



AI Acts on South America and Turkey

AI's ninth International Council meeting in Strasbourg, France, 24-26 September, expressed its concern at the deteriorating human rights situation in the "southern cone" of Latin America—Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.

The council, AI's governing body, said it was profoundly disturbed by the increasing use of kidnapping, torture and political murder in these countries.

It expressed shock at the recent murder in a bomb trap in Washington, DC, of the former AI-adopted prisoner of conscience in Chile, Orlando LETELIER.

Some 200 delegates and observers from 30 countries and 31 international organizations, including the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Red Cross, attended the meeting.

The AI council also said it was disturbed at the recent mass arrests in Turkey of trade unionists who had demonstrated against the establishment of extraordinary tribunals for political crimes. It urged Turkish authorities "to take steps to ensure the immediate release of those arrested as a result of peaceful protest".

The council expressed regret at "the apparently negative response of the British government" to the recently-published report of the European Commission of Human Rights on the use of torture by British security forces in Northern Ireland in 1971. (See *Cat Bulletin*).

It also regretted the considerable time taken by the commission to pronounce on the complaint brought by the Republic of Ireland and urged AI's International Executive Committee "to study both the British response and the problem of improving the efficiency and speed of international human rights machinery".

In other actions, the council:

- stressed the need for international co-operation in the field of human rights education;
- agreed to launch AI's campaign against capital punishment on 10 December 1977 with an international conference in Stockholm, Sweden;
- designated 1977 as "Prisoners of Conscience Year" and approved the circulation of a petition urging the United Nations General Assembly and every government in the world to act for the immediate release of all prisoners of conscience.

The meeting also heard greetings messages from Prime Minister Gaston THORN of Luxembourg and from AI's adoption group in the Soviet Union. The Moscow group was to have sent two members to the meeting—

group president Valentin TURCHIN and Vladimir ALBRECHT—but the two were unable to obtain exit visas from the Soviet authorities.

The group's message was relayed by telegram from former AI-adopted prisoner of conscience Andrei AMALRIK, who is now living in The Netherlands. It said the group was "making constant efforts on behalf of political prisoners in Yugoslavia, Spain, Uruguay and other countries of the world where people can be imprisoned for making their opinions known".

It also asked the AI council not to forget those members of the group—biologist Sergei KOVALYOV and group secretary Andrei TVERDOKHLEBOV—who were sentenced during the past year to imprisonment and/or exile for expressing their opinions.

The council also noted with concern that two members of the executive committee of AI's Nepal Section were held in detention under the Security Act of Nepal. They are Purosottim BASNET and Marsall JOLUM.

The International Council also decided to hold its next meeting in Bad Honneff, Federal Republic of Germany, in September 1977.

RECORD BUDGET COMMITMENTS

National section treasurers at the council also committed a record total of £750,000 to the 1977/78 budget and confirmed the budget of £460,000 for the current year.

This large increase will enable AI to increase its work on behalf of prisoners and to improve its publications and implement its policy of multi-culturalism. It will also enable AI to send more missions to observe trials of political prisoners and to increase its direct relief work for prisoners and their families □

AI MISSION REPORTS SYSTEMATIC TORTURE IN THE PHILIPPINES

A two-man AI mission which interviewed political prisoners in The Philippines late last year "found unavoidable the conclusion that torture was used frequently and with extreme cruelty, often over long periods", according to the mission's 60-page report published on 15 September.

The mission consisted of Thomas C. JONES, an American lawyer from Washington, DC, and Wen-hsien HUANG, a

ANNUAL REPORT LISTS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN 112 COUNTRIES

More than 100 countries throughout the world imprisoned people for their beliefs, denied them fair and prompt trials, and/or tortured or executed them during 1975/76, according to AI's annual report published on 26 September.

At 220 pages, it is the most extensive annual report ever published by AI in its 15-year history. It details AI's work on 112 countries from 1 June 1975 to 31 May 1976.

In his preface, Dirk BORNER, chairman of AI's International Executive Committee, points out that governments are reluctant to submit to effective international control of their behaviour on human rights.

"... it becomes more and more evident that in spite of growing international awareness of violations of human rights," Mr Börner says, "institutions composed of governments rather than individuals, such as the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, are not immune from political pressure and thus are sometimes unable to cope with such problems".

AI Deputy Secretary General Hans EHRENSTRALE notes in his introduction that in 1975/76 the international covenants on human rights came into force, with their ratification by 35 countries. These international covenants are intended to provide the legal framework for the protection of the human rights set out in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed in 1948 but which, in 1976, is still largely ignored.

"Amnesty International has campaigned persistently for the implementation of the covenants," Mr Ehrenstrale says, "because it is better to prevent imprisonment than to release the prisoners. In the process of the campaign, more people and more governments will learn that, in a world of poverty

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member of AI's research department staff in London.

They visited The Philippines from 22 November-5 December 1975 to study the problem of detention under martial law and the degree to which those detained without trial were denied human rights.

