

SPECIAL ISSUE

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PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE STILL HELD IN 71 NATIONS

Thirty years after the United Nations proclaimed the universal right to freedom of opinion, men and women are being held as prisoners of conscience in at least 71 countries because of their non-violent political or religious beliefs. Amnesty International (AI) is investigating other possible cases in a further 12 countries.

As the world prepares to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, nearly 5,000 such cases of known or possible prisoners of conscience in these 83 countries are being taken up by AI groups.

"Prisoner of conscience" is the original term given by the founders of AI to people imprisoned anywhere because of their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion, provided they have not used or advocated violence.

For each name that is known to AI, there may be fifty or another hundred which are unknown, amounting to an unacknowledged population of prisoners of conscience scattered over the globe, held in secret interrogation centers, in overcrowded prisons, in labour camps, on isolated islands.

Each case involves an actual or possible violation of the declaration and in most cases the prisoner is detained by a member state of the United Nations whose Charter includes the obligation to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Arbitrary arrests, torture and killings

In addition to prisoners of conscience in detention, tens of thousands of people have been arbitrarily arrested, many under military rule, and detained for years without charge or trial. In addition to jails and makeshift prisons, they can also be found in re-education camps, psychiatric hospitals to which they have been confined for political rather than medical reasons or in villages to which they have been exiled. AI knows of more than 50 countries where arbitrary detention without charge or trial is permitted or is taking place.

Specific allegations of the torture and severe maltreatment of prisoners, including sustained beatings and compulsory treatment with drugs, have reached AI from more than 42 countries in the past year.

Reports of summary executions of political prisoners or "political undesirables" and disappearances of people after arrest or abduction by security or paramilitary forces have been received from 23 countries.

This special issue of the Amnesty International (AI) Newsletter is being published for the 30th Anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The AI movement, which was founded in 1961, exists to secure the observance of the declaration throughout the world by working for the release of all prisoners of conscience, seeking fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners, and opposing torture and the death penalty in all cases.

In early February 1979, AI will publish its *Amnesty International Report 1978* giving details of the extent to which those human rights with which it is concerned have been violated during the past year. On page 6 of this issue, we print a review of just 30 issues and actions reported in the *AI Newsletter* during 1978.

AI says it can only deal with the "tip of the iceberg" of political arrests, torture, killings and disappearances because many governments which commit such human rights violations make efforts to keep them secret from the outside world.

Prisoners still detained despite special appeals

AI launched 24 special appeals during this 30th Anniversary year in attempts to secure the release of 70 prisoners of conscience. By November, 32 prisoners were still detained despite the appeals.

The 70 prisoners, from 18 countries, were chosen to represent symbolically the many thousands of prisoners all over the world who are detained by their governments in defiance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Of the 70 prisoners, 22 were detained without charge or trial. Twelve are now free. An appeal for amnesty was made on behalf of a group of 31 prisoners in one country. While no amnesty was granted, 19 of these prisoners have since been released. No news has yet been received of a missing prisoner, who disappeared on arrest in 1976 but who is still believed to be alive, and who was also the subject of a 30th Anniversary appeal.

A 'Declaration of Conscience'

Human Rights Day this year, to be observed on 10 December, is not an occasion for celebration, but should signal popular determination to end the international hypocrisy about human rights, says AI in its Declaration of Conscience which coincides with the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see page 3).

The AI declaration says arbitrary arrest, detention, disappearances, torture and murder degrade the entire political process within the community of nations.

International human rights standards have not been honoured: "the victims of economic, social and political injustices have been denied even the right to defend their rights".

Worldwide Moment of silence to be observed

AI groups and national sections are to mark the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with a formal Moment of Silence. The silence will commemorate all those who, since the adoption of the declaration in 1948, have died or been silenced in the exercise of their rights or in defence of the rights of others.

The Moment of Silence will be part of the special 30th Anniversary events planned by AI, which is also asking other human rights groups to share in this commemoration of the victims.

STOP PRESS

Amnesty International has been awarded the United Nations Human Rights Prize. The award is one of eight being made by the UN on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The prizes are awarded to those who have made "outstanding contributions to the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other UN instruments". The series of periodic Human Rights prizes was established in 1966. The prizes have been issued twice before in 1968 and 1973.

Winners of the award are chosen by a special selection committee composed of the Presidents of the General Assembly and ECOSOC, and the Chairmen of three UN human rights bodies.

China

Major report on political imprisonment

A major *AI* report published on 27 November says political dissenters in the People's Republic of China can be detained, interrogated, tried and punished without access to fair trials and without safeguards against maltreatment during detention.

The 176-page report, *Political Imprisonment in the People's Republic of China*, which is the result of several years of intensive research, outlines the country's constitutional, legal and penal systems. It draws on cases of prisoners of conscience in China under adoption or investigation by *AI*, some of whom are serving sentences ranging from 15 years to life imprisonment. Among them are LIN Xiling, a girl student arrested in 1957 at the age of 20; CHAMBA Lobsang, a Tibetan monk arrested in 1959; DENG Qingshan, a young peasant sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in 1970, and others detained for their beliefs.

AI submitted the draft of its report to the Chinese government in June and offered to publish any comments or corrections. *AI* has heard nothing from the government. However, within the last month there have been reports in the international press that JIANG Hua, President of China's Supreme Court, has said there are still many people wrongfully imprisoned in the country, and that "all sorts of excuses" were being used to avoid reviewing miscarriages of justice.

