/Beijingshi/Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo/People's Republic of China. □

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Francisco Bonifacio Mba Nguema: a soldier, he is serving a 20 year prison sentence after being convicted of attempting to overthrow the Equatorial Guinean Government.

Francisco Bonifacio Mba Nguema and about 40 others were arrested in August 1988 after the president of an opposition party based abroad, the *Partido del Progreso*, Progress Party, had visited the country briefly to request permission for the party to operate in Equatorial Guinea, officially a one-party state. Those arrested were apparently suspected of being members or supporters of the Progress Party. He and many of his fellow detainees were badly tortured by Equatorial Guinean soldiers and by Moroccan members of the Presidential Guard, seconded to Equatorial Guinea under a bi-lateral military assistance agreement.

The *ad hoc* military court which tried Francisco Bonifacio Mba Nguema in September 1988 apparently based its conviction on confessions extracted under torture and on the fact that he had read a novel, *The Dogs of War*, by Frederick Forsyth, about an imaginary coup set in the early 1970s in a country which is usually interpreted as being Equatorial Guinea. The only other evi-

dence against him, the testimony of a prosecution witness, was proved in court to be false. The court used summary procedures which severely curtailed the rights of the defence. He and another soldier were initially sentenced to death. Seven other defendants received prison terms of between 12 and 30 years. They had no right of appeal.

Soon after the trial, the death sentences were commuted by presidential decree to life imprisonment.

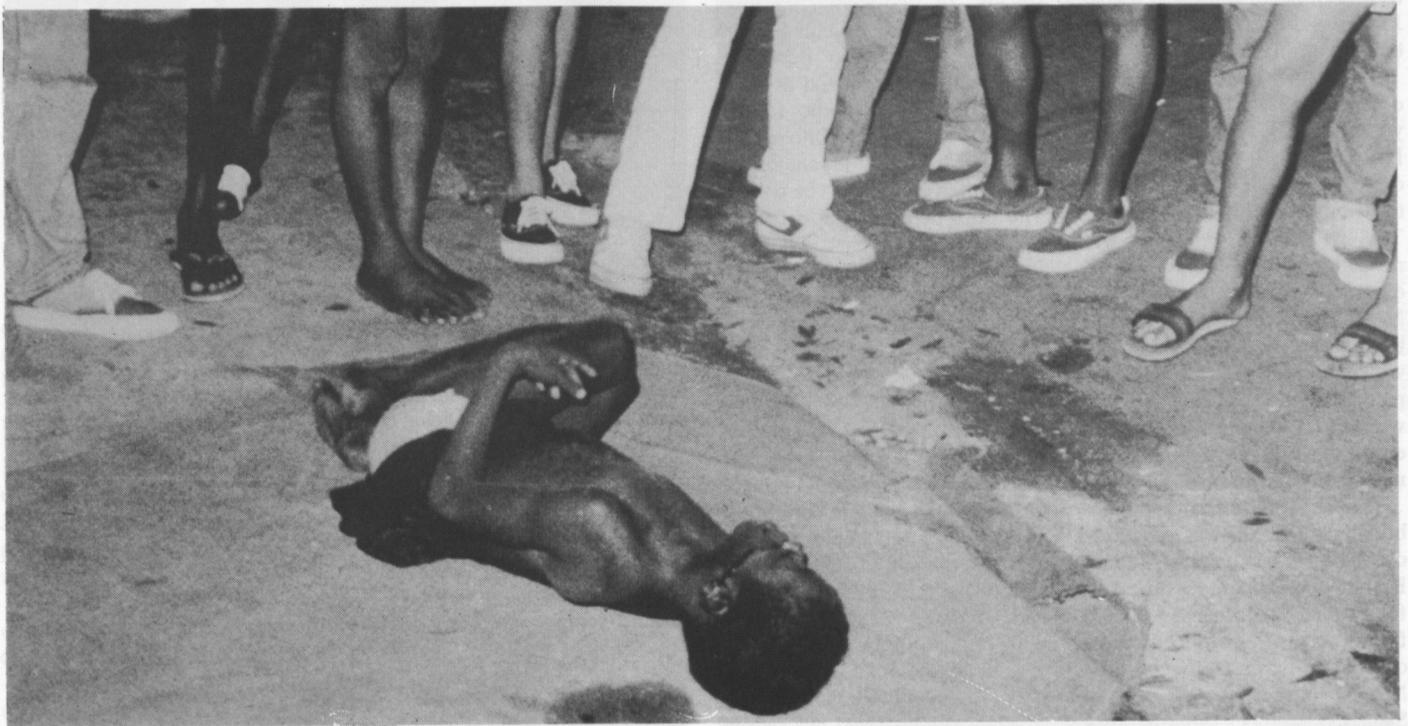
In August 1989, the government's 10th anniversary, the two life sentences were commuted to 20 years' imprisonment and four prisoners had their sentences halved. (Three others were released separately.) They are held at Bata prison in the mainland province of Rio Muni.