The delegates interviewed prisoners in the main detention centers in Luzon and also

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AI-PRISONER RELEASED IN YUGOSLAVIA

Mirko VIDOVIC, an AI-adopted prisoner, was released from prison in Yugoslavia on 3 September, 16 months before the expiry of his sentence. He is now in France with his family.

Mr Vidović, a Croatian writer and poet, was granted political asylum in France in 1965.

He was arrested while on a visit home to his mother in Zadar in 1971 and charged with incitement against the social system, bringing Yugoslavia into derision and importing into the country and distributing foreign literature.

His trial in September 1971 was open and the French consulate provided Mr Vidović with a defence lawyer, but he was sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment.

His sentence was later increased by 2½ years, reportedly in connection with his refusal to testify against persons suspected of involvement in student agitations in Zagreb earlier that year. He was not due for release until 1978.

Mr Vidović had been transferred from the Croatian prison to that of Sremska Mitrovica (Vojvodina) in 1974. In June 1976, Yugoslav judicial authorities allowed an AI mission to meet Mr Vidović briefly in his cell □

AI-PRISONER RE-ARRESTED IN TAIWAN FOR "SEDITION"

HUANG Hua, a Taiwanese former AI-adoptee, was re-arrested on 26 July on charges of involvement in "seditious activities".

Mr Huang was first arrested in 1967 when he was a candidate for a city council election. He was then detained with 13 others accused of belonging to *Taiwan Ch'ing-nien*, a society for promoting the unity of Taiwanese youth.

The society was said to be guilty of "wild talk" in a Taipei restaurant and of "scribbling political graffiti and distributing leaflets".

Mr Huang was tried in 1969 before a secret military tribunal and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for "preparing to overthrow the government".

He was released in July 1975 after a general commutation of prisoners' sentences. He then contributed articles to the *Taiwan Political Review* about the need for political reform. He later became its managing editor, but the magazine's December 1975 issue offended the censor and the magazine was suspended for a year.

As Mr Huang found it difficult to find another journalistic or teaching post, he started a street side stall selling noodles in the center of Taipei.

The government claims that Mr Huang was re-arrested in July this year because "he failed to repent and has continued to engage in rebellious activities after his release", but no specific charge has been brought against him.

On 13 August, AI launched an urgent action campaign urging his immediate release or an open trial □

200 RELEASED IN EIGHT MAJOR POLITICAL TRIALS IN MOROCCO

More than 200 people were released in eight major political trials which took place in Morocco in July and August.

Approximately 350 people were brought to trial on various charges. Many had been in detention since 1973 and some since 1972.

More than 200 defendants were either acquitted or sentenced to terms of less than 3 years, which had already been served by the time of the trials.

Some of the accused were charged with planning violent crimes against the government of King HASSAN.

Among those imprisoned for their political convictions were members of the leading opposition party *Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires* (USFP) and leaders of banned student groups *Union Nationale des Etudiants du Maroc* (UNEM) and *Syndicat National des Lycéens* (SNL), who had protested against government repression.

Most of the cases of students and USFP members which had been taken up by AI have now been released. Among them was Abdelaziz MENEHBI (*Prisoner of the Month*, March Newsletter) who was acquitted at his trial.

AI sent two French lawyers to Morocco to observe the eight trials. They were François JEMOLI (*August Newsletter*) and Laurent HINCKER □

VIETNAM DECLARES AMNESTY

An amnesty was declared at the end of August by the Vietnamese National Assembly on the occasion of the Vietnamese National Day—2 September.

But no details are known of the extent of the amnesty.

AI welcomed the move on 6 September in a cable to the chairman of the standing committee of the Vietnamese National Assembly, Truong CHINH.

AI later inquired about reported arrests in a letter to Interior Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Tran Quoc HOAN.

The letter inquired particularly about Luong Trong TUONG, the leader of one group of the Hoa Hao Buddhist sect. One source has described Mr Tuong, who is aged 72, as a non-violent religious leader. But a December 1975 report linked Mr Tuong with some Hoa Hao groups engaged in armed resistance.

AI asked the interior minister for details of the charges brought against Mr Tuong and whether any steps had been taken to bring him to trial. Similar inquiries were made about members of his family also reported detained.

AI also inquired about the fate of three women reportedly arrested in November

1975 after the closure of a Buddhist monastery in Tan Long A, province of Can Tho.

According to one report, the arrests took place when the three women came to the Duoc Su monastery after learning that their spiritual leader, Venerable Thich Hue HIEN, self-immolated with 11 other monks in protest against measures taken by the local authorities over religious ceremonies that had been planned.

No further information is available on this incident or on the arrests □

BOLIVIAN EXILES WISH TO LEAVE CHILE

Fifty Bolivian mineworkers forcibly exiled to Chile in June have asked to be allowed to return to Bolivia or to seek asylum in other countries (*August Newsletter*).

The 50 exiles are leaders of the Bolivian Federation of Mining Workers (FSTMB) and its parent organization, the Bolivian Confederation of Labour (COB). They were exiled to Chile after nearly 600 trade unionists were detained in June and July following Bolivian government measures to dismantle trade union organizations.