The *AI* report criticizes legislation in China providing for political imprisonment, and says that such laws are loosely-worded and have been interpreted broadly, permitting large scale imprisonment on political grounds. Under the Chinese constitution, certain categories of people defined as "class enemies" can be deprived of their political and civil rights solely on the basis of their "class origin" or political background.

The report points out that the continuous "mass mobilization campaigns" since the early 1950s have been used to identify people dissenting from official policy and have broadened the range of political offences to the extent that each campaign has defined new types of offenders according to the politics of the period.

Under Chinese law, pre-trial detention is unlimited and the trial does not normally begin until the detainee has "confessed" in writing. Political defendants are usually tried *in camera*, or by "mass public trials" where no defence is possible. The report states: "Trials are a mere formality: rather than 'trials' they are, in fact, meetings to announce the sentence."

Certain political offenders can be punished by compulsory labour without even judicial investigation. Formal punishments range from a

term of imprisonment to execution. The report cites the case of HE Chunshu who was sentenced to death in February 1978 for writing and distributing a "counter-revolutionary" leaflet. According to the court notice, he had "obstinately refused to admit his crime", and was executed immediately after sentencing.

AI emphasized that it was not possible to present a comprehensive portrait of detention conditions prevailing in China at any one time but *AI* is aware of constant complaints by prisoners about punishments, insufficient food and inadequate medical care.

AI welcomed the announcement that efforts are being made in the People's Republic of China to redress miscarriages of justice committed in the past. However, the legislation providing for political imprisonment is still in force and arrests on political grounds are continuing.

Political Imprisonment in the People's Republic of China: 176 pages, is published in English by Amnesty International Publications, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, England. Copies can be obtained from *AI*'s national sections.

Tunisia

Security court sentences workers

Tunisia's State Security Court has sentenced 16 trade unionists to a total of 98½ years' imprisonment, most with hard labour, after a trial in which *AI* says the rights of defence were "gravely abused".

The workers faced a wide range of charges, three of which carried the death penalty, after their arrest in connection with a one-day general strike in the country on 26 January (October Newsletter).

On 2 October, an *AI* representative was refused entry into the court.

At the outset of the trial, the 76 lawyers for the defence requested a delay of two months to enable them to study the case dossier of 4,000-5,000 pages. The court granted a delay of only 14 days.

In protest against the conduct of the trial, all the defence lawyers withdrew on 28 September, whereupon the court appointed a group of 18 lawyers to defend the trade unionists. But the 18 also refused to defend the workers because there was insufficient time to study the case dossier and they had been unable to consult their clients.

Twelve days later the court sentenced Habib ACHOUR, former secretary general of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) and Abderrazak GHORBAL, secretary general of the Sfax regional UGTT office, to 10 years' imprisonment with hard labour.

Three other trade unionists received sentences of 8 years' hard labour; four received sentences of 6 years' hard labour; six received sentences of 5 years' hard labour; eight received 6 months' suspended sentences; one

person was given 6 months and six of the defendants were acquitted.

The President of the Tribunal imposed sanctions against two of the original defence lawyers. Maître Mohammed BELLALOUNA was banned from the Bar for two years for his conduct in withdrawing from the case and Maître Noureddine BOUDALI received a caution for the same reason.

AI considers that the rights of the defence were gravely abused in the trial and fell far short of the standards for impartiality set down in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by the Tunisian government in 1969.

Ethiopia

'halt political arrests, torture and killings'

At the outset of a worldwide campaign against violations of human rights in Ethiopia, *AI* appealed to the Ethiopian Head of State, Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu HAILE MARIAM, to take urgent steps to achieve full protection of human rights in Ethiopia, to halt continuing political detention, torture and killing, and to free all prisoners of conscience.

Similar human rights violations under the late Emperor Haile SELASSIE were the object of earlier *AI* concern; however, a consistent pattern of flagrant violations of fundamental human rights has developed since 1974 when the Provisional Military Government (*Derg*) assumed power.

Several thousand real or suspected opponents of the government including women, students and schoolchildren are in detention. *AI* has received allegations of prisoners being subjected to beatings, sexual tortures, electric shocks and immersion in hot oil.

AI has details of at least 350 currently known political prisoners, some held for more than four years without trial, but it has decided not to publish the names for fear of reprisals against them or their families.

Conditions in all Ethiopian prisons are harsh, with detainees crowded into dark, poorly ventilated cells for nearly 24 hours each day. As a result of inadequate medical treatment and unsanitary conditions, most prisoners suffer from hypertension and intestinal and respiratory complaints.

Large numbers of summary executions and political killings have been carried out by the security forces since 1974, including more than 5,000 killed during the government's official "Red Terror" campaign from December 1977 to mid-1978.

Previous *AI* appeals to the Ethiopian government appear to have had no positive effect. The Ethiopian authorities have merely accused *AI* of spreading "counter-revolutionary" and "venomous" propaganda.

Declaration of Conscience

issued by Amnesty International for Human Rights Day 1978

I

THREE DECADES after the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, countless men and women are in prison for their beliefs.

They are being held as prisoners of conscience in scores of countries throughout the world, in crowded jails, in labour camps, and in remote prisons.