■ Please send courteous appeals for his release, in Spanish if possible, to: Su Excelencia/Coronel Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo/Presidente de la República/Gabinete del Presidente de la República/Malabo/República de Guinea Equatorial. □



FOCUS

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Patricio Hilario da Silva, aged 9, whose corpse was dumped in the fashionable Rio de Janeiro suburb of Ipanema on 22 May 1989. A note tied around his neck read: "I killed you because you didn't study and had no future.... The government must not allow the streets of the city to be invaded by kids." The boy is believed to have been the victim of a death squad.

BRAZIL

Child victims of killing and cruelty

Torture is an everyday occurrence in Brazil and extrajudicial execution is common*. The targets, increasingly, have been poverty-stricken children and adolescents in the big cities. The main perpetrators of abuses against them are death squads, often composed of or run by police officers.

AI has received an increasing number of reports of ill-treatment, torture and killing of children and adolescents in Brazil.

As more children are forced onto the streets to help support their families or to fend for themselves they become increasingly vulnerable to abuse by law enforcement officials; many have been "eliminated" by death squads.

An estimated seven million children live and work on the streets in Brazil. Some, but by no means all, are drawn into a life of crime — acting as snatch thieves and drug couriers on behalf of criminal gangs; others make a meagre living from begging, selling things on the street or scavenging on rubbish tips.

The mere fact of being on the streets, ill-clothed and ill-fed, makes such children "suspected

*See AI report *Brazil: Torture and extrajudicial execution in urban Brazil*, published in June 1990.

criminals" in the eyes of many civil and military police officers, and therefore vulnerable to arbitrary treatment.

Daily, children are being ill-treated, tortured, mutilated and killed.

Death squads

Disturbing research by Brazilian organizations has shown that street children and adolescents are increasingly falling victim to death squads.

In the past five years there has been an alarming increase in activity by these squads in many Brazilian cities. This has included killings of suspected petty criminals who are often poor, destitute and young.

Police authorities in Rio de Janeiro, Recife and Manaus have acknowledged that many of these death squads are run by or made up of off-duty police.

In April 1990 the Rio de Janeiro police department reported that

half the city's identified death squad members are police officers. In Rio at least 13 prosecution witnesses to death squad killings have been murdered since 1983. Despite the clear risk to witnesses, judges in such cases continue to release prime suspects.

In 1989 a survey was conducted by the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Research, with the assistance of the National Street Children's Movement, on the violent deaths of children in Brazil. It drew its information from official sources and reports in the media and concluded that increasing numbers of children are dying violently.

The report noted that the figures for the first six months of 1989 had already equalled those for the whole of the previous year. Eighty per cent of the victims were male and aged between 15 and 18.

Although the relevant data were not available in all records, in those where ethnic origin had

been noted 82 per cent of the victims were black or of mixed race.

The survey analysed press reports of 624 violent killings of children in 15 Brazilian states during the 18 months before July 1989. In 21 per cent of the cases — some 130 children — the killings had been attributed to death squads. In Pernambuco State over half of the violent killings of children in the first six months of 1989 were attributed to death squads, more than double the number of such cases for the whole of the previous year.

Brazilian human rights organizations now believe that at least one child a day is killed by death squads.

The report concludes: "These facts are impressive insofar as they show the marked presence of organized actions for the elimination of people, here in the case of children and adolescents, whether with a view to 'cleaning up the streets', 'removing witnesses' or

of 'guaranteeing the security' of a given area. The fact is these groups are acting in practically the whole country, without their activities being properly investigated or punished."