Although Chile granted the exiles "political asylum", they reportedly remain virtual prisoners in small towns in the most inhospitable regions of Chile. They are allegedly unable to leave the towns to work or seek medical attention unless accompanied by a member of the security forces and with the permission of the town's military authorities.

They are not allowed to visit Chile's capital, Santiago, where they could contact embassies to arrange asylum elsewhere. The exiles must report to military authorities twice a day and they have been assigned to low salaried manual labour jobs which they have no opportunity of refusing.

Reports allege that any violations of the regulations imposed by the authorities would be punished by 2 years' imprisonment.

Five of the exiled mineworkers asked the Chilean minister of the interior in August to allow them to seek exile in other countries or to return to Bolivia. They had protested the conditions in which they lived and the impossibility of earning a living in their small village.

They said they were mineworkers with from 15 to 25 years of service and that they all suffered from silicosis and other respiratory diseases, which were seriously aggravated by the low altitude. All the mineworkers come from high altitudes and the exceptionally wet and cold climate of southern Chile has led to serious colds and in some cases pneumonia.

The mineworkers felt the conditions in which they were forced to live in Chile were little different from those "in prisons of our country".

On 26 August AI reinforced the mineworkers' request by cabling President Hugo Banzer SUAREZ of Bolivia and to Chilean President Augusto PINOCHET urging that their petition be granted □

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.

Vladimir BALAKHONOV, *Soviet Union*

Vladimir BALAKHONOV, born in 1935, worked with the Soviet delegation of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in Geneva from May 1969 to September 1972. The Swiss government granted his request for political asylum for himself and his family, but Mr Balakhonov's wife decided to return to the Soviet Union with their small daughter. A few weeks after her departure he too decided to return after being assured by Soviet Embassy officials that he would not be prosecuted in any way.

Mr Balakhonov was arrested in Moscow in January 1973 and charged with treason under article 64 of the USSR criminal code. This defines "flight abroad or refusal to return from abroad to the USSR" as a treasonable offence. He underwent a psychiatric examination in the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry, was declared of sound mind and sent for trial. He was sentenced to 12 years in a strict regime corrective labour colony.

Mr Balakhonov has taken part in a number of actions by prisoners in protest against bad prison conditions and in support of their demand to be recognized as political prisoners. In 1975 he spent some time in the psychiatric wing of a colony hospital and in July 1975 he was punished by transfer for three years to Vladimir prison.

In Vladimir prison Mr Balakhonov has several times been placed in the punishment cell (alone, with no reading matter, heating or warm clothes and reduced food rations) for participating in protests and hunger strikes and refusing to do forced labour.

He receives very few of the letters that are sent to him and several of his own letters to friends have been intercepted by the prison authorities with no explanation.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Vladimir Balakhonov to: SSSR, Moskva, Kreml, Generalnour Sekretaryu Tsk KPSS, L. Brezhnev (to the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU).

Yousif al AJAJI, *Bahrain*

Yousif al AJAJI was one of 29 Bahrainis arrested in June 1974 following an industrial dispute at the Aluminium Bahrain Company. Trade unions are illegal in Bahrain and the right to form trade unions has been and still is a very important issue among leftwing elements in the country.

Yousif al Ajaji is one of the remaining three prisoners of the original 29. The three have been held without trial since their

arrest in June 1974. The other 26 were released, although some have since been re-arrested.

Please send courteously worded cards or letters appealing for his release to: The Prime Minister, His Excellency Sheikh Khalifa Bin-Sulman al-Khalifa, Bahrain, Arabian Gulf; and to: The Minister for Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Sheikh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak al-Khalifa, Bahrain, Arabian Gulf.

Mirza Jawad BAIG, *Pakistan*

Mirza Jawad BAIG is a former member of the Divisional Council of Karachi in his mid-fifties. He was arrested on 30 November 1974 and is serving a 12-year prison sentence for advocating the concept of *Shehri Hukoomat* the Metropolitan Government Movement.

An international conference of metropolitan cities in Toronto, Canada, recommended in 1967 that autonomous metropolitan governments be set up in all cities with populations greater than 2,500,000.

In a number of meetings and pamphlets, Mr Baig followed up the recommendations, proposing a number of sweeping measures which would have given Karachi control of its local resources, a share in local taxes and greater administrative powers.

Unfortunately Mr Baig propagated his ideas at a time when Pakistan was just recovering from the separation of its eastern wing (now Bangladesh) during a civil war.

He was charged with advocating secession and tried by a Special Court, consisting of a single High Court judge, where special rules and procedures were applied which fell short of the customary rules in ordinary courts. The Special Court sentenced Mr Baig to 12 years' imprisonment on 9 March 1975 for "condemnation of the state and advocating abolition of its sovereignty".

Mr Baig appealed on the grounds that he had never advocated secession but merely asked for the creation of a metropolitan government. The High Court rejected the appeal but acknowledged that Mr Baig's pamphlets had stated that Karachi would remain part of the province and observed that "it is true that he did not advocate any violence or revolutionary methods for effecting this change".