Thousands are held under administrative orders, often by military rulers, and are denied any possibility of trial or appeal.

Others are in hospitals for the insane or hidden in secret detention camps.

Many are forced to endure relentless, systematic torture.

Increasingly, political leaders and ordinary citizens are becoming the victims of abductions, disappearances and killings carried out both by government and opposition.

These acts are an affront to human society. They degrade the entire political process within the community of nations.

II

NOWHERE in the principles which govern the conduct of nations is there justification for arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and murder.

The Charter of the United Nations has established the individual and collective commitment of its members to the rights and fundamental freedoms of all people.

The violation of those rights and freedoms is an insult to all people and a threat to international peace and stability.

There has been progress. The International Bill of Human Rights has finally entered into force and 52 governments have ratified the covenants which form part of it. All governments within the United Nations have unanimously declared that under no circumstances is there justification for torture. They have adopted the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

The United Nations, the International Labour Organization and UNESCO have established mechanisms to hear complaints of human rights violations.

Proposals are now before the United Nations for an international code of conduct for law enforcement officials and for principles to protect the human rights of all persons subjected to any form of detention or imprisonment.

The American Convention on Human Rights has now entered into force, the Council of Europe has dealt with numerous cases before its human rights commission and the creation of regional mechanisms for the protection of human rights elsewhere has been endorsed by governments in the United Nations.

This progress is of vital importance. The setting of international human rights standards and the creation of possibilities for the protection of those rights

reinforce the vision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Thirty years ago, it was that declaration which elevated respect for the inalienable rights of all people above the distinctions of race, nation and belief. It proclaimed respect for the dignity of the human person as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

III

THAT COMMITMENT to human dignity has not been honoured: freedom, justice and peace have become the broken promises of our time.

The victims of economic, social and political injustices have been denied even the right to defend their rights. Prisoners of conscience are known to be in detention in at least 71 countries. In at least 50 countries detention without trial is permitted or is taking place. Numbers of political prisoners are being kept in prolonged detention awaiting trial. From more than a quarter of the countries whose governments have voted for the protection of human rights, torture has been reported. Almost all retain the death penalty and in a score of nations, disappearances and summary killings have become commonplace.

The 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not an occasion for celebration.

This Anniversary should be a commemoration of all those who have met their deaths and who have been silenced in the streets and in the prisons, death cells, camps and torture chambers. Each killing has been senseless and shameful. Each act of torture has disfigured our common humanity. Every voice which has been silenced has diminished us all.

IV

WE, the members of Amnesty International, are determined that this commemoration of the victims who have suffered and who continue to suffer despite the Universal Declaration of Human Rights shall be a signal for change:

We call for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience wherever they are held.

We call for the cessation of all acts of torture and cruelty inflicted upon prisoners.

We demand that all political prisoners held without charge and without trial be given a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial court with full rights of defence.

We reaffirm our total opposition to the imposition and infliction of the death penalty.

We are determined that these principles be respected by all governments, political movements and citizens.

It is only the strength of informed, popular opinion which will finally put an end to the international hypocrisy about human rights.

To this end we are totally committed.

Somalia Public executions

Seventeen military officers were publicly executed on 26 October in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. They were charged with participation in a coup attempt on 9 April, in which 20 soldiers were killed as a section of the army attempted to overthrow the military government. The trial by the National Security Court began in July, but verdicts were not announced until 12 September after which *AI* launched an Urgent Action appealing to President Siyad BARRE to commute the death sentences. *AI* had earlier cabled President Barre explaining *AI*'s opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances.

Cuba Government asked for exact prisoner statistics

The Cuban government should publish precise statistics of the country's political prisoners or "counter-revolutionary offenders", said *AI* in a memorandum to the government published on 9 November.

AI said it was acutely aware that a substantial number of Cuban prisoners were now among the longest serving political prisoners to be found anywhere in the world.

The memorandum was sent to the government in March this year, following a mission to Cuba late last year, led by Thomas HAMMARBERG, chairperson of the organization's International Executive Committee. The Cuban government received the mission delegates in their private capacities (March *Newsletter*).

AI said it welcomed the release of several hundred political prisoners during the past year. But it was concerned that there were still more than 3,000 imprisoned, most of them under the "Progressive Plan" which was introduced in 1971 to give conditional freedom to cooperative prisoners having served at least a quarter of their sentences. Most of those still imprisoned are long term prisoners, in many cases serving 15 or 20 year sentences.

In its memorandum *AI* said the Cuban government should state precise charges against people imprisoned for their ideological opposition to the Revolutionary Government and should also explain the evidence to substantiate the charges.

On the question of prison conditions, the *AI* memorandum welcomed improvements provided for the majority of prisoners since the introduction of the "Progressive Plan", but expressed concern about the *plantado* group of prisoners who remain outside the plan because they refuse to cooperate with the prison authorities for political reasons.

AI also expressed concern that the sentences of some political prisoners have

allegedly been prolonged because of their *estado de peligrosidad post-delictiva* (state of post-criminal dangerousness) and special additional security measures have been applied to them. Officials in Havana told the *AI* mission this affected 26 prisoners.

The death penalty can be imposed under Cuban law for a substantial number of offences. In its memorandum *AI* urged the government to eradicate this penalty at the earliest possible opportunity.