At the beginning of June 1990 the television network *TV Globo* filmed a documentary on the activities of death squads in Rio de Janeiro and "justiceiros" — their equivalent in São Paulo.

On 3 June, the day before the documentary was broadcast, two young boys, Flavio, aged 17, and Dina, aged 16, were dragged out of their homes in Vila Nova, near the centre of Duque de Caxias. They were killed in front of witnesses and their bodies secretly dumped. Members of the Vila Nova community believe the boys' deaths were linked to interviews they gave to *TV Globo* reporters. They had talked of their work as lookouts for drugs dealers in the Vila Nova slum, nicknamed *Lixão* (rubbish dump).

Simone Amaral Cerqueira was brutally killed. She was a 17-year-old girl with dual Australian-Brazilian nationality. She was found dead with an 18-year-old friend, Disney Erwin Rodrigues, on a waste-tip on the outskirts of Nova Friburgo, Rio de Janeiro State, in December 1988. According to his friends, Disney Rodrigues had denounced police officers in the city for extortion in drugs-related cases.

Simone Cerqueira and Disney Rodrigues were abducted on 4 December by five men in plain clothes, four of whom were later identified as members of the military police.

The two bodies were found the next morning bearing marks of torture. One of Simone Cerqueira's eyes had been gouged out before she was shot in the head at close range. She had been raped. Disney Rodrigues' body was riddled with bullets.

Criminal proceedings have been initiated against two military police officers but the trial is not



Simone Cerqueira, tortured and found dead on a waste-tip

expected to be held until 1991.

In September 1989 five youths aged between 17 and 23 were killed by a death squad in Nova Friburgo. Four military police have been charged with the killings.

The police are slow to act in cases of abduction by death squads. In February 1988 two teenage brothers, Aldenir Calisto Mendes and Magno Fernando Mendes, were abducted at midnight from their home in the shanty town of Corto Oito in Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, by armed men claiming to be police. The boys helped support the family by washing cars. The men forced their way in and produced neither arrest warrant nor identification. They told the boys' mother that they had to take her sons to the police station for questioning.

Fearing that the men might be a death squad, the boys' mother immediately left the house to report the incident to the police. On her way she saw a military police patrol and implored them to start looking for her sons. They refused on the grounds that they had no orders to do so. At the police station the police chief told her she had to wait 24 hours before reporting the boys missing.

When she resumed her search at 6am the following morning she overheard someone in a local bakery saying that the bodies of two young men had been found nearby, riddled with bullets. She had found her sons.

The men who had abducted them, and who had claimed to be police, had been looking for another of her sons, 19-year-old Evandro Sergio Mendes, allegedly implicated in the shooting of a military police officer. He was shot and killed 11 months later on 2 January 1989.

Gilberto Girão ("Beto") was 16 when he was killed. He worked as a shoe-shine boy in Duque de Caxias and had lived on the streets since he was four. He was well known both to local church workers and the police.

In April 1988 he was arrested and taken to the 59th Police Precinct in Duque de Caxias where he was held among adult detainees, contrary to the law.

When social workers went to protest about his detention the police chief refused to release the boy, claiming that he was of age, and told them, "I don't have time to waste on defenders of down-and-outs".

The social workers took Beto's documents to a local judge and convinced him that the boy was a minor. They then managed to obtain a court order for his transfer to the State Foundation for the Welfare of Minors (FEEM).



A five-year-old has her photograph taken for the records in the state children's institute in São Paulo. In 1989 over 2,000 street children were rounded up in Rio de Janeiro for being on the streets. There are frequent reports that destitute children and young offenders held in closed state institutions (known as FUNABEM or FEBEM) are often beaten and ill-treated by staff. The victims' fears of reprisal often prevent complaints being made and adequately investigated. A 14-year-old former inmate stated: "In FUNABEM they beat us for nothing. For any little thing they like to hit and beat us. They say 'If you tell the judge, I will kill you.' And so you get scared and don't say anything."

© Hans Jürgen-Burkard/Bilderberg



Boys searching a São Paulo waste-tip. Most juvenile death squad victims are impoverished black boys aged between 15 and 18 © Pascal Maître/Gamma

The police chief allegedly told the church workers, "You may have got him out of jail, but you can't save his life" and warned them that should Beto ever return to Duque de Caxias he would not last more than a week.