Ironically, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali BHUTTO of Pakistan announced on 3 January 1976 his government's decision to give Karachi the status of a metropolitan municipal corporation. It would appear that the government corporation is not essentially different from the Metropolitan Government Movement advocated by Mr Baig and for which he is now serving a 12-year prison sentence.

Please send courteously worded appeals for the release of Mirza Jawad Baig to: Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Office of the Prime Minister, Islamabad, Pakistan.

News of Past Campaigns

Ivan Axelrod SEIXAS, A Brazilian *AI*-adoptionee (*Prisoner of the Month*, August 1974 *Newsletter*) has recently been released, along with Cesar QUEIROZ Benjamin.

They are two of the youngest known political prisoners in Brazil. Both were arrested when they were 16 years old and were held in detention for more than five years.

Senhor Axelrod was arrested with his father in April 1971 in São Paulo and both were brutally tortured. Senhor Axelrod was a witness to his father's death which resulted from this treatment.

In November 1973, he was placed in the custody of the military judiciary. The court required that Senhor Axelrod undergo a psychiatric examination to determine whether he was sufficiently mature to be held responsible for any crime he may have committed.

This examination testified that he was a normal, stable individual, who showed no sign of psychotic disturbance and was not a danger to the community.

Despite this, the trial judge found him to have "delinquent potential" and to be in need of psychiatric attention. An order was made to intern him in a mental asylum.

Doctors recommended that Senhor Axelrod be conditionally discharged as they had found him "lucid and peaceful". Such appeals were rejected.

Before his release, he was held in the Traubate asylum for almost three years, where he slept in a cell 2 meters by 4 meters, was made to do forced labour and was deprived almost completely of reading material.

Senhor Queiroz was detained in August 1971 for his alleged leftwing activities as a student. His parents testified that, 40 days after his arrest, his body bore marks of severe torture.

At all his trials, Senhor Queiroz was found not guilty. At a 1974 appeal hearing, the Supreme Military Tribunal ruled that he was to be considered "not responsible" for any crimes he may have committed as he was only 16 years' old at the time the alleged offences occurred.

Despite this ruling the decree for his release was not issued until November 1975. At this time, his family was warned that he would be murdered by para-police death squad on leaving the prison.

His release was not finally achieved until the end of August 1976, when he left Brazil for Europe.

Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in August of the release of 77 *AI*-adopted prisoners and took up 109 new cases.

'URUGUAYANS KIDNAPPED IN ARGENTINA FOR RANSOM'

A Uruguayan exile alleged in September that Uruguayan security officials had kidnapped Uruguayan citizens in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and demanded ransoms for their release.

The allegations were made by Washington PEREZ, a Uruguayan citizen, in a taped testimony. Señor Perez recently arrived in Sweden from Argentina.

Señor Perez alleged in his testimony that he had been forced to act as an intermediary in ransom demands from Uruguayan officials to the clandestine Uruguayan political group *Resistencia Obrera Estudiantil* (ROE—Workers Students Resistance) for the release of a ROE member, Gerardo GATTI, who

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AI Mission Reports Systematic Torture in The Philippines

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had talks with government officials, including President Ferdinand E. MARCOS.

Of the 107 prisoners interviewed, 71 told the delegates that they had been tortured. Political prisoners were subject to "indefinite detention, in many cases for several years, without being informed of the charges and without trial of the issues," the delegates reported.

The mission's report was submitted to The Philippines government on 24 May, together with 15 detailed recommendations for correcting the abuses found by the delegates.

Since the AI mission, about 30 of the prisoners interviewed have been granted temporary release, and court martial proceedings have started against three military men and an officer on torture charges. In July, President Marcos ordered all prisoners with cases pending before military tribunals to be brought to trial by the first week of August.

On 15 August, after the AI report went to press, the government announced steps to prevent torture, banned the use of so-called "safe houses" to interrogate prisoners and ordered that all arrests be formally registered within 24 hours.

The report says that since President Marcos declared martial law on 21 September 1972, The Philippines "has been transformed from a country with a remarkable constitutional tradition to a system where star chamber methods have been used on a wide scale to literally torture evidence into existence".

The AI mission "collected overwhelming evidence" that the promises and guarantees set down in the country's Bill of Rights "were meaningless nullities for persons detained under suspicion of political offences. The evidence establishes a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights. . ."

The Philippines judiciary has become totally ineffective in preventing such violations: "The rule of law under martial law is authoritarian presidential-military rule, unchecked by constitutional guarantees or limitations".

More than half the report is devoted to detailed first-hand accounts of torture by individual prisoners the mission interviewed.

Among the types of torture allegedly inflicted on prisoners were prolonged beatings with fists, kicks and karate blows, beatings with rifle butts, heavy wooden clubs and soft-drink bottles, the pounding of heads against walls or furniture, the burning of genitals and pubic hair with the flame of a cigarette lighter, *falanga* (beating of the soles of the feet) and the so-called "lying on air" torture. In the latter, the individual is made to lie with his feet on one bed and his head on another. He is then beaten and kicked whenever he lets his body fall or sag.

