

# ROMANIA

## @Continuing violations of human rights

### BACKGROUND

Presidential and parliamentary elections in September and October 1992 resulted in the re-election of President Ion Iliescu and the return to power of the Democratic National Salvation Front (DNSF), with 28% of the vote for the Senate and over 27% for the Chamber of Deputies giving it a mandate to form a government. Prime Minister Nicolae V\_c\_roi's government is maintained in power by the parliamentary support of smaller left-wing and right-wing, nationalist parties. The main feature of the new government's economic policy appears to be a more guarded approach in the transformation to a market economy of state-managed industry and services. However, the difficulties in controlling rising inflation and unemployment are contributing, throughout the country, to a growing popular discontent.

Although the vast majority of the population are ethnic Romanian (89.4% according to the 1992 census) inter-ethnic relations are becoming an increasingly important issue. Romania has an ethnic Hungarian population of 1,620,000, mostly living in Transylvania, in the northwest of the country. In December 1989, the persecution of a Hungarian Reformed Church priest in Timi\_oara, Bishop Laszlo Tokes, was denounced by Romanians of all ethnic origins. The ensuing demonstrations led to the overthrow of President Ceau\_escu and major political changes in Romania. However, the lifting of restrictions on political rights and freedoms allowed the creation of organizations which promote nationalistic and xenophobic policies. As a result, inter-communal tension has been rising in Transylvania, particularly after the violent attacks by ethnic Romanian villagers against ethnic Hungarians in Tirgu Mure\_ in March 1990.

The smaller parties supporting the Government of Prime Minister Nicolae V\_c\_roi openly incite national intolerance. Some of these parties, such as the Party of Romanian National Unity (PUNR), supported by DNSF sympathizers, also made significant gains in the local elections, held in February 1992, particularly in some parts of the ethnically heterogeneous region of Transylvania. They have encouraged ethnic hatred, accusing the ethnic-Hungarian community of irredentism and opposition leaders of being Hungarian "agents".

Soon after he was elected mayor of Cluj-Napoca, Gheorghe Funar introduced restrictions on "public demonstrations within the confines of the city", including the organization of international meetings. He also decreed that street signs and all publicly posted signs and announcements should be in the Romanian language only, dismissed the

headmaster of the Brassai Samuel High school, Kelemen Attila Balint, and ordered the eviction of the Hungarian student association from state-owned premises.

As PUNR presidential candidate, Funar based his campaign on attacking the ethnic-Hungarian community with statements such as: "We have to be on our guard all the time. These barbarians from Asia have been here for 1,000 years but are still not civilized and are capable of any form of treachery." In the September 1992 presidential elections he came third, receiving 1.6 million votes, almost 10% of the electorate.

The Government's apparent lack of will to reduce inter-ethnic tension is demonstrated by the appointments in March 1993 of ethnic-Romanian prefects for Harghita and Covasna counties, with a majority ethnic-Hungarian population. This measure was described by the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (UDMR) as an example of continuing discrimination against the minority.

The atmosphere of national intolerance has also affected other ethnic minorities, particularly the Roma community. Although the latest census sets the Roma community in Romania at around 450,000 it is widely believed that the actual number is closer to 2,000,000, making it the largest Roma community in Europe. A recent survey carried out by a team from Bucharest University supports the general impression of the Roma community's desperate social and economic conditions, which reflect a long history of racial prejudice and neglect for the needs of this community not only in Romania but throughout the region. This independent study indicates that 80% of Roma have no vocational training and that only 23% of the community are employed. Only 50% of the Roma children attend schools regularly. Racial prejudice and a higher incidence of crime committed by members of the Roma community have also contributed to a rising number of violent attacks against Roma. Around 40 such assaults in various parts of the country were recorded recently and reported in March 1993 by the Aven Amentza Foundation, a non-governmental Roma organization. There is no available data on how many of the perpetrators of such attacks have been identified by the authorities and prosecuted. Most such assaults on Roma are carried out by other ordinary Romanian citizens, who are in some cases even joined by Roma from a different social group. However, Amnesty International has also received reports of incidents where members of the Roma community, apparently because of their ethnic background, were subjected to torture and ill-treatment by police officers and has called on the Romanian Government to fully investigate these cases.