Beto managed to escape from FEEM, and on 4 September 1988 his bullet-riddled body was found under a bridge in Duque de Caxias. Those responsible for his killing have never been found.

In São Paulo vigilante groups, known as *justiceiros* (justice bringers), operate in towns in the greater São Paulo area, allegedly with local police support. Thirty-seven *justiceiro* killings were registered in the "ABCD" region — the short name for the industrial towns of São Paulo, including Diadema, in the 45 days up to 15 June 1990.

In April, two brothers aged 17 and 18 were shot dead in Diadema

by armed men in plain clothes who had asked to check the younger one's labour card to see if he was employed. His card was not signed by his employer, although he said he was working. A relative overheard the killer say "A blank labour card is your death certificate." After a public outcry about the killings, two suspected *justiceiros* were taken into police custody in May.

Human rights groups have alleged that National Foundation for the Welfare of Minors (FUNABEM) employees have passed information on freed or escaped inmates to death squads in the impoverished northeastern state of Pernambuco. The President of FUNABEM in Pernambuco admitted that he was unable to stop this practice because children would not come forward as witnesses.

One hundred and forty four

cases of death squad killings were recorded in the first three months of 1990 in the state capital, Recife.

Demetrius Demetrio, the leader of the Little Prophets Community, reportedly has been threatened with death because of his work among poor children in Recife. The community gives shelter at present to dozens of street children.

Threats against Demetrius increased after 4 March 1990 when the community centre was broken into and documents on the children sheltering there were burned. Two armed men kidnapped him on the night of 9 April. After driving him around on a deserted road for an hour they dumped him and drove off in his car. They told him that this should be a warning to him.

Killings by uniformed police

Children and adolescents have also figured among the many people shot dead on the street by uniformed police.

Witnesses often dispute police explanations that these killings occur in the course of "shoot-outs" — many of the victims have been unarmed.

Figures for São Paulo show a marked increase in uniformed police killings in recent years: in 1987, 254 people were killed by police, according to official statistics; in 1988 the figure was 411, and it had risen to 585 in 1989.

According to witnesses, 17-year-old Marcio Mouro da Silva, who was out with a group of friends, was arrested by police on the evening of 25 May 1989 for carrying a plastic toy gun. The police handcuffed him and bundled him into a police wagon. He was later found dead in hospital with six bullets in the head, neck and chest.

Police alleged that he had shot at them. His corpse, which was covered in mud, showed signs of bruising, and his thumb had been broken. The trial of the officers involved was deferred four times because of pressure from the police. When it eventually took place, convictions were finally upheld because Marcio's five friends had witnessed his arrest.

Marcelo Domingos de Jesus, aged 19, was shot dead in the São Paulo metro on 23 November 1989 when singing "rap" music with a group of 11 other black boys. Two military police in the metro carriage called other police to assist them with the noisy group after the boys had allegedly insulted a female police officer. According to the boys, one of the military police entered the carriage firing his revolver. Marcelo

was shot in the head. The police alleged that he had touched his belt in a way that suggested he was reaching for a gun. None of the boys was armed.

On 22 March 1990 Tchai da Silva Ferreira, aged 14, went out with some friends to celebrate the fact that he had just got a better paid job in a local supermarket in the southern zone of São Paulo. His friend Claudio was driving him in his car to a pizzeria when an unmarked police patrol car began to follow them. The boys said they took fright when they saw they were being pursued by two armed men in a car with no number plates and no police markings. They tried to give them the slip but as Claudio accelerated the police opened fire, wounding Tchai in the head. He died in hospital three hours later. None of the boys had any previous police record.

On 25 March 1990 Adriana Ceres Zago Buenos, aged 17, was shot dead by a police officer in Rio de Janeiro, while she was riding pillion on a motor-cycle. When the driver did not stop when signalled to do so, the police officer drew his gun, took aim and fired, hitting Adriana in the back.

Following a series of police killings of unarmed minors in São Paulo, the new State Police Secretary admitted in a press interview in April 1990 that police violence was his main concern in his new post.

He said he prayed for the safety of his own children when they went out at night.