Other prisoners alleged they were injected with "truth serum" or subjected to Russian roulette (holding a gun with a single bullet in its chamber against the victim's head, rotating the chamber randomly and pulling the trigger).

The report also lists the initials of all the torturers named by the prisoners the delegates interviewed. The full names of the alleged torturers were sent to the government with the report.

Report of an Amnesty International Mission to the Republic of The Philippines, 22 November-5 December 1975. 60 pages, published by Amnesty International WC1X 8SP, England. Price 90 pence (US \$1.80)□

EIGHT IRAQI KURDS TAKEN UP BY AI

AI has taken up the cases of eight Iraqi Kurds arrested at the beginning of 1976 allegedly for their membership of illegal political organizations.

A group of seven (Shihab NOURI, Jaafar Abdul WAHID, Awad Abdul GHAFUR, Omar Said BISMULLA, Faridoun Abdul QADIR, Arsalan BAIZ and Ali KHIRA) are mainly teachers and students. They were forced to flee the country in December 1975 when the Iraqi authorities discovered the existence of their secret organization. They

took refuge in a Kurdish refugee camp in Iran.

A month later they were arrested by the Iranian secret police (SAVAK) and handed over to the Iraqi authorities in accordance with a 6 March 1975 agreement between Iraq and Iran which provides for the extradition of "subversive elements".

They were reportedly severely tortured under interrogation during their initial detention in Suleimaniya prison. They were later transferred to Fadhiliya prison in Baghdad and were tried by a revolutionary court in July. Two were sentenced to death and the others to period of imprisonment. None of the death sentences has yet been carried out.

The eighth AI-adopted prisoner, land surveyor Muhammad Sa'id ABBAS, was arrested in Baghdad in January 1976 allegedly for holding political meetings.

Muhammad Sa'id Abbas had been an active member of the Kurdish Revolution during the 1974/75 hostilities but had surrendered to the Iraqi army after the 6 March agreement, in accordance with the general amnesty (law number 52 of 1975).

Muhammad Sa'id Abbas was also tried in July and a death sentence passed on him was commuted to 6 years' imprisonment□

ROMANIA ISSUES TWO AMNESTIES

Two amnesty decrees were issued by the Romanian authorities between June and July.

The first was a State Council decree (published in *Scinteia* of 17 June) which pardoned people who had illegally fled the country or were under prosecution or trial for illegally leaving the country.

The second amnesty was a presidential decree (*Scinteia*, 6 July) which granted pardons to Romanians serving prison sentences of up to 2 years, to people over the age of 60 and to pregnant women and nursing mothers serving terms of up to 5 years.

Under the terms of the amnesty, many prisoners serving sentences of up to 8 years also had their sentences reduced, though some categories of prisoners were not included.

The release of several prisoners under AI-adoption or investigation has recently been confirmed even though the amnesty provisions did not apply to some of those released.

Among those who are now free are Ioan BUZDUGAN, aged 64, a member of the Reform Adventist sect. He had been sentenced in 1971 to 12 years' imprisonment for urging young people not to participate in political activities and to refuse military service and work on Saturdays.

Members of two families, sentenced to prison terms of between 12-14 months for trying to flee the country after legal permission was refused, were also released, as were two brothers, Gunter and William TOTOK. Gunter Totok had been sentenced in December 1975 by a military tribunal to 5 years' imprisonment for anti-socialist propaganda. His brother, a dissident Marxist poet, had not been tried at the time of his release.

The amnesty decrees preceded the celebration in Romania of National Day on 23 August.

AI groups undertook a postcard campaign welcoming the release of the prisoners and requesting the release of others□

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION RECOGNIZED IN WEST GERMANY

A new bill on conscientious objection has been passed by the *Bundestag* of the Federal Republic of Germany and agreed by the federal chancellor. It is now awaiting the signature of President Walter SCHEEL.

Under the terms of the bill, those people who do not wish to perform military service will no longer be subjected to the protracted examination of their motives of conscience which formerly preceded legal recognition of conscientious objectors in West Germany.

This would mean considerable progress towards full implementation of German citizens' constitutional right to refuse military service on grounds of conscience.

AI wrote to Herr Scheel on 9 September, welcoming the move and urging that the bill be accompanied by an amnesty for all those imprisoned or facing imprisonment for refusing to perform military service on grounds of conscience, or those who have left the country to avoid persecution for such refusal□

Annual Report Lists Human Rights Violations in 112 Countries.

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and riches, human rights are not the mere dreams of idealists but everyone's fundamental entitlement."

Statistically, the report says that the number of new cases taken up by AI during the year 1975/76 totalled 1,880 and 1,599 prisoners were released. The organization also dispensed more than £80,000 from its headquarters in London in relief to prisoners and their families in 1975/76 and sent missions and observers to 32 countries.