In the early years of the revolution, the summary procedures of the Revolutionary Tribunals were criticized because they restricted the rights of legal consultation and defence. Sentences passed by these tribunals were in many cases extremely severe, and were out of proportion to the alleged offence. *AI* urged that serious consideration be given to the possible revision of all cases where sentences of extreme severity (such as 30 years' imprisonment) had been passed by the Revolutionary Tribunals.

Rhodesia Internal leaders urged to free political detainees

The visit to the United States of members of Rhodesia's ruling Executive Council, prompted *AI* to urge Bishop Abel MUZOREWA, President of the African National Council (ANC), and the Reverend Ndabaningi SITHOLE, leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-S), to use their influence as members of the Council to free all political detainees.

These include Reverend Canaan BANANA (formerly Bishop Muzorewa's deputy in the ANC), Enos NKALA (detained with Reverend Reverend Sithole for 10 years) and some 100 other detainees not released following the March agreement between Prime Minister Ian SMITH and three internal black leaders.

AI also urged the repeal of the Indemnity and Compensation Act, which provides immunity from prosecution to the security forces for all acts committed in "good faith", and emphasized the urgent need to establish an open and independent inquiry into allegations of torture and civilian killings by the security police and armed forces.

At the same time, *AI* sought clarification of recent reports that secret hangings may be continuing or are about to resume in Rhodesia, despite previous criticism of the use of the death penalty for political offences by Bishop Muzorewa and Reverend Sithole. *AI* asked the two black leaders to make their positions clear on the death penalty. Many death sentences have been imposed since March and the new martial law provisions, introduced in September, empower the military courts to impose death penalties on civilians and specifically forbid judicial review.

Afghanistan AI mission meets Vice-Premier in Kabul

An official *AI* mission to Afghanistan discussed political imprisonment in the country with Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hafizullah AMIN in late October.

AI welcomed Mr Amin's announcement that the government was releasing 72 to 74 women and children, as well as four former officials of the previous administration which was overthrown in April 1977. The women and children are members of the former royal family and relatives of former President DAUD. The government also told the *AI* mission that "around one hundred" political prisoners were held in the country.

However, the *AI* mission, led by Turkish constitutional lawyer Professor Mümtaz SOYSAL, received reliable reports that several thousand political prisoners were currently being held in Kabul's Pule Charkhi and Demazang prisons, as well as in provincial prisons. *AI* urged the government to release all political prisoners held without charge or trial.

The government told the *AI* mission that four former officials, including three ministers, who had been arrested during the April takeover were released on 19 October. But there were no firm plans for the trial or release of the remaining officials of the Daud administration who are still in prison.

AI's mission expressed concern that political prisoners arrested during previous regimes continued to be held by the new administration, most of them without charge or trial—in one case for more than 20 years. The *AI* mission received no assurance that political prisoners imprisoned under previous regimes would be released.

AI also said fears had been expressed about the lives and safety of several members of the new government who had been arrested in August on a charge of plotting to overthrow the government of President TARAKI. According to the government all prisoners arrested on these charges were alive and well, but *AI*'s delegates were not in a position to substantiate this. The government had added that international organizations like *AI* would be permitted to attend the trial of these prisoners, which would start "at an appropriate time" to be decided by the country's Revolutionary Council.

AI will be making further representations to the Afghanistan government on the basis of its mission's findings. *AI* urged that prisoners be allowed family visits and is now waiting for official lists confirming the announced release of all women and children arrested in connection with the April takeover.

Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in October of the release of 107 prisoners under adoption or investigation and took up 125 new cases.

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.

Ales MACHACEK—Czechoslovakia

Ales MACHACEK, an agricultural engineer who worked as a technician in the Regional Institute of Economic Planning in Usti nad Labem in Northern Bohemia, was arrested on 25 January 1977. Together with a friend, nuclear physicist Vladimir Lastuvka, he was charged with "subversion" (article 98, part 1 of the penal code) for possessing books and periodicals published by Czechoslovak emigrés living abroad, and for possessing and distributing documents produced by Charter 77, a human rights movement which was founded in Czechoslovakia in January 1977. Supporters of the movement have been subjected to persecution and imprisonment since its foundation.

On 28 September 1977 Machacek was sentenced to 3½ years' imprisonment. This sentence was upheld at the appeal hearing on 5/6 January 1978. In explaining the verdict, the judge stated that the defendants' criminal activity could have been considered as "incitement", a less severe offence, but that in view of their deeply hostile attitude towards the socialist society and state, the court defined their activity as "subversion of the republic".

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

SAWITO Kartowibowo—Indonesia

SAWITO Kartowibowo, a retired civil servant and religious mystic, was arrested in Indonesia in September 1976 on a charge of subversion and insulting the Head of State. Following a nine-month trial, he was sentenced in July 1978 to 8 years' imprisonment.

Sawito was arrested with four other people for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government of President Suharto. He was accused of inducing several respected religious figures to sign documents which condemned the government for presiding over a situation within the country in which morality was being degraded, the safety of the national identity endangered and the "pulse of legal sovereignty" stopped. The documents urged the transfer of authority from President Suharto to a committee of four, led by Dr Mohammad Hatta, the former vice-president and co-founder with the late President Sukarno of the Republic. The signatories to the main document

entitled "In Pursuit of Salvation" included Cardinal Justinus Darmojuwono, leader of the Indonesian Roman Catholic community; Professor Hamka, chairman of the Indonesian Moslem Teachers' Council; Dr T.B. Simatupang, chairman of the Indonesian Council of Churches and former armed forces chief of staff, and R. Said Sukanto Tjokrodiatmodjo, leader of Java's mystical groups.