Legislative reforms in Romania are still high on the Parliament's agenda. This task is particularly important in view of Romania's aspirations to join the Council of Europe and to become a Party to the European Convention for the Protection of Fundamental Freedoms and Human Rights. A new Law on Reorganization of the Judiciary ( Law Number 92/1992) will come into force in July 1993. Although it will bring the Procuratura, the office of the public prosecutor, under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice, certain legal provisions

will render the Minister's orders ineffective. Orders will not be issued directly to subordinate prosecutors but through the Prosecutor General, who is not legally obliged to enforce them. In addition, there are still no provisions for inquests to be conducted by an examining magistrate. The retention in the new Law of military courts in the judicial system, competent to try all members of the armed forces for all crimes, is widely viewed as a legal anachronism and might even be incompatible with the Romanian Constitution which prohibits the establishment of extraordinary courts. There are also concerns about this Law's criteria for the appointment and grading of judges which might influence their competence and independence.

The Penal Code and Code of Penal Procedure, as in most other Central and East European countries, have not yet been radically reformed. Although some articles have been abolished since December 1989, the Romanian Penal Code under Article 200 paragraph 1 still punishes anyone "who has sexual relations with a person of the same sex" with one to five years' imprisonment. In July 1992 representatives of Amnesty International were told by Romanian authorities that no one had been prosecuted for this offence since the fall of Ceau\_escu in December 1989 and that the proposed reform of the Penal Code will abolish this crime. Amnesty International urged the Romanian Minister of Justice, Petre Ninosu, to ensure that the proposed reform of the Romanian Penal Code will not permit the imprisonment of people solely because of their homosexuality.

The process of reform in the judiciary and the police force, according to independent assessments, has been inadequate. Most of the judges in Romania worked in the same post before the changes effected in December 1989. Their training and experience are insufficient for an independent judiciary. Court rulings, even at the highest instance, often reflect practices incompatible with international standards for fair trials. Amnesty International has received reports of cases where the courts in Romania have used as evidence confessions of the accused, although they were later retracted as having been induced by torture. The organization has recently addressed the Romanian authorities in one such case where a person has been condemned to a long prison sentence on the basis of a confession reportedly obtained under torture.

Amnesty International also continues to receive reports alleging that police officers resort to torture and ill-treatment of detainees, often in order to force them to confess. In other instances their use of firearms is frequently not in accordance with appropriate international standards, but relatively few cases are fully investigated and brought to trial.

The Romanian Government has still not clarified some of cases brought to its attention by Amnesty International. The organization is still concerned with the fate of Viorel Horia, a 15-year-old schoolboy whose whereabouts remain unknown following his reported arrest on 13 June 1990 in Bucharest. Amnesty International also continues to

appeal to the Romanian authorities to fully investigate the shooting of Andrei Frumu\_anu and Aurica Cr\_iniceanu during the demonstrations in Bucharest in September 1991.

## **ALLEGED TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT OF ROMA IN PIA\_A RAHOVA**

On 3 July soldiers of the military police unit UM 02180 allegedly tortured and otherwise ill-treated members of the Roma community in Pia\_a Rahova, in Bucharest.

According to information received by Amnesty International, Sergeant-Major Gheorghe Nastase belonging to military police unit UM 02180, based in Rahova, and George Br\_nescu, a Rom, resident of the same suburb of Bucharest spent the evening of 1 July drinking together. Following a dispute they had a fight and at around 11.30pm Gheorghe Nastase was taken to hospital. Reportedly this incident was investigated on the same evening as well as on the morning of 2 July by a team from the Ministry of Interior and a group of soldiers from UM 02180.