The Amnesty International Report 1975-1976, 220 pages, published by Amnesty International Publications, 53 Theobald's Road, London WC1X 8SP, England. Price £1.50 (US \$3.00)□

'Uruguayans Kidnapped in Argentina for Ransom'

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had been abducted in Buenos Aires on 10 June.

Señor Perez said that he definitely recognized Uruguayan police commissar Campos HERMIDAS among Señor Gatti's captors. "The others appeared to be members of the Uruguayan police and military, with one Argentinian army colonel," he said.

On 13 July Señor Perez was taken by force to a secret location to meet his friend Señor Gatti. The captors told him to take a message to the ROE group offering to exchange Señor Gatti for a large sum of money. They also offered to release 10 other ROE members imprisoned in Uruguay, Señor Perez alleged.

Señor Perez testified that Señor Gatti bore visible marks of torture and that his arm was badly infected.

Negotiations between the ROE group and Señor Gatti's captors broke down on 17 July when the captors informed Señor Perez that the "Gatti business" was over. But they asked him to relay another ransom offer to ROE concerning Uruguayan trade unionist Leon DUARTE, abducted in Buenos Aires on 13 July.

Señor Perez alleged that when he was taken to see Señor Duarte, clear marks of torture were visible.

Señor Perez also said he thought that the secret location in which both Señores Gatti and Duarte were held also housed the 26 Uruguayans abducted in Buenos Aires in the middle of July (September *CAT Bulletin*). One of the captors had made a joking reference to "40 pairs of shoes below".

Convinced that his life was in danger, Señor Perez sought the protection of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and took his family to Sweden 15 days later.

AI has received reliable information that the ransom demands were a pretext to discover the whereabouts of ROE members.

On 19 September AI asked President Jorge VIDELA of Argentina to investigate Señor Perez' allegations. It also asked the Argentinian authorities to make every effort to locate the missing Uruguayans.

● **Council of Europe Support Requested:** AI Legal Adviser Nigel S RODLEY and Researcher Tricia FEENEY on 17 September drew the attention of the Commission on Populations and Refugees of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly to the situation in Argentina.

The commission is preparing a resolution of the assembly on refugee problems.

AI also called for Council of Europe support for a strong convention on territorial asylum when the United Nations' sponsored conference of plenipotentiaries meets in Geneva in January 1977 to draft such a convention□

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South Africa Conscript Describes Torture in Namibia

South African troops were accused on 30 August of committing large scale and systematic torture in northern Namibia during recent months.

In a statement to the London *Guardian*, a young conscript of the South African army described the methods used in a massive security sweep last June. Code-named "Operation Cobra", the action was aimed at creating a free-fire zone along the Namibian border with Angola to help prevent incursions by guerrillas.

Eyewitness Bill ANDERSON of Cape Town, said that "orders were to kill those who ran and arrest those who did not run. All the arrested men were beaten, tortured, and interrogated without exception". Mr Anderson whose battalion was based at Ondongwa, said:

"Torture began almost at once when the suspects were brought back. The first few were interrogated by a section of 10 South African police inside the tent of the battalion headquarters. I saw the troops beating the suspects with rifles and fists and kicks for two hours before they were taken into the tent. All the troops were welcome to join in the beating. . . I would not watch but every night I heard the screams. . . The screams would go on until well after midnight. Officers boasted in front of me of using field telephones for electric shock torture to the genitals, nipples and ears. It was common knowledge that this was being done.

"I saw two suspects given water torture at the camp near Inahna. Their heads were stuffed into an ordinary iron bucket full of water and they were held under until they ceased to struggle. . . I often saw young boys being roughly manhandled and kicked. They were blindfolded. . .

"The conditions [the suspects] were kept in were appalling. They were handcuffed to

trees at night. Some were kept in pits. It was winter and very cold, approaching freezing point at night. Suspects were handcuffed to trees, dressed only in loin-cloths, and drenched in cold water."

Mr Anderson claimed that some 90 per cent of the troops in his battalion cooperated and took part in the beatings:

"It was spoken of as a pleasure. For the first two hours of detention the troops had a free hand. I regularly saw beatings with fists, boots and rifles, burning with cigarette ends and the filling of mouths with sand."

A state of emergency was declared in Ovamboland, in the north of Namibia, in 1972, and this was extended to adjoining areas in May 1976. Various press reports based on first- or second-hand accounts from Namibia, particularly from religious sources, leave little doubt that torture is used as a systematic practice to force confessions from detainees.

Military bases throughout Ovamboland reportedly have detention camps attached to them. Estimates of the number of detainees run into the thousands. United Nations Commissioner for Namibia Sean MacBRIDE has said that between 40,000 and 50,000 villagers have been forcibly resettled in Ovamboland, creating a depopulated zone along the length of the Namibia-Angola border.

On 30 August *AI* cabled South African Prime Minister John VORSTER calling for an urgent investigation by an international independent committee into allegations of massive arrests and torture in northern Namibia resulting from a South African infantry special security operation□

alive of all the people with whom I was arrested. The rest were tortured to death in *Villa Grimaldi*."

