



Mission to Vatican Church asked to support abolition of death penalty

AI has urged the spiritual leaders of more than 750 million Roman Catholics throughout the world to take concrete steps towards a clear pronouncement by the church in favour of the abolition of the death penalty.

The call came during a three-day *AI* mission to the Vatican in mid-December 1980 for talks with Roman Catholic Church leaders and officials.

During the mission the three delegates were granted a 25-minute private audience with Pope JOHN PAUL II on 13 December.

In its plea to the church's leaders for an end to the death penalty the mission—comprising the Chairperson of the IEC, the Secretary General and an IS staff member—stressed that *AI* understood the subject to include extra-judicial as well as judicial execution.

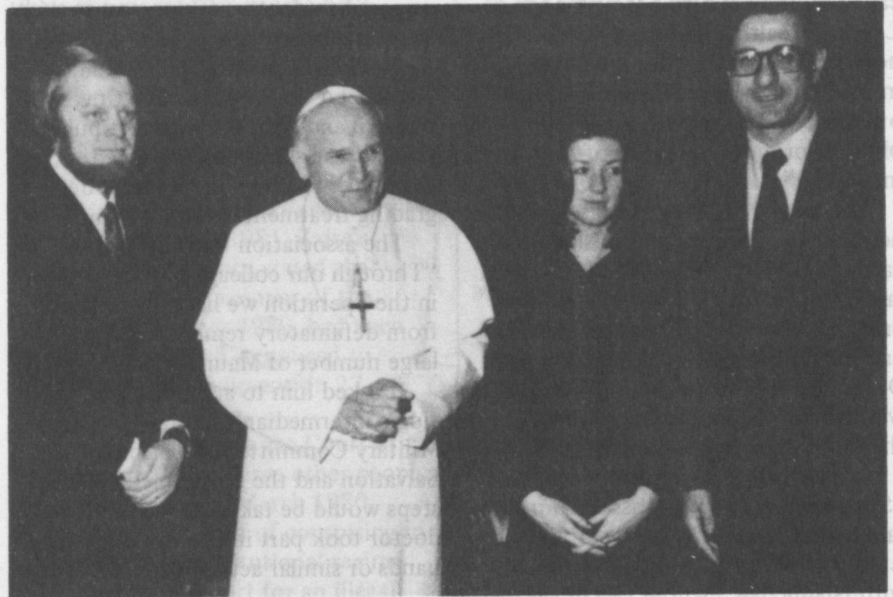
The mission stated that the existence of the death penalty as a legal possibility always provided the grounds for legitimizing killing; the only way to make executions for political reasons impossible was to erase the death penalty from the statute book.

The mission argued further that when a state executed somebody it was saying implicitly that killing a person was a possible way of solving a problem in society—a damaging message, particularly for youth and future generations.

The mission also spoke of *AI*'s concern about the increase in extra-judicial executions and in "disappearances".

Turning to human rights violations in general, the mission spoke of the need to protect people who are victimized because of their efforts on behalf of the victims of human rights violations.

Among other points raised were:



AI's mission to the Vatican photographed with Pope John Paul II: (from left to right) Secretary General Thomas Hammarberg, the Pope, IS staff member Julia Collier and IEC Chairperson José Zalaquett.

- the behaviour of governments which sign and ratify human rights treaties and then violate them;
- the increase in the violation of human rights and the different methods or "faces" of repression—in addition to extra-judicial executions and "disappearances", the mission also mentioned false charges against political prisoners and "staged" trials.

■ At least 1,086 people were sentenced to death in 41 countries from January to December 1980, according to preliminary figures compiled by *AI*.

In the same 12-month period, at least 1,105 people are known to have been executed in 30 countries. A further 29 prisoners are reported to have been executed by political opposition movements.

In 1979 at least 975 people were reported to have been executed throughout the world.

It is expected that the preliminary figures for 1980—based on news reports and other information reaching *AI*—will be revised later in the year when more information becomes available □

Bolivia: nine killed in raid

Nine Bolivians attending a clandestine political meeting are reported to have been shot dead when a combined army-paramilitary force raided a house in La Paz on 15 January 1981.