On 3 July at around 3.30pm, between 40 and 50 soldiers of the same military police unit reportedly came to the market at Pia\_a Rahova. They wore camouflage uniforms and black head masks and were armed with rubber truncheons, nunchakus (weapons used in martial arts), chair legs and pick-axes. According to statements received by Amnesty International the soldiers split into three groups and attacked indiscriminately Roma people who were at the market. Mircea Gheorghe was allegedly hit with a stick on the head which made him lose consciousness. The soldiers continued to beat him, despite the bleeding from his head. The Institute of Legal Medicine of Bucharest stated three hours later that Gheorghe Mircea had suffered a 4cm long lesion on his head above the right temple and multiple, large contusions on the right shoulder, chest, thigh and calf. Ion Constantin received blows with a rubber truncheon on the head above his right eye and the back of the neck. Maria Mircea was hit on the back and the right arm. Ani\_oara Duman was selling cigarettes and various other articles when she and her child were attacked and beaten. When some of the soldiers reached \_tefan Marcu, who had a stand at the market, they allegedly beat him, threw onto the ground all objects that were on sale and scattered in the air his money, around 40,000 lei. Another group of soldiers entered the "Minodora" restaurant, broke some furniture and threatened the people inside that the next time they would come to destroy their homes.

An independent journalist who arrived on the scene of the attack soon after it started, reported that 13 people were injured in this apparently unprovoked attack. Another report received by Amnesty International alleged that two traffic police officers and a unit of the Ministry of Interior, stationed at the time in Pia\_a Rahova did not intervene to protect the victims of this incident.

In October 1992, Amnesty International called on the Romanian Government to initiate an independent, impartial inquiry into the alleged torture and ill-treatment of Roma in Pia\_a Rahova, to make public its findings and to bring to justice all those found responsible. According to the Romanian authorities the 40 soldiers who participated in the alleged attack acted without the knowledge of their superiors and after drill hours. Amnesty International was not informed what disciplinary measures had been taken against the soldiers who participated in this attack.

## **IMPRISONMENT ON GROUND OF HOMOSEXUALITY**

### *The case of Milorad Muta\_cu and Mirel Ciprian Cucu*

Mirel Ciprian Cucu and Milorad Muta\_cu were arrested on 22 January 1993 in Sinnicolau Mare, near Timi\_oara, and placed in preventive detention. Mirel Ciprian Cucu has been charged under Article 200 paragraph 1 of the Romanian Penal Code and faces a possible prison sentence of one to five years for "having sexual relations with a person of the same sex". He was released after two months' detention and is now awaiting trial. Milorad Muta\_cu has been charged under the same article, paragraph 2, for homosexual relations with a minor and faces a possible prison sentence of two to seven years. Timi\_oara court released Milorad Muta\_cu on 12 May 1993. The trial of the two men however has been postponed.

Mirel Ciprian Cucu reportedly met Milorad Muta\_cu in late November 1992 through an advertisement he had placed in the newspaper Publitem, asking to meet someone interested in "long-term friendship". The two men lived together in Timi\_oara in the apartment of Milorad's family. On 5 January 1993 they moved to a room in Sinnicolau Mare where they were arrested on 22 January 1993.

An article in the official police newspaper, Tim-polis, described the reason for the arrests exclusively in terms of the two men having had consensual sexual relations in private in a relationship which, without distinguishing between the ages of the two young men, was described as representing a danger to society. To this end the police newspaper vilified the younger man in particular as a "social danger" for initiating the relationship, while characterizing the two as "youths out of the control of society". Tim-polis while publicizing the case also implied that homosexual behaviour was a form of mental illness and disregarded the reputations or well-being of the two men, by publishing the names, photographs and addresses of the two even before formal charges were brought against them. There is no evidence that elements of coercion or exploitation were present in the relationship, both men have been treated as adults in terms of police procedure and preventive detention. Romanian law punishes sexual relations between men at any age, although a heterosexual relationship between people of the same ages would be lawful.

In April, Amnesty International called for the immediate release of Milorad Muta\_cu from prison. Should Mirel Ciprian Cucu and Milorad Muta\_cu be tried and again imprisoned they would both be considered prisoners of conscience.

## **ALLEGED TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT BY POLICE**

### *The case of \_tefan Tasnadi*

On 22 August 1992 \_tefan Tasnadi, an ethnic Hungarian from Sic commune, county Cluj, had an argument with a police officer (a sergeant from the commune) at the "Presso" restaurant in Sic, after the police officer, who was under the influence of alcohol, had allegedly spoken offensively to \_tefan Tasnadi's girlfriend.

Three days later, at 5am on 25 August, the sergeant, accompanied by another police officer, reportedly followed Tasnadi in a car as he was walking home. Having refused their order to get into the car, \_tefan Tasnadi was allegedly forced to do so, whereupon they allegedly beat him with a rubber truncheon and a loaded weapon on the way to the police station in the town of Gherla in Cluj county. When they arrived at the police station \_tefan Tasnadi was handed over to two other police officers, who allegedly beat him about the face, neck and hands with truncheons and their fists.