On 31 July Mrs Diaz was removed from *Tres Alamos* once again. Fears for her life were increased by contradictory statements by Chilean diplomatic sources.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the Austrian government that she could not leave Chile because "she appeared on a list of wanted persons", while the Chilean embassy in Bonn said on 5 August that Mrs Diaz "had left Chile approximately six months ago".

Recent information indicates that Mrs Diaz has been returned to *Tres Alamos* and held, together with other "important prisoners" excluded from the release□

European Commission finds Britain Guilty of Torture

The European Commission on Human Rights in a report published on 2 September found the British government guilty of having used torture in Northern Ireland.

The 686-page report is the result of a four-year inquiry into complaints made in December 1971 by the government of the Republic of Ireland under the European Convention of Human Rights. The complaints alleged that interrogation methods amounting to torture had been used against a number of prisoners after the introduction of internment in Northern Ireland in August 1971.

The commission concluded that five techniques of "interrogation in depth" — including hooding, prolonged periods of standing with the fingers pressed against a wall, loud electronic noise, deprivation of sleep and a limited diet of water and bread — constituted torture and thus violated article 3 of the European Convention.

The commission found that such methods had been used on 14 detainees on two occasions

The commission also upheld 11 of 16 other complaints brought by the Irish government of inhuman treatment (as distinct from torture), but rejected the remaining five. Also rejected were Irish government charges that internment itself constituted a breach of the European Convention, and that detention procedures discriminated against Northern Ireland's Roman Catholics.

The commission accepted the existence of a seminar in Northern Ireland in April 1971, which had been organized by the English Intelligence Center to teach the interrogation methods orally to officers of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

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Torture Victims Excluded from Release in Chile

The recent unconfirmed release of a number of prisoners from *Tres Alamos* detention camp in Chile has not improved conditions for those still detained.

Gladys DIAZ Armijo is a well known political commentator and "best woman journalist" of 1972 who did not benefit from the government announced releases.

Following her arrest in February 1975, *AI* launched urgent appeals on her behalf when it was reported that she was suffering brutal torture at the hands of the DINA (National Directorate of Intelligence).

Later reports confirmed that she was one of the women prisoners subjected to the

worst and most prolonged torture sessions. She was initially kept for nearly three months at "the tower" (torture rooms) of *Villa Grimaldi* interrogation center. During this time she suffered two heart attacks and had several ribs broken as a result of torture. Throughout 1975, when she was already at *Tres Alamos* and *Pirque*, she was removed three times for further torture to *Cuatro Alamos* (incommunicado wing of the camp) and *Villa Grimaldi*.

In June 1976 Mrs Diaz was interviewed by an American journalist Joanne OMANG of the *Washington Post*, who reported Mrs Diaz's statement that she was the "only one left

appeals

PARAGUAY

Many hundreds of people remain in detention after the widespread waves of arrests in 1975 and 1976. Many were severely tortured, some to death. The exact number of dead and disappeared is not known.

The arrests affected social and religious workers, teachers, students, trade unionists and peasants.

While reports of torture and appalling prison conditions in urban areas have been plentiful and have received some publicity (June *CAT Bulletin*), the situation in the countryside remains largely unknown.

Accounts from isolated rural areas allege frequent night raids by the military, accompanied by killings and disappearances which have left the population terrorized.

Some known cases are:

— Constantino CORONEL, a member of the Agrarian Leagues and peasant leader in the Misiones district. He was held in late April 1976, reportedly tortured and presumed dead.

— Silvano FLORES, also a member of the

Misiones Agrarian League, was assaulted at his home on 14 April by agents believed to belong to the police. He was first injured and then murdered by having his throat slit in front of his wife and children.

— Juan de DIOS SALINAS and Albino VERA, disappeared in Quiindy on 9 June.
— Arturo BERNAL, leader of the Piribebuy Agrarian League, was held on 12 April 1976. He died in police custody on 6 July, after 55 days of interrogation. The official explanation was that he died of "pneumonia". He was the father of seven children.

It is feared that unless thorough investigations are carried out to clarify the circumstances in which these men have died or disappeared and the responsible persons are brought to justice, similar deaths and disappearances will continue unabated in Paraguay.

Please write courteously worded letters urging the investigation of these cases and the protection of peasants against violations of human rights to: His Excellency President Alfredo Stroessner, Palacio de Gobierno, Asunción, Paraguay; *and to:* His Excellency Dr Juan Carlos Morales, President of the Supreme Court, Chile y 14 de Julio, Asunción, Paraguay.

FURTHER DEATHS 'UNDER TORTURE' IN SYRIA

Three detainees reportedly died this July in Syria as a result of torture. These cases bring the total number of reported deaths after torture to seven since early 1975. The 1973 Syrian constitution specifically prohibits torture.

Tarik HAIDARI, a 40-year-old lawyer from Aleppo, was detained without trial in early 1975 in Al Mezze prison in Damascus, together with eight other lawyers. His health reportedly deteriorated after severe torture, and he was transferred to the military hospital attached to Al Mezze. He was released on medical grounds at the beginning of 1976 and died in July.