Later, when questioned by the authorities, these men said they had been misled and signed the document without appreciating its full meaning.

During his trial, Sawito claimed that he had received the order to draw up the documents during a divine revelation while meditating on a mountain top. Despite repeated allegations by Sawito of corruption in the Suharto government, his requests to call as witnesses several prominent government figures and the signatories of the documents were turned down by the court. At the end of the trial, the public prosecutor demanded a 20-year sentence. Both Sawito and the prosecution are to appeal to the High Court against the 8-year sentence Sawito received.

Please send courteously-worded letters, urging the immediate and unconditional release of Sawito Kartowibowo, to: His Excellency President Suharto, President of the Republic of Indonesia, Istana Negara, Jalan Veteran, Jakarta, Indonesia.

Ambrose SIMELANE—Swaziland

Ambrose SIMELANE has been continuously detained under Swaziland's 60-day detention law since February. A prominent member of the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC), the main opposition party until it was banned in April 1973, Simelane was arrested around the same time as Dr Ambrose Zwane, the former leader of the NNLC (April Newsletter).

Under Swaziland law, the prime minister can order the administrative detention without trial of any person for a period of 60 days. However, when the first detention order on Simelane expired in March, a new 60-day order was issued immediately to provide for his continued detention and this process has continued since then. No charges have been brought against Simelane.

It is thought that the reasons for his detention are in part political and related to his support for the NNLC, but that they are also connected with his position as a prominent businessman. Simelane himself apparently believes that he will not be released from detention until he agrees to

give control of his various business enterprises to certain members of the government.

Although detainees are officially accorded the same treatment as prisoners awaiting trial, Simelane is reported to be held in the maximum security section of Matsapha Central Prison and to receive the same treatment as convicted criminal offenders.

Please send courteously-worded letters, appealing for the release of Ambrose Simelane, to: Colonel Maphevu Harry Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, Government House, PO Box 395, Mbabane, Swaziland.

NEWS OF PAST CAMPAIGNS — 1978

AI members and supporters appealed for the release of 44 Prisoners of the Month from 29 countries in the first 11 months of 1978.

Since the appeals, seven prisoners have been released unconditionally. A further six have been released conditionally and another two are due for such release by the end of the year. Two prisoners have been tried and convicted, while there is no news or change in the circumstances of the remaining 24 cases.

Released Prisoners of the Month for 1978 so far are:

- Gasim Amin—Democratic Republic of Sudan (February Newsletter)
- James McKoy, Jerry Jacobs, William Earl Vereen, William "Joe" Wright II, Wayne Moore and Reginald Epps of the Wilmington 10—United States (February Newsletter)
- Anastasia Gaona de Acosta—Paraguay (May Newsletter)
- Mayer Al-Khayyat—Israel/Occupied Territories (May Newsletter)
- José Carpio—Ecuador (June Newsletter)
- Dr Nicolae Ighisan—Romania (July Newsletter)
- Willibordus Surendra Rendra—Indonesia (August Newsletter)
- Roberto Sapiains—Chile (October Newsletter).

Indonesia

Demonstrators still detained

The latest news reports from Indonesia indicate that about 40 people remain in detention in the capital, Jakarta, in connection with the demonstrations and unrest in the first few months of the year (May Newsletter). These include *AI* adopted students and prominent moslems such as Dr Ismael SUNY, a university professor, Mahbub DJUNAEDI, a journalist and deputy secretary general of the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (the Islamic United Development Party) and SUTOMO, a well-known businessman and veteran of the struggle for Indonesian independence. The authorities reportedly intend to bring several of these detainees to trial in the near future. In addition, several hundred moslem activists, arrested at the time of the May 1977 general elections, remain in detention in the provinces.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW: FROM THE AI NEWSLETTER

JANUARY

- *AI* publishes *Declaration of Stockholm*, adopted by conference of 200 delegates from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Americas and Caribbean, calling for immediate and universal abolition of the death penalty.
- Confirmation of three death sentences in Vietnam prompts cable from *AI* expressing concern to President Ton Duc Thang.
- *AI* reports testimony of Argentinian torture victim whose husband has been "missing" since November 1976. She saw his mutilated body lying motionless on a mattress inside an unofficial detention center where the couple were held after being abducted from their Buenos Aires flat.

FEBRUARY

- Torture of political detainees by security forces in South Africa is routine and receives tacit government approval, says *AI* in 108-page report, *Political Imprisonment in South Africa*.
- Names of 192 people believed to be held in Mexico for politically-motivated acts and a list of some 300 "missing" people are sent by *AI* to Mexican Attorney General in response to his categorical denial of the existence of any political prisoners in the country.