Soldiers are said to have surrounded the house before opening fire on those inside. About 15 people were attending the meeting and they are said to have offered no resistance.

Those attending were leaders of the *Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR), a radical nationalist party which won six seats in the 1979 election; it is not a guerrilla organization.

The 15 included the leading re-

presentative still remaining in Bolivia of the *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB), the Bolivian Workers Federation; most of COB's leadership is now in exile.

The raid is reported to have been carried out on the instructions of the Ministry of the Interior. Soon afterwards the Ministry called a news conference at which it stated that nine "guerrillas" and one police officer had been killed in an "armed confrontation".

The Roman Catholic Church in Bolivia has questioned the Ministry's explanation of the circumstances of the killings and Archbishop Jorge MANRIQUE of La Paz called on the

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Mauritania

Amputations: doctors object

The Mauritanian Association of Doctors, Pharmacists and Dentists has called on the country's Minister for Labour, Health and Social Affairs to help ensure that "no doctor takes part in the amputation of hands or in any other act which might harm the physical or moral integrity of the individual".

The appeal followed worldwide news media coverage of punishments carried out in Mauritania under Islamic law in September 1980, when a prisoner was executed and three others had their right hands amputated (see December 1980 *Newsletter*). Doctors were reported to have participated in the execution and amputations.

In a letter to the Minister dated 25 November 1980, the association said it was "deeply concerned" to learn that punishment in accordance with Islamic law "will in fact be carried out by doctors".

Dealing with the September amputations, the association said whether the doctors "acted of their own accord or under compulsion" was unimportant; it drew the minister's attention to the Hippocratic Oath

and the world Medical Association's Tokyo Declaration, both of which were opposed to doctors taking part in such punishments. It also pointed out that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stipulated that no one should be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The association told the Minister: "Through our colleagues' participation in the operation we have all suffered from defamatory remarks made by a large number of Mauritians."

It asked him to act as the association's intermediary before the ruling Military Committee of National Salvation and the government so that steps would be taken to see that no doctor took part in the amputation of hands or similar acts.

- The World Medical Association (WMA) also wrote to the Minister—on 19 December 1980—saying that the participation of doctors in the September punishments was a "clear and flagrant violation" of the WMA's Tokyo and Geneva Declarations □

Czechoslovakia

Religious believers arrested

More Roman Catholics are reported to have been arrested in Czechoslovakia.

Jozef LAHUDA, a priest, was sentenced on 30 October 1980 to six months' imprisonment for saying mass and for holding a prayer meeting with a group of young people in a mountain hut without state permission.

A librarian, Emilie KOSEGOVA, was sentenced to four months' imprisonment for organizing the four-day meeting.

Another Roman Catholic priest, Josef BARTA, barred by the authorities from exercising his office, was detained on 18 November on charges of organizing theological groups among young people. From 1952 to 1966 he was imprisoned after being convicted of "high treason".

In a separate development, Rudolf BATTEK, a prominent human rights

activist who has been in pre-trial detention since June 1980 and is seriously ill (see October, December 1980 *Newsletters*), reportedly started a hunger-strike on 12 December 1980 after he had been refused permission to see his lawyer or his wife—he has not been allowed to see either of them since October 1980.

On 14 January 1981 the Public Prosecutor extended his custody pending investigation into further accusations against him; after hearing the news his wife started a hunger-strike.

Rudolf Battek was first charged with "assaulting a policeman"; this was later changed to "causing bodily harm". According to the 14 January letter to his wife he has now also been charged with subversion. The latest charge goes back to his arrest in 1979 and he now faces a sentence of five years' imprisonment □

Chile

Bishops excommunicate 'torturers'

Three Roman Catholic bishops in the Chilean towns of Talca and Linares have issued a decree excommunicating anyone in the two dioceses who is "responsible for torture".

The decree issued on 9 December 1980 to coincide with the 32nd anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, states that those responsible for torture are liable to *excomuni6n* "*latae sententiae*", that is, they are automatically excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church and excluded from all its sacraments.

The bishops state that they issued the excommunication decree after "taking into account that the crime of torture has continued among us".