Torture in custody

In some cases, formal complaints against police for torture of minors have been lodged. It is not uncommon however for witnesses and complainants to withdraw their statements after receiving threats.

In July 1989, 14-year-old Marcelo Moreira Pacheco was abducted and tortured by a military police patrol while trying to report the kidnapping of a 13-year-old friend.

The two boys had been playing the day before and had been assaulted by three men. Some tapes were stolen from Marcelo and he ran away. His friend Andre Leota tried to escape on a skate-board, but did not return home.

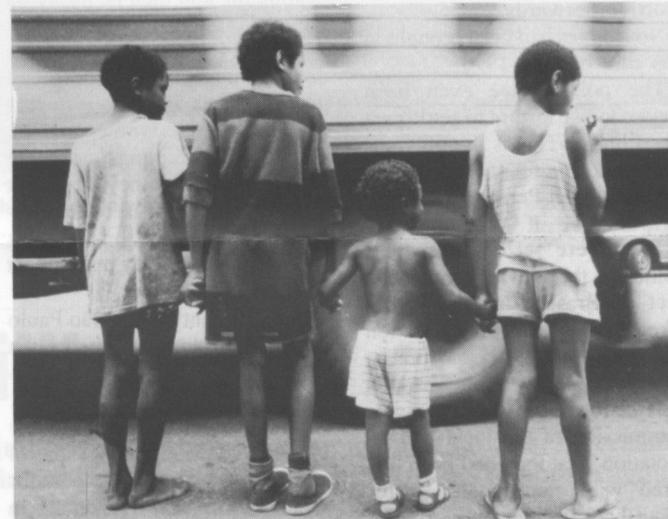
Marcelo went to his friend's house the following day to wait with the family for news. At about 8.40pm a military police patrol came to the house and asked him to tour the area with them in their vehicle to look for Andre. He got into the vehicle with five military police.

He was taken to various locations and the police reportedly



© Agencia Objectiva Press

This photograph of a torture session was taken by a police inspector in Porto Alegre. The victim, an 18-year-old street cleaner known as Doge, and the 19-year-old friend who was tortured with him have both been killed



Street children often band together to support each other. Forced to fend for themselves, many turn to petty crime. State governments periodically round up homeless children and take them to FEBEM © Ben Gibson/Impact

began interrogating him as if they believed he had been responsible for his friend's kidnapping. He was taken to a hut in a shantytown where he was interrogated.

According to his testimony the police took out a machine like a transformer and applied electric wires to his fingers, anus and other parts of his body, giving him electric shocks.

They took him to other places, often returning to a road near the botanical gardens and torturing him with electric shocks again. During his ordeal Marcelo was frequently held handcuffed, with his legs and feet tied together.

For some of the time another military police vehicle drove in convoy with the original military police patrol, and police from the second vehicle reportedly also participated in the torture.

In his official complaint to the

police he said he had been treated in this way by the police for 12 hours. His friend Andre Leato was found shot dead with marks of beating on wasteland later that day.

Seventeen-year-old Jeremias de Souza Santos died on 25 October 1989. One month earlier he had been arrested by military police in Muaná, a town in Pará State. He was suspected of belonging to a gang of youths who had been robbing local shops and businesses.

Jeremias de Souza Santos, a mentally retarded deaf mute, is believed to have been tortured with electric shocks in the police station to make him give the names of members of the gang.

When his relatives finally tracked him down they found him suffering from convulsions. They rushed him to hospital in Belém, the state capital, where he died

Minors beaten 'for pleasure'

In June 1990 the press reported complaints that over 20 minors were being held in the maximum security prison of Campo Grande in Mato Grosso do Sul. The detainees complained that they were beaten "for pleasure" by guards.

One boy of 17 stated that after complaining about poor food he was beaten with an iron bar and then locked naked in a punishment cell without light or covering overnight.

A boy of 16 said, "Sometimes they leave us in there for three days, naked, sleeping in the cold, which seems more like a refrigerator".

Another boy of 16 was being held in a cell together with adults convicted of rape.

shortly afterwards.

No charges had been brought in this case by July 1990.

The police have even been known to use torture to settle personal feuds. This is the only apparent motive for the arrest and torture of Elci Pereira, a teenage girl, and two of her friends.