MARCH

- *AI* urges full investigation into the machine-gun murder of Dr Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, director of Nicaragua's daily newspaper *La Prensa* and principal opposition leader.
- Three prisoners of conscience in Singapore enter their fifteenth year of detention without trial as *AI* publishes briefing paper on political imprisonment and prison conditions in the country.
- In eye-witness evidence published by *AI*, two escaped political prisoners from Equatorial Guinea say President Macias Nguema has turned the country into "an immense torture center" where "the way out is the cemetery"

APRIL

- Despite recent amendments to the law, trial procedures for political prisoners in Iran "deny defendants any possibility of a fair trial", says *AI* in testimony to a United States Congressional Sub-Committee.
- Between 10,000 and 15,000 political prisoners may be held in Bangladesh, says *AI* in report which also expresses concern at executions carried out after closed military trials.
- A list of 113 cases of death squad killings and "disappearances" in Guatemala during the last four months of 1977 is made public by *AI*. Each case appears to be part of a longstanding pattern of official murder. Formal investigations into the cases have been insubstantial and inconclusive.
- *AI* appeals to United States Governors George Wallace of Alabama and George Busbee

The following month-by-month review of 1978 highlights just 30 of the issues and actions reported in *AI's International Newsletter* during the year, indicating the range of *AI's* work during the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Each item is listed under the month it was reported in the *Newsletter*.

of Georgia to exercise clemency on behalf of two black prisoners under sentence of death.

MAY

- The first public executions in Pakistan since the present government assumed office are carried out as three civilians are hanged in late March after trial before a military court. *AI* announces it had cabled Chief Martial Law Administrator General Zia-ul-Haq in an effort to stop the executions.
- *AI* expresses concern over reports that a number of political and criminal offenders were executed in early 1978 in the People's Republic of China.
- *AI* says it appealed to President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire to commute 19 death sentences, including five passed *in absentia*, imposed after a trial of 91 persons before a military tribunal on charges of plotting to overthrow the government.

JUNE

- *AI* appeals to the government of Thailand to release political detainees held before the October 1976 coup, those arrested during the coup, those detained by emergency decree on suspicion of being "dangerous to society" and those held without trial as suspected communists or communist sympathizers.
- *AI* receives reports that, since the start of 1978, Polish authorities have subjected a number of dissidents to detention and ill-treatment by the police.
- *AI* cables President Ernesto Geisel of Brazil, asking him to do all in his power to end a hunger strike of nearly all of the country's 200 political prisoners.

JULY

- Following the findings of its own mission to Northern Ireland in late 1977, *AI* calls for establishment of a public inquiry in the United Kingdom to investigate allegations of maltreatment of persons detained by the Royal Ulster Constabulary on suspicion of involvement in or knowledge of terrorist offences.
- *AI* publishes evidence of 30 cases of people confined in psychiatric hospitals for political reasons in Romania.

AUGUST

- The rule of law has been overthrown in Uganda, says *AI* in a report which describes political murders and massacres by security

forces and the institutionalized use of torture.

- *AI* says it knows of more than 230 people in the Soviet Union who have been sentenced to imprisonment, exile or banishment, or confined to psychiatric hospitals for the non-violent exercise of their human rights since August 1975, the period of reporting by various unofficial Soviet Helsinki monitoring groups. Government policy has been thus far to impose maximum or near-maximum sentences on convicted Helsinki monitors.
- Two prisoners of conscience adopted by *AI* in the German Democratic Republic are sentenced for "collecting information", a charge now being applied against people whose activities have led to publication abroad of criticisms of the country's political system.

SEPTEMBER

- *AI* criticizes the re-arrest of a former prisoner of conscience in Bulgaria who is banished to a remote village from which, five months earlier, he had been released after 7 years' confinement. During his brief period of freedom he had allegedly been involved in compiling a document on human rights violations in the country.
- *AI* reports that two Tanzanian security officers have been convicted of "cruelly torturing" a prisoner in 1976. *AI* groups had earlier appealed to the Tanzanian authorities to investigate the prisoner's prolonged detention without trial in harsh conditions.

- The Sousse Criminal Court in Tunisia decides to transfer the cases of 101 trade unionists, arrested after a one-day general strike, to the State Security Court in Tunis. *AI* says this decision highlights official treatment of the trial as a political case.

OCTOBER

- An impartial examination of all available information indicates that fundamental human rights are being grossly violated in Democratic Kampuchea, says *AI* in a statement submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Numerous and consistent allegations state that people have been summarily executed because they held positions in the former administration or because they oppose policies of the present government.
- Persecution of peasant farmers, rural trade unionists, priests and lay religious leaders in El Salvador has made the country a "major human rights problem area", says *AI*.

NOVEMBER

- *AI* asks Iraq for details of prisoners who will not benefit from an announced large scale amnesty and expresses concern at the execution of 21 "communists" earlier in the year.
- *AI* criticizes the government of the Republic of Ireland for rejecting recommendations of an independent committee set up by the government to advise on safeguards against police brutality.



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Psychiatry Abused for Political Purposes in Romania

Dissidents in Romania are forcibly confined in psychiatric hospitals because of their political views rather than for authentic medical reasons, *AI* said on 20 November. At the start of a worldwide campaign by *AI* national sections and groups, the organization appealed to President Nicolae CEAUSESCU to release all human rights activists, members of religious and ethnic minorities and dissident workers who are being held in the country's prisons, forced labour camps and psychiatric hospitals.