In their decree, the three bishops—Carlos GONZALEZ and Alejandro JIMENEZ, of Talca, and Carlos CAMUS, of Linares—explicitly use the definition of torture contained in the United Nations Declaration of 9 December 1975.

Those 'responsible'

According to the decree, people are considered "responsible for torture" if they carry out torture or participate in its perpetration; if they "incite, request or order" torture; if they are in a position to prevent torture but fail to do so.

The bishops point out that the decree applies to those "passing through" Talca and Linares, as well as to local people.

The decree states that the excommunicated "delinquent" could be absolved if he ceased his offence. Quoting church canon law, the bishops say that this is understood to mean that the delinquent had sincerely repented and "at the same time had given, or at least seriously promised to give redress corresponding to the damages and scandal [caused]".

- During 1979 and 1980 there were a growing number of allegations of torture in Chile (see September 1980 *Newsletter*) and the issue was widely publicized both within the country and abroad. In the past month articles on torture have been appearing in the Chilean press, including *Hoy*, *Solidaridad* and *Mensaje* □

Campaign for Prisoners of the Month



Each of the people whose story is told below is a prisoner of conscience. Each has been arrested because of his or her religious or political beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin or language. None has used or advocated violence. Their continuing detention is a violation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. International appeals can help to secure the release of these prisoners or to improve their detention conditions. In the interest of the prisoners, letters to the authorities should be worded carefully and courteously. You should stress that your concern for human rights is not in any way politically partisan. In no circumstances should communications be sent to the prisoner.

Vaclaf UMLAUF, Czechoslovakia

A 20-year-old miner preparing for theological studies, he was detained on 19 March 1980, after the police had searched his home and his parents' flat; they confiscated literature with religious themes and some typewritten manuscripts.

On 23 May 1980 Vaclaf UMLAUF was tried before the Brno District Court on charges of "incitement" and "damaging the interests of the Republic abroad" and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He had complained at his place of work that the equipment in the mines was inadequate and had also openly condemned the Soviet military action in Afghanistan. He was also accused of having distributed an unspecified "anti-state" text and of having sent a letter to a priest in the United Kingdom in which he criticized the Prague trial in October 1979 of six members of the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS).

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the release of Vaclav Umlauf to: JuDR Gustav Husak, President of the CSSR, 11 908 Praha-Hrad, CSSR; *and to:* JuDr Jan Nemeč, Minister of Justice of the CSR, Vysehradská 16, Praha 2-Nove Mesto, CSSR.

Nabil JA'ANINI, Jordan

A 38-year-old bacteriologist from the town of Madaba; he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by a military court in 1977.

Nabil JA'ANINI was arrested in Madaba on 2 May 1977 on suspicion of Communist Party activities; membership of the party is prohibited in Jordan under the Anti-Communism Law (No 91) of 8 December 1953. He was charged, under Article 3, with

being a member of a communist cell and with illegal possession of communist literature. He is serving his sentence in Al-Mahatta Central Prison, Amman, where he has become active on a number of prisoner welfare committees and is using his medical skills in the prison clinic.

Nabil Ja'anini, who comes from a large family—he has seven brothers and three sisters—studied chemistry in Jordan before continuing his studies in Kiev, in the Soviet Union; he returned to Jordan in 1973. At the time of his arrest he ran his own laboratory for medical and chemical analysis in Madaba.

AI believes he has been imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of his rights to freedom of opinion and expression, guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Jordan has signed and ratified.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for his release to: His Majesty King HUSSEIN, The Royal Palace, Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; *and to:* His Excellency Mr Mudar BADRAN, Prime Minister, Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Jorge RODRIGUEZ Gallegos, Chile

A 53-year-old engineer who lectured at Taltal Technical College until his arrest on 2 June 1980 for allegedly belonging to the banned Communist Party and for contravening the Law of Internal State Security.

Jorge RODRIGUEZ Gallegos was one of about 30 people arrested in the towns of Antofagasta, Calama and Taltal at the end of May and beginning of June 1980 by members of the security forces, who acted without arrest warrants and without informing the families of those concerned.