They were seized from their homes in the Neza Gamma district of Brasília in June 1987, taken to the local police station and detained for several hours. The girls subsequently made a statement to the human rights commission of the local bar association, that they had been tortured with electric shocks for about half an hour.

They had quarrelled with the girlfriend of one of the police officers involved and that is believed to be the reason for their arrest and torture.

Torture and beatings on the streets

Street children are regularly picked up by the police, who often beat them and extort money from them by threatening to send them to state institutions.

In September 1989 municipal social workers reported the existence of a house in a wealthy part of Rio de Janeiro where street children were allegedly taken and tortured.

A 13-year-old boy had told them, "There is a torture room there. They take you upstairs...punch and kick you, throw tar on our skin...they make us undress, and then drop tar on us there". A 12-year-old boy stated, "Most of the police take us there when they pick us up".

The following testimonies were collected in Rio de Janeiro in 1988 and 1989. Fearing reprisals, including death, street children are often reluctant to identify themselves. For this and other reasons verification of these allegations is not always possible. Nevertheless they give an indication of street children's perception of their treatment by police and security guards.

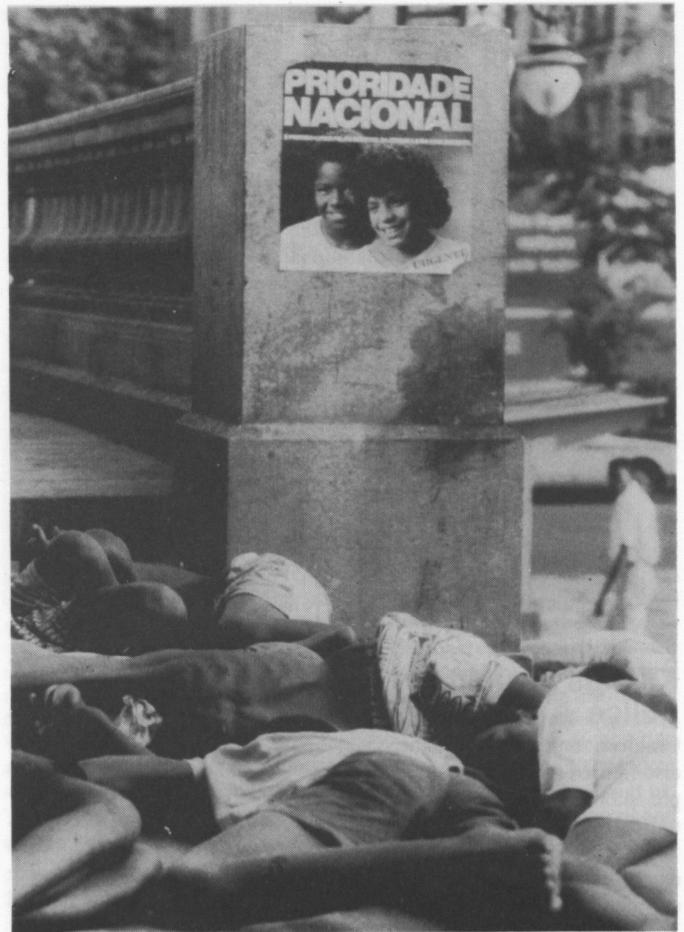
"I am 10 years old. I sleep in a shopping centre. Every day and night, around midnight, the military police come and take us inside...hit us, make us eat cockroaches and shit, they throw hot water on us, beat us with truncheons on the head, and do all sorts of things".

"I am 13. This mark on my face is where a military police officer hit me in the eye yesterday inside the police unit. He wanted to make me get the other boys to sell to the police the things they had stolen. I didn't want to so he took me inside the unit, beating me and then he hit me in the eye".

"I am 14 years old. I have been detained many times. The police get hold of us and start torturing us...they burn us with cigarettes, do all sorts of things, standing with our hands up they throw hot water on us, beat us with truncheons, on the head, on the hands — look, it hurts...they make us eat shit and cockroaches".

In one recent case in São Paulo a 12-month-old baby was beaten by military police who were allegedly searching for *justiceiros*.