\_tefan Tasnadi was then taken back to the police station in Sic, where he was allegedly handcuffed to a bed for about an hour. He was reportedly fined 10,000 lei (an average monthly salary) for disturbing the peace.

According to a medical certificate issued to Tasnadi, he received wounds requiring five to six days' medical attention as a result of the alleged ill-treatment.

On the advice of his solicitor, \_tefan Tasnadi made an official complaint regarding his alleged ill-treatment in custody to the Military Procurator's Office, but to date Amnesty International is unaware of any investigation of the officers allegedly responsible for the ill-treatment.

### *The case of Mihai and Petric\_ Potera\_*

At the end of February 1993, Petric\_ Potera\_, a 14-year-old boy, was arrested when the police officers were unable to find his father, Mihai Potera\_, whom they suspected of theft. He was taken to the police station in Pa\_cani, where he was allegedly kicked to induce him to admit his father's guilt. Following Petric\_ Potera\_' refusal to comply with their demands, the police officers searched Mihai Potera\_' parental home in the village of Tudora-Boto\_ani.

Reportedly the police officers found nothing incriminating but they arrested Mihai Potera\_ and took him to the police station in Pa\_cani, where allegedly they beat him savagely for five

days. According to the report Mihai Potera\_ eventually confessed to the alleged theft in order to save himself from further beatings. After his release from custody he was examined by a forensic expert in Bucharest and later admitted to the St Spiridon Hospital in Ia\_i for medical care.

The Military Prosecutor of Ia\_i is reportedly investigating this incident but Amnesty International has not yet been informed of its findings.

## **ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF HOMOSEXUALS**

Amnesty International has recently also received reports that homosexual men or persons suspected of being homosexual have been tortured or ill-treated in Romanian police stations and prisons and has asked the authorities to investigate these allegations

### *The case of Doru Marian Beldie*

Doru Marian Beldie was arrested in Bucharest on 16 June 1992, a month after his 19th birthday. He was taken to the 17th District police station where he was reportedly beaten with truncheons on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet for several hours in order to force him to sign a confession.

He was charged under Article 200 paragraph 2 of the Romanian Penal Code for homosexual relations with a minor. He had no previous criminal record and at the time of his arrest he was studying in a technical school to be a mechanic. He is currently serving a four years' and six months' prison sentence in Jilava prison in Bucharest.

### *The case of Marcel Brosca*

Marcel Brosca, a 20-year-old student, was arrested on 7 March 1992 in Tecuci. After spending the night in the railway station waiting-room he was reportedly woken by four policemen accompanied by a 17-year-old boy. Pointing to Marcel the policemen asked the boy if this was the man they had been looking for and the boy responded affirmatively.

Marcel Brosca was then taken to the police office in the railway station where reportedly he was beaten for three or four hours. He was allegedly pulled by the hair; the sides and the back of his head were beaten against the table and the wall until blood poured over his face; his arms were twisted; and he was beaten on the soles of his feet with truncheons.

During the first two hours of the interrogation he was not given any idea of what he was charged with. Eventually one of the police officers reportedly read a statement of the victim, a minor, who allegedly was forced to perform oral sex on a stranger, whom he

identified as Marcel Brosca. After this Marcel Brosca was allegedly beaten again in order to force him to confess to this crime. Finally he consented and the police reportedly dictated what he had to write down in his declaration. He was convicted under Article 200 paragraphs 1 and 2 and sentenced by the County Court in Gala\_i to five years' imprisonment. He is serving his sentence in the prison in Gala\_i.

### *The case of Ienel S*

Ienel S, aged 21, was arrested on 29 October 1990 in the village of Corod, Gala\_i County, where he was attending a wedding. Around 2am, he reportedly left the festivities to go back to the house where he was staying. He was followed by a 24-year-old man (who had been reportedly previously arrested for homosexual acts and released in 1988 and is suspected of being a police informer). This person allegedly proposed that Ienel go with him to a garden or into the park. Ienel asked the man to come back with him to the house where he was staying. The man refused, insisting that they go some place outside. At around 6am Ienel was woken by police officers who took him to the village police station.