They were held in secret detention

centres for five days and were reported to have been brutally tortured by being kept hanging by the feet for hours; by being taken outdoors and having their naked bodies hosed with jets of icy water (it was winter in Chile); by being given electric shocks on the most sensitive parts of their bodies; by being punched and kicked. Some were said to have been forced to swallow human excrement and urine.

Of those arrested, 21 were later charged under the Law of Internal State Security and Decree Law 77 (1973) which bans "Marxist" political parties.

Jorge Rodríguez, who is being held in Antofagasta Prison, was recently sentenced to 1,200 days' *relegación*, internal exile; the sentence is believed to be under appeal.

He is reported to be suffering from a chronic duodenal ulcer. He underwent emergency surgery six months before his arrest and was to have had another operation in July 1980; this was not done because of his imprisonment. It is not yet known where he is to serve his internal exile but it is likely to be somewhere remote with few or no medical facilities.

Jorge Rodríguez, who is married with two children and a member of the teachers' union SUTE, was detained for three months in 1973, immediately after the coup that brought General PINOCHET to power.

Please write courteously worded letters appealing for his release to: General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, Presidente de la República, Edificio Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile.

PRISONER RELEASES AND CASES

The International Secretariat learned in December of the release of 107 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 106 new cases.

In a 16-page briefing paper published this month, AI describes the systematic arrest and imprisonment of citizens of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) for their non-violent exercise of human rights, in particular the right of people to leave their country and their right to freedom of expression. AI has learned of the arrest of more than 200 prisoners of conscience a year in the GDR in recent years but believes the total number to have been much higher.

Prisoners of Conscience in the GDR

Bernd SOBE, a mechanic, and his wife Gerdi, a secretary, are in jail in the GDR after being convicted of "treasonable passing on of information". He is serving five and a half years' imprisonment and she four and a half years', while their 11-year-old daughter Doreen stays with her grandparents.

The couple were arrested in 1979. They had been applying repeatedly to the authorities for permission to leave the country and had written letters appealing for support in their efforts to a number of organizations outside the GDR, including the United Nations.

Bernd Sobe had also directed an appeal to trade union organizations in Western Europe, in which he claimed that dissenters in the GDR were frequently subject to "Berufsverbot", job discrimination on political grounds.

All available information suggests that this activity was the basis for the charges of "treasonable passing on of information" (Article 99 of the penal code).

Article 99 makes it a crime to send information "to the disadvantage of the interests of the GDR" to a "foreign" power. . . . or to foreign organizations as well as their helpers." The article concerns only information not categorized as secret—passing on secret information is dealt with in Article 97 (Espionage). There is no provision that the information must be inaccurate or in any way distorted for its transmission to constitute a crime, nor is it made clear what may be considered to be "to the disadvantage of the interests of the GDR".

Article 99 of the penal code is in conflict with Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees the right to "seek, receive and pass on information, regardless of frontiers". The covenant has been ratified by the GDR.

Although the GDR has signed or ratified a number of international human rights agreements and the GDR constitution contains human rights guarantees, the exercise of some of these rights is severely restricted by various articles in the penal code, such as Article 99.

The right of free expression, for instance, is restricted by:



Gerdi and Bernd Sobe and their daughter Doreen. . . parents imprisoned for "treasonable passing on of information".

- "Taking up illegal contacts" (Article 219), which, among other things, proscribes handing over "writings, manuscripts or other materials which are suited to damage the interests of the GDR to organizations, institutions or individuals abroad".

- "Incitement hostile to the state" (Article 106), which proscribes discrediting the "social conditions" in the GDR or importing, producing,

disseminating or displaying writings with this object.

- "Public vilification" (Article 220), which proscribes the vilification in public of "the state order or state bodies, institutions or social organizations or their activity or measures taken by them". A clause added in 1979 proscribes making available to others "writings, objects or symbols which are suited to disturb the state or public order. . . . the socialist way of life or to bring the state or public order into contempt".

People convicted under these articles face prison terms of up to 12 years.

The right to leave one's country, contained in Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, is restricted by Article 213 of the penal code—"illegal crossing of the border"—which proscribes crossing the border without permission or even making preparations to do so; permission is seldom granted.