On the afternoon of 24 May 1990 two military police patrol cars arrived at the Imperador shanty-town, near Heliópolis in



Sleeping street children huddle together outside the municipal council in Rio de Janeiro, below a poster proclaiming children to be a "National Priority"

© Nando Neves/Imagens da Terra

the southern zone of São Paulo. They demanded a photograph of the head of each household and warned the families that they would be back later to collect them.

That night at about 10.30pm witnesses said that the military police returned, wearing plain clothes, and forced their way into

the flimsy shacks, smashing belongings and firing shots into the air.

They allegedly started to beat everyone in the shacks indiscriminately. Among those injured were 18-year-old Roseli Conceição, who was eight months pregnant, and a year-old baby, Johnny de Carvalho. □

Urgent action needed to save lives

Under Article 227 of Brazil's 1988 Constitution children should be safeguarded from all forms of neglect, discrimination, exploitation, violence, cruelty and oppression.

New legislation to protect children has recently been approved by Congress. The Children's Statute, which replaces the Minors' Code, gives children and adolescents greater individual guarantees.

In his state of the nation address on 22 June 1990 President Collor de Mello declared: "We cannot be and will not again be a country cited as violent in reports by Amnesty International. Our society will not tolerate violence and we will not allow 'the new Brazil' to live with or accept any form of disrespect for

human rights. I trust that the states of the Federation will be united with the federal government in fighting any kind of violence — a fight which requires the complete recycling and modernization of the state police forces."

AI is calling on the Brazilian Government to send a clear message, through the chain of command of the civil and military police forces, that unlawful killing and all forms of physical or psychological torture and ill-treatment are forbidden and will be punished with the full force of the law. The organization recommends:

— that the Federal Government sets up a central register of all violent deaths, including those of children and adolescents,

which are related to death squads or uniformed police action;

— that federal authorities supervise the state-level investigations into such killings and take all necessary steps to ensure that thorough and impartial investigations are conducted and that those responsible for crimes are brought to justice;

— that the Federal Government ensure that street children and other victims of police violence, and witnesses, are offered adequate state protection to enable them to testify against the perpetrators without fear of reprisals;

— that the authorities conduct prompt and impartial investigations into all reports of torture and ill-treatment.

MAURITANIA

Killings of black Mauritians continue

FOR over a year the black population living in southern Mauritania has been a target for human rights violations including arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, rape and extrajudicial execution.

Expulsions of black Mauritians to Senegal, which started after Mauritians and Senegalese were involved in intercommunal violence in both countries in April 1989, have continued, but the number of Mauritians fleeing to neighbouring countries also increased dramatically earlier this year as a result of an upsurge in human rights abuse.

The main targets among the black population have been members of one ethnic group, known as the Peul (known elsewhere in West Africa as the Fula or Fulani) or locally as the Hal-pulaar (speakers of the Peul language). They include both farmers and nomadic herdsmen.

Both the National Guard and a semi-official militia have carried out arrests and killings of unarmed Hal-pulaar who are suspected of promoting opposition to the government and backing a number of armed opposition groups. The area around the town of Sélibaby in particular was affected earlier this year, and 48 people are known to have been extrajudicially executed in April.

On 10 April 1990, in the small village of Moudji in Sélibaby's Gouraye district, seven people were arrested including Silly

GREECE

Conscientious objectors petition AI

IN April the 250 conscientious objectors imprisoned in Avlona Military Prison sent petitions to AI offices throughout the world calling on the movement to intervene "in order to terminate the unjust and unlawful imprisonment still being imposed on us". For more than a decade AI has been campaigning for the release of conscientious objectors in Greece as prisoners of conscience and for alternative civilian service to be introduced in Greece. There are currently some 400 conscientious objectors imprisoned in Greece, all Jehovah's Witnesses; all those known to AI are adopted prisoners of conscience.

In their petition the conscientious objectors described how they are condemned to prison sentences of four or five years, despite the fact that the European

Parliament has passed resolutions calling on member states to resolve the problem of conscientious objection in their respective countries.

They also drew attention to the fact that they are not permitted visits from their religious ministers (unlike Greek Orthodox prisoners held in the same prison) and that their cells are overcrowded and poorly lit, with 15 to 20 of them sharing cells designed for six prisoners.

They wrote, "It is incomprehensible that a member state of the EC should ignore resolutions passed by the European Parliament and should so blatantly violate international treaties aimed at the protection of human rights...."