He was accused of having forced the other man to have oral sex with him. This was supported by the testimony of an eye-witness, a cousin of the alleged victim, who claimed to have seen the entire scene through a window of the house.

Ienel S was reportedly beaten by police officers from 7am to 8pm. They beat him with wooden sticks on the torso and on the back, as well as on the hands and feet in order to force him to confess to the crime. After signing a confession he was reportedly taken in semi-conscious state to a doctor to be examined. Without a proper examination the doctor signed a certificate which made no mention of his injuries.

According to the report received by Amnesty International Ienel S is scrawny and extremely weak-looking and has severely impaired vision. It seems unlikely that Ienel S used force in connection with the sexual acts for which he was charged.

Ienel S was convicted under Article 200 paragraphs 1 and 2 and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. He is now in Gala\_i prison and will soon be eligible for parole.

## **FAIR TRIAL CONCERN**

### *The case of Viorel Baci*

Viorel Baci was reimprisoned on 8 February 1993 in the Penitenciarul Boto\_ani following the decision of the Supreme Court of Romania to reject an extraordinary appeal filed on his behalf by the General Prosecutor. Amnesty International considers Viorel Baci may be a prisoner of conscience who was prosecuted and convicted on false charges because of his



father's religious beliefs. The organization is also concerned that allegedly Viorel Baciú was tortured by police officers until he confessed to the crimes with which he was charged.

Viorel Baciú was arrested on 24 October 1988 and tried in Jude\_ean Suceava Court on 27 September 1989 on charges of murder, rape, robbery, battery and bodily injury. He was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment. Ruling on his appeal the Supreme Court of Romania, on 23 April 1990, quashed the part of the sentence pertaining to the crimes of battery and bodily injury and reduced the punishment to 10 years' imprisonment. Considering that the charges against Viorel Baciú were groundless and essentially illegal, the General Prosecutor filed on 8 January 1992 an extraordinary appeal against the Supreme Court decision and suspended further execution of the prison sentence. Viorel Baciú was released from prison on 17 January 1992. However, on 6 April 1992, the Supreme Court of Romania rejected as unfounded the extraordinary appeal and Viorel Baciú was reimprisoned on 8 February 1993.

According to reports received by Amnesty International Viorel Baciú was falsely charged because of his father's activities as a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses religious group. Under the former government of Nicolae Ceau\_escu which was overthrown in December 1989, members of such evangelical sects were often severely harassed and in some cases imprisoned, sometimes on false charges. Ioan Baciú, Viorel's father, had reportedly been under pressure from local authorities since 1969 to give up his religious belief. Their home had been searched for religious literature and other printed materials considered dangerous as anti-communist propaganda. Their farm property had been intentionally damaged and there had been attempts at larceny. He was frequently called to the local police station and asked to provide information about the religious assemblies in which he participated and sources which supplied him with "religious propaganda".

Local authorities had also questioned Viorel Baciú, on several occasions prior to his arrest, about his father's activities. Although not a member of this religious group Viorel Baciú shares their beliefs. Viorel Baciú had no previous criminal record.

Following the murder of Petru Halmaga on 23 October 1988 Viorel Baciú was summoned to the police station in Dumbr\_veni. He denied having any knowledge of the crime. During this interrogation one of the police officers reportedly told him: "You are Ioan Baciú's son, a Jehovah's Witness". He was subsequently arrested and taken to the police station in Suceava where he was reportedly tortured and otherwise ill-treated in order to force him to confess to the crimes with which he was charged. The alleged rape of Ana Pádure\_ and battery and robbery of her husband Zamfir Pádure\_, committed on 13 October 1988, had not been reported to the police until 27 October 1988, after Baciú's arrest.

Describing the torture and other ill-treatment to which Viorel Baciuc had been subjected, a witness who shared a cell with him in Boto\_ani Prison reported:

"The boy is young and strong, but I think that some people want him exterminated. In the way he's tortured and ill-treated, he won't last long. I saw him with his hands crushed, flowing with blood, bound in chains and beaten, many days in a row."