Article 213 carries a sentence of up to two years' imprisonment or, in "serious" cases, of from one to eight years"; a case is "serious" if, for example, a hiding place has been used or if the offence was carried out with what is described as "special intensity".

The heavily fortified frontier between the GDR and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) presents a formidable barrier to would-be emigrants and a number of them have travelled to other Warsaw Pact countries, hoping to cross into Western Europe from there; if caught in the attempt, they are usually returned to the GDR (see box).

In the past would-be emigrants mostly tried to flee across the border but in recent years, particularly since the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Helsinki in 1975, a growing number have openly sought official permission to emigrate, basing their applications on internation-

al law. Most such applications are turned down and those who persist in their demands to emigrate are liable to arrest and imprisonment for "impeding the activity of state bodies" (Article 214).

Other hazards facing would-be emigrants:

- If, when stating their reasons for wishing to leave the GDR, they "discredit" conditions there or publicly "vilify the state order or state bodies", they can be prosecuted under Articles 106 ("Incitement hostile to the state") or 220 ("Public vilification").
- If they turn to foreign organizations for help, they can be prosecuted for "treasonable passing on of information" or "taking up illegal contacts".

The articles of the penal code described above are used not only against would-be emigrants but also to imprison critics of government policies.

• Andreas COBURG was arrested in May 1980 after appealing to the International Committee of the Red Cross to inspect conditions in GDR prisons. He is now serving a four-year prison sentence for "incitement hostile to the state".

People are also imprisoned for refusing, on grounds of conscience, to do military service. Although people objecting to armed military service can choose to serve in conscript units working on the construction of military installations, there is no alternative service for them outside the military and defence system.

Michael GEISLER is one of a number of conscientious objectors whose cases *AI* has taken up. He refused to do military service for religious reasons but said he was willing to do alternative service in a hospital or nursing home.

He was arrested in May 1978 and sentenced to 21 months' imprisonment for "refusal to do military service" (Article 256 of the penal code). He was released in an amnesty in 1979.

After arrest, prisoners of conscience are usually kept in pre-trial detention for three to seven months' for questioning by the state security service. They are denied access to a lawyer until this investigation is over.

Trials are short—some last less than an hour—and take place *in camera*.

After sentence, prisoners of conscience often have to share cells with people sentenced for violent crimes. The cells tend to be overcrowded and poorly ventilated. The prison diet is reported to be inadequate, with insufficient protein and vitamins, and some prisoners become ill as a result. For disciplinary offences prisoners can



Two lorry-drivers, Hans Dirk WEISSENBORN, left, and Udo LEMKE, photographed aboard the Dutch ship *Capricorn*, during an unsuccessful attempt to flee the GDR in August 1980; they are now believed to be in a GDR prison.

They had gone to the Polish coast intending to escape across the Baltic. After watching ships for a week they spotted the *Capricorn* lying at anchor and floated out to it on inflatable mattresses.

Members of the crew rescued

them half-drowned at 3 am on 29 August. The pair appealed for help, saying they wished to leave the GDR for political reasons. The ship's owners, however, refused permission for the captain to take them to Western Europe because the *Capricorn* was in Polish waters.

Eventually the Polish authorities sent a patrol boat to arrest the pair, indicating that they were to be sent back to the GDR.

Hans Weissenborn had previously served 18 months' imprisonment for attempting to flee the GDR.

be confined to their cells, receiving less food, with a warm meal only once every three days.

Since the early 1960s large numbers of political prisoners have been released before completing their sentences to the FRG, in exchange for sums of money paid by the FRG Government. There are few details available about this scheme—known unofficially as the "buying out" scheme; although its existence is now common knowledge, it was originally kept secret. A price is said to be negotiated for each prisoner, the amount apparently depending on the person's professional qualifications.

Some would-be emigrants deliberately provoke their own arrest in the knowledge that most political prisoners are eventually allowed to emigrate under the "buying out" scheme.

• Jacob MANTHEY applied repeatedly but unsuccessfully for permission to emigrate. Finally he walked up to the Berlin Wall and notified the

guards that he was looking for a loophole through which to go to West Berlin.

He was arrested and sentenced to one year's imprisonment for "pretending to commit a crime" (Article 229 of the penal code). After eight months in prison he was allowed to emigrate in 1978.