"Now that widespread changes are sweeping over Eastern Europe, and Poland, Hungary and

recently Czechoslovakia have released all their conscientious objectors, why should Greece, a member state of the EC, continue in its blatant violation of human rights in imprisoning conscientious objectors?"

In 1988 the Greek Government announced a draft law proposing civilian service for conscientious objectors which would be double the length of ordinary military service; the law has still not been debated by parliament. AI considers such a length for alternative service to be punitive and any conscientious objectors imprisoned for refusing to perform such a service, were it to be introduced, would still be considered as prisoners of conscience by AI.

AI is calling on the Greek Government to introduce civilian service of non-punitive length. □

COLOMBIA

Attacks on human rights workers

ON 4 July 1990, 40-year-old lawyer and human rights worker Dr Alirio de Jesús Pedraza Becerra "disappeared", following his detention by armed men in Bogotá. Eye-witnesses report that he was seized by eight heavily armed men as he was leaving a baker's shop and pushed into a waiting car. Two of the men had reportedly identified themselves to two police agents who stood by during his abduction. His detention was denounced to the authorities and an investigation initiated, but despite all efforts to locate Dr Pedraza, the armed forces and police have denied his detention and his whereabouts remain unknown.

Alirio Pedraza is a member of the *Comité de Solidaridad con Presos Políticos* (Political Prisoners Solidarity Committee),

and had been actively involved in documenting human rights violations, including extrajudicial execution and torture, in which members of Colombian security forces are implicated.

Since Dr Pedraza's "disappearance" a number of human rights workers have received anonymous death threats. On 10 July a man reportedly telephoned Elvia Uran Vda. de Beltran, long-time member of a human rights group in Medellín, Antioquia department, threatening that if she did not stop her work with prisoners she would suffer the same fate as Alirio Pedraza. Later that evening Martha Luz Saldarriaga Vélez, a lawyer working with the same human rights group, received anonymous death threats by telephone. □

SINGAPORE

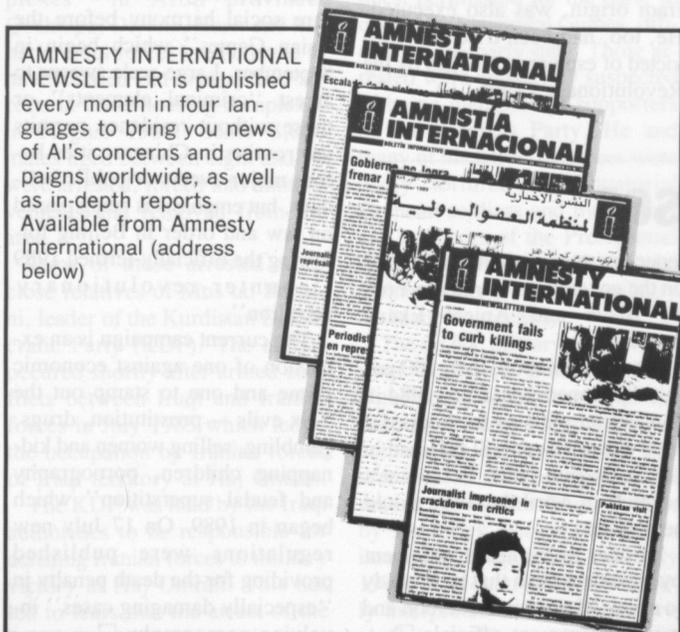
Released from detention

TEO Soh Lung, a prisoner of conscience who spent just over two years in solitary confinement without every being charged or tried, was released from detention on 1 June.

She was among 22 people detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA) in May and June 1987 for alleged involvement in a "Marxist conspiracy to subvert the existing social and political system in Singapore". She was released in September the same year but was rearrested in April 1988 together with seven others when they issued a joint statement

denying any involvement in the conspiracy and alleging that they had been ill-treated in detention. Teo Soh Lung and three others brought *habeas corpus* actions to contest their detentions and they were released in December 1988.

However, all four were immediately rearrested and Teo Soh Lung's detention order was renewed in June 1989 for a further year. While welcoming her release, AI remains concerned at the restrictions imposed on Teo Soh Lung and is calling on the Singapore Government to release her unconditionally. □



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