Most people confined in this manner in psychiatric hospitals remain there for up to several months but, in some cases, are detained for as long as five years. *AI* said that the treatment of victims varied, but that deliberate misuse of powerful drugs was common. "Such treatment is used deliberately to inflict suffering and exert pressure on dissenters", *AI* said.

Among the drugs in such use are haloperidol, plegomazin and mazesptil, all used for treatment of mental illnesses, but administered in Romania in excessive doses, without proper medical control and to people to whom they should not be prescribed in the first place. In addition, inmates have been injected with a preparation made by mixing milk and iodine. This is said to cause intense pain, high fever, low blood pressure and feelings of anxiety.

In numerous cases, inmates of psychiatric hospitals have been released only after making statements renouncing their political beliefs.

Another form of imprisonment involving the re-education of political dissenters is the use of labour camps, mainly in the Danube delta and Danube-Black Sea canal areas.

This form of imprisonment is officially justified on the grounds that labour is valuable as a form of "resocialization" of offenders, and provides cheap and readily available man-

power required for Romania's economic growth plans. *AI* said that among those imprisoned for terms of up to one year in labour camps have been miners who took part in a major strike in the Jui valley area in 1977, and signatories of the human rights petition initiated by the dissident writer Paul GOMA.

AI said that short-term detention of dissenters is common in Romania, and beatings and other forms of maltreatment are common during questioning. *AI* has received allegations in more than 200 such cases. The beatings are administered not only by members of the state security police (*securitate*) but also by boxers who are members of the "Dinamo" sporting club, which is under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior. In many cases the arrested person had been released within days but subjected to the same process repeatedly without ever being faced with formal criminal charges (July *CAT Bulletin*).

ment Institute and the Association of Chambers of Commerce. Although martial law and the suspension of constitutional guarantees had not yet been decreed, all arrests were reportedly being made without warrants and the security forces were refusing to disclose the whereabouts of prisoners to their relatives.

From recently released prisoners, Argüello's relatives learned that he had been taken to the Managua police headquarters jail. However, on the morning of his death, relatives attempting to deliver food and clothing to the police jail were informed that he had been transferred to the Office of National Security, the intelligence service of the National Guard.

It appears that he was, in fact, transferred from the police headquarters to the Office of National Security a few hours after his arrest. Prisoners there are known to be held in total seclusion and torture is used during interrogation.

Argüello's relatives have been told that when he arrived there, his shirt was removed and tied around his face. He was then placed against a wall and threatened with execution. Throughout the whole of the following day, he was kept separate from the other prisoners and subjected to questioning. When he was brought back to the other prisoners, he was extremely weak and began vomiting a greenish liquid.

Hardly able to speak or move, he complained of back pain and explained to the guards that he suffered from ulcers. His request for medical attention was ignored. Unable to walk because of the beatings he had received on his legs, Argüello had to be carried to the bathroom. Although he was then given medicine, by Monday evening his condition had worsened and he was taken to the Military Hospital at 1 am Tuesday morning. On admission, he was vomiting blood, had respiratory difficulties and a high temperature.

Several hours later, after his relatives had been frustrated in their effort to visit him in the police jail, they learned "unofficially" from a National Guard officer that Argüello was dead and that the body could be collected from the hospital.

AI will be pressing the Nicaraguan government to establish a full and impartial inquiry into the circumstances of Gustavo Adolfo's death.

NICARAGUAN PRISONER'S LAST 72 HOURS

Seventy-two hours after he was arrested by Nicaragua's National Guard, the relatives of Gustavo Adolfo ARGUELLO HURTADO collected his dead body from Managua's Military Hospital. In the official death certificate the hospital's forensic surgeon recorded the cause of death as *haemorrhagic pancreatitis* (inflammation of the pancreas) but later, after prompting from the family, he included a description of visible marks and bruises on the body.

The dead man's relatives have been able to piece together what they believe happened in those 72 hours, relying for information on the testimony of ex-detainees and medical staff of the Military Hospital.

Gustavo Argüello Hurtado, a 33-year-old businessman, was arrested on the afternoon of Saturday, 9 September. He was detained along with two friends, Carlos ALEMAN OCAMPO, a well-known poet, and Eduardo HOLMANN CHAMORRO, a nephew of newspaper editor and opposition leader Pedro Joaquin CHAMORRO, who was assassinated in January (March *Newsletter*). The arrests were part of over 700 made at the same time in connection with a nationwide general strike which began on 25 August to demand the resignation of President Anastasio SOMOZA DEBAYLE. The strike, which was supported by all political opposition parties, was also endorsed by the National Develop-

appeals

Abraham HOCHMAN—*Argentina*

Abraham HOCHMAN, a 38-year-old lawyer who has defended political prisoners in Argentina, was taken from his home in Buenos Aires at 3 am on 17 August by a group of armed men. His abductors also took away books and money. To date, his wife and daughter have received no news of him.

The legal profession has been a particular target of repression in Argentina. Many lawyers have been detained or have disappeared. *AI* has received information on the disappearance of at least 50 members of the legal profession since the military coup in March 1976. Others have been forced to abandon their work and leave the country for their own safety.

In February 1978, the International Commission of Jurists updated their 1975 report on the situation of judges and lawyers in Argentina, concluding: "although the violence is widespread and is aimed at many sectors of national life, the situation of defence lawyers and members of the judiciary is particularly acute".