One of the methods used to torture Viorel Baciuc is referred to as *rotisor*: the body is suspended by the legs with the hands tied and the victim is beaten over the entire body, especially the genital organs and nails. The body is then lowered and the victim is beaten on the soles of the feet and around the toes.

From 6 to 12 December 1988 Viorel Baciuc was treated in the Jilava prison hospital, reportedly for coughing and spitting blood and other injuries sustained during the investigation.

He met his defence attorney Radu Ursu for the first time on 14 February 1989. In the presence of the investigating prosecutor, as well as during the trial, he retracted his confession which he said was obtained under duress. On 14 March 1989 Viorel Baciuc wrote to the Military Prosecutor calling for an investigation into his torture in the Suceava police station.

Amnesty International has received other reports alleging that the police in Suceava at that time frequently tortured and ill-treated people who were in detention. The organization has been calling on the Romanian authorities since July 1991 to investigate these reports and to bring to justice those responsible. However, it has not been informed whether such inquiries have taken place. Reportedly all the officers, except for one person now retired, who were allegedly responsible for the torture and ill-treatment of Viorel Baciuc and other prisoners are still in their posts. Their identity is known to the Romanian authorities.

The Supreme Court of Romania, in its decision rejecting the extraordinary appeal, reviewed the investigation and the judicial proceedings in the Jude\_ean Suceava Court. The Supreme Court of Romania stated that the confession of Viorel Baciuc, although subsequently retracted, should nevertheless be taken into consideration because "the declarations had been given in front of the prosecutor as well as at the reconstruction of the crime in the presence of three disinterested witnesses, which excluded the possibility of the use of force against the accused by the police officers".

Furthermore, according to the Supreme Court, the confession has been corroborated by other evidence and testimony of an eye-witness. In the opinion of the Court, although it is evident from medical certificates that the eye-witness suffers from oligophrenia (an archaic

term for mental retardation), "the first instance court had justifiably relied on his testimony since it is corroborated by the confession of the accused".

In July 1992, Marin Li\_\_, Assistant General Prosecutor, who made the extraordinary appeal on behalf of Viorel Baciu, told a representative of Amnesty International that his investigation into this case had revealed no evidence to support the charges on which Viorel Baciu was convicted.

Investigations of allegations of torture and ill-treatment of detainees are within the competence of the Military Prosecutor of Romania. Amnesty International has not been able to obtain any information on whether any inquiry into the torture of Viorel Baciu has taken place.

## RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Amnesty International is concerned about two separate cases in which the peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression may lead to the imprisonment of those concerned.

### *The case of Sorin Ti\_ei*

Sorin Ti\_ei was present at the central square in Gala\_i on 18 September 1992 when a group of around 100 people peacefully protested alongside an election campaign rally of President Ion Iliescu's supporters. He has denied that he participated in either group or that he was warned by a police officer that his conduct was inappropriate or in violation of any law. On 21 September he was summoned to the Gala\_i Police Department where he was served with a *proces verbal* accusing him of disturbing the rally and refusing to leave when ordered by the police, offences contained in Article 26, paragraphs i and k of Law number 60/91. For both offences he was fined the legal maximum of 100,000 lei. Sorin Ti\_ei refused to sign the *proces verbal*. On 11 November 1992, during a court hearing set to replace the unpaid fine with a prison term, Sorin Ti\_ei contested the validity of the *proces verbal*. He was sentenced on 14 December 1992 to 333 days' imprisonment. Following an appeal his case has been returned to the Gala\_i court for a retrial.

### *The case of Mihaela Nicolae*

On 4 June 1992, in Cluj-Napoca, Mihaela Nicolae participated in a peaceful demonstration organized on the occasion of President Ion Iliescu's visit to the city. She was summoned by the local police authorities on 30 June to sign a *proces verbal* in which she was accused of shouting insulting slogans against the President and fined 5,000 lei. Mihaela Nicolae denied that she had shouted "obscene" slogans and refused to sign the *proces verbal* or pay the fine. She has been summoned to appear in court in Cluj-Napoca where the hearing to replace the unpaid fine with a prison sentence has been postponed on 28 April 1993 for the third time.

In March 1993, Amnesty International wrote to the Romanian Government expressing its concern and pointing out that should Mihaela Nicolae and Sorin Ti\_ei be imprisoned Amnesty International would consider them to be prisoners of conscience.