Marwan HADID, a religious man from Hama, had been detained without trial in Al Mezze since early 1975. He reportedly died on 23 July 1976 as a result of the torture to which he had been subjected.

Adel KAYALI, a 35-year-old lawyer from Aleppo, was arrested on 15 July 1976 and reportedly tortured for eight days. He was then transferred to hospital, where he died on 25 July.

The Syrian security forces are empowered to arrest and detain indefinitely anyone suspected of opposition to the government of President Hafez ASSAD.

Allegations of torture received by *AI* over the past years from many sources indicate that torture is common practice during interrogation in the first few months of detention. Reports state that the most common methods are beatings and electric shocks, and torture often continues until a "confession" is signed.

Treatment will then improve and the

prisoner will be moved from solitary confinement to a communal cell. Family visits are reportedly permitted only at irregular intervals, after signs of ill-treatment have disappeared.

Where, as in most cases, insufficient evidence is produced to bring charges, the prisoner may remain indefinitely under the jurisdiction of the security forces without access to legal counsel.

AI requested President Assad on 20 August 1976 to undertake an immediate investigation of the latest allegations. Previous *AI* interventions on cases of alleged deaths under torture received no response, and *AI* national sections have been asked to make similar interventions on the latest allegations □

TORTURE DECREASES IN SAO PAULO

Encouraging reports have emerged from the São Paulo area in Brazil that torture may be diminishing there.

The Brazilian government came under international attack following the deaths in custody of Vladimir HERZOG, in October 1975, and of José Manoel FILHO in January 1976. Both men had been detained by São Paulo security services (December 1975 and February 1976 *CAT Bulletins*). At the same time a dossier on torture was published which had been smuggled out of a São Paulo prison in December 1975 (January *CAT Bulletin*).

Following national and international publicity on these events, the military commander of the São Paulo area, General Eduardo D'AVILA MELLO, was dismissed in January and replaced by a more moderate commander, General Dilermando GOMES MONTEIRO. Torture allegations have now ceased in the area.

Civil rights lawyers and the Roman Catholic Church, who have denounced torture in the past, have expressed their confidence that the government measures have successfully banned the wide-

spread use of torture in São Paulo.

The situation has not changed in other areas of the country, where political sources have expressed reservations about the government's power to bring the military and security forces under full control.

Torture allegations are still reported from other areas, including Rio de Janeiro, the country's largest city. Signs of paramilitary violence in the area have also appeared in the form of executions by death squad.

Last year Rio security officials announced that they had "declared war" on the squad, believed to be responsible for the torture and execution of more than 3,000 petty criminals and political suspects over the past decade.

But dozens of bodies have been found in the region in the last three months, bearing signs of torture, cigarette burns and marks of strangulation

European Commission Finds Britain Guilty of Torture.

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The report said that the security force witnesses giving evidence had been instructed by the British government not to talk about the techniques or about the seminar. It also mentioned that the British government sought to justify itself by saying that the techniques had had important results against terrorists in many parts of the world, including Palestine, Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, the British Cameroons, British Guyana, Brunei, Aden, Borneo and the Persian Gulf.

The British government reacted angrily to the publication of the commission's report. Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Merlyn REES expressed "regret at the Irish government's persistence in raking over events of five years ago."

The Irish government decided in March this year to refer the case for judgement to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association announced on 10 September that it would attempt to bring six more cases of alleged ill-treatment of civilians by security forces before the European Commission. Three of the five criticized techniques (hooding, prolonged wall-standing and deprivation of sleep) were allegedly used against three men detained in early 1975 in Cookstown and three others detained in June 1976 in Belfast. All six were subsequently released without being charged.

• Report Confirms AI Findings

The report's findings tally with the *Report of an Inquiry into Allegations of Ill-Treatment in Northern Ireland* published by *AI* in March 1972. This inquiry was conducted in Belfast by a three-man commission in December 1971. It heard evidence on 30 persons detained between August and November of that year.

The *AI* report stated: "It is a form of torture to force a man to stand at the wall in the posture described for many hours in succession, in some cases for days on end, progressively exhausted and driven literally out of his mind by being subjected to continuous noise, and being deprived of food, sleep and even of light".

The British government itself established a committee to investigate the allegations, chaired by Sir Edmund COMPTON. In its report published in November 1971, the committee described the interrogation techniques as "physical ill-treatment", but did not consider that they amounted to "brutality".

Soon afterwards the government announced that the techniques in question would no longer be used.

Subsequent lawsuits brought by victims resulted in compensation of between £12,000 and £14,000 (US \$24,000-28,000) being awarded to 12 of the 14 detainees against whom the techniques had been used.

That they had suffered serious and lasting damage was confirmed recently by Irish psychiatrist Robert J DALY of the University of Cork. Professor Daly published a report based on examination of, among others, 13 of the men subjected to the five techniques. He found that after five years they showed marked anxiety, almost universal depression and psychosomatic symptoms such as ulcers, headache and diarrhoea. One man had died prematurely of a heart attack □