Some sources estimate that the total number of disappearances in Argentina attributable to the security forces since the military coup is over 15,000. In the period May–October 1978, *AI* received information about the abductions of more than 80 people.

Please send courteously-worded letters, asking the Argentine authorities to acknowledge that Abraham Hochman is in official detention, to provide information on his whereabouts, to report his legal position and guarantee his physical safety, to: Vice-almirante Rùben Franco, Secretario de Información Pública, Casa de Gobierno, Balcarce 50, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

FORMER SAVAK CHIEF ARRESTED IN IRAN

General Nematollah NASSIRI, former head of SAVAK, Iran's security and intelligence organization, was arrested on charges of "torture, illegal detention of people, murder and corruption" on 7 November.

Earlier in June, the Shah had dismissed General Nassiri and appointed him Ambassador to Pakistan. However, the general was forced to resign after accusations that he had ordered torture and illegal arrests and had accumulated wealth unlawfully.

To mark the Shah's 59th birthday at the end of October, approximately 1,000 political prisoners were released from Iranian jails. Many of the released prisoners reported that torture was regularly inflicted on political detainees. They said they were subjected to electric shocks and the use of a metal helmet over the head to intensify the sound of the victim's cries.

The releases were followed by the dismissal, or forced retirement, of 34 senior officials of

SAVAK, including Parvez SABETI, SAVAK's second-in-command.

It has been reported that the activities of the Iranian political police have been curtailed in recent months, in response to a series of public demonstrations, in Tehran and the provinces, against the Shah's regime.

Meanwhile, opposition members of parliament have called for a retrial of all political prisoners still in detention and the legal rehabilitation of those recently released.

LETTER FROM PARAGUAY

A relative of a Paraguayan political prisoner who disappeared several years ago has written to an *AI* group member, thanking the movement for its efforts on behalf of all the country's political prisoners.

The letter says:

"... I am deeply grateful to you for your concern about the fate of the long-suffering, forgotten peoples of Paraguay. It gives us great comfort to know that we are not alone in the world. . . Thank you on behalf of my father, who disappeared after arrest. . . thank you in the name of all political prisoners."

In recent years—after more than two decades of systematic human rights violations in Paraguay—the cases of prisoners who have died under torture or disappeared after arrest have received international attention from international human rights organizations and intergovernmental bodies.

During 1978 the majority of officially recognized political prisoners were released and the state of siege was lifted in all areas of the country except the capital, Asunción. However, no official inquiry into the cases of death in custody has taken place and no information about the fate of the disappeared has been made public or given to their families.

AI welcomed the release of prisoners, but is continuing its efforts to secure a full investigation into the fate of the dead and disappeared.

NEW WAVE OF ARRESTS AND TORTURE IN CHILE

AI has received allegations of torture concerning 25 people arrested in Chile since September 1978. Reliable reports indicate that there has been a renewed wave of arrests in various parts of the country in recent months. *AI* has also received information on numerous people detained for up to 72 hours but has very little information about the treatment of those concerned.

The following account describes the cases of four people allegedly tortured during this short-term detention.

• **Valparaiso:** At the end of August, a young man was arrested in Valparaiso early in the morning by uniformed police. After initial questioning, during which he was well treated, he was left alone for 10 minutes

before being blindfolded and taken elsewhere.

He was made to strip from the waist down. His hands and feet were bound and electric currents applied to all sensitive parts of his body during the first 30 minutes of the interrogation. He was then taken to a cell. This treatment was repeated at intervals throughout the day and night of 30 August until very early the following morning. At midday the next day, the young man appeared before a naval court to "make declarations". He was then held incommunicado for six days until a second appearance before the naval court which this time declared itself incompetent to handle the case. The young man is now being held in the Public Prison of Valparaiso, awaiting a hearing before an appeal court.

It has been reported that he suffered severe cerebral and muscular pains after his interrogation and burn marks were evident on his body where electric current had been applied.

• **Santiago:** A building worker and two young men about 18 years of age were arrested in a Santiago street by security agents at the end of September. They were brutally beaten and then taken to the local police station. From the police station, they were taken to a torture center. Here they were hung from a bar while electricity was applied to sensitive parts of their bodies. During their period of torture, they were forced to sing festive songs.

A young teacher, his father and two others from their district, all members of a Christian community, were detained at the beginning of September in Santiago. The teacher, and possibly the others, were accused of belonging to an anti-fascist front organization. They were severely tortured with electricity and were badly beaten. They were also subjected to the 'submarine'—a method of torture in which the head is immersed for a long period of time in water through which an electric current is passed. On the second day of their detention, the detainees were forced to drink urine. They have reported that all the detainees in this center were forced to squat in an attitude of submission while listening to a speech of President PINOCHET.

After several days of torture, the detainees were sent to military courts and then to the Public Prison of Santiago. They were finally released 20 days after their detention.

• **Chuquicamata Mines:** Following industrial action in Chuquicamata copper mines, the province of El Loa where the mine is situated was placed under state of siege on 1 September. Since that date, about 80 workers have been arrested and were still being held at the beginning of November without charges. Because the zone is under state of siege, little information is available about the situation of these prisoners but it is known from reliable reports that there have been incidents of torture. Several of those arrested have been transferred to isolated places in the northern desert of Chile.