Although *AI* recognizes that the "buying out" scheme has brought relief to thousands of political prisoners, it is in general concerned about exchanges of prisoners, including "buying out" arrangements.

Release in this way is subject to political expediency and it tends also to blur the fact that the imprisonment itself was a violation. There is also a risk that people may be arrested for use in future exchanges.

Amnesty International Briefing: German Democratic Republic (GDR), published on 4 February 1981, by Amnesty International Publications, available from the International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, United Kingdom; price £0.60. □

China Hong Kong journalist detained

A Hong Kong journalist, FANG DAN, is reported to have been arrested in Shanghai in October 1980 as he was preparing to board an aircraft for Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang in western China.

On 5 November the police informed his sister in Peking of his arrest but did not say where he was detained or what charges were being brought against him. His wife, who is in Hong Kong, has received no official notification by the Chinese authorities of his arrest.

Fang Dan is a painter and art critic who has been established in Hong Kong for several years. He contributed regularly to well-known Hong Kong magazines, including political commentaries and articles on literature and

art in the People's Republic of China, which he visited frequently over the years.

At the time of his arrest he was going to attend an art exhibition in Urumqi at the invitation of a group of non-official Chinese painters. He had planned to return to Hong Kong at the end of November. Nothing has been heard of him since his arrest.

On 9 January 1981 *AI* cabled Premier ZHAO Zi-yang, expressing concern about the reported arrest and urging that Fang Dan's whereabouts and any charge against him be made public or that he be released immediately.

• Fang Dan is the prisoner's *nom de plume*; his real name is HAO Ming □

South Korea Court confirms death sentences

The South Korean Supreme Court on 24 December 1980 confirmed death sentences passed on LEE Jae-mun, a former reporter, and 45-year-old SHIN Hyang-shik by Seoul District Criminal Court on 2 May 1980. The two were convicted of working for a socialist revolution in the Republic of Korea. They may still appeal to President CHUN Doo-hwan for clemency.

On 31 December 1980 the Martial Law Commander, General LEE Hui-song, confirmed the death sentences on CHUNG Dong-nyon, a student, PAE Yong-ju, a taxi-driver, and PARK No-jung, a printer; the three had been sentenced to death on 25 October 1980 after being convicted on charges relating to violent disturbances in the city of Kwangju in May 1980. Death sentences passed on two others convicted on the same charges were commuted to life imprisonment.

At least 11 South Koreans are known to be under sentence of death in the Republic of Korea at present, all of them convicted on charges with political aspects □

Benin Concern over detentions

An appeal has been sent to the President of Benin, Lieutenant-Colonel Mathieu KEREKOU, calling on him to put an end to the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience in Benin and to end the use of politically motivated administrative detention without charge or trial.

The appeal, which *AI* sent in mid-January 1981, also drew attention to the harsh conditions of detention in Cotonou Police Station.

At least 100 people are reported to have been arrested in Benin in late November and early December 1980. Because of the great secrecy of the operations and the absence of any independent judicial controls it has been difficult to ascertain the motive behind the arrests or how many of the people are still held.

Detention without charge or trial—in some cases lasting more than eight years—has become the penalty in Benin for political opposition, either real or supposed.

More than 60 students and teachers were detained in waves of arrests in 1978 and 1979 as the government tried to suppress various opposition and strike movements. At least 30 students are still being held in Cotonou Central Prison without any legal redress.

Three former Presidents of Benin

and a number of senior officials have been held without charge or trial since 1972, when the present government took power.

Although a number of political prisoners have enjoyed the benefit of a trial, the judicial conditions were such that their alleged guilt appears to have been insufficiently demonstrated: no defence lawyers, *in camera* proceedings and the right of appeal refused. This was the case for 14 people arrested in connection with alleged "plots" in January and October 1975: a number of them who were unable to attend their trials learned of their conviction over the radio.

About 150 people are held in harsh conditions in Cotonou Police Station. One cell, known as "the cage" ("*ia grille*") is so crowded that most of the prisoners are forced to remain standing continuously. The sanitary and medical conditions in the prison are inadequate and the prisoners' access to the outside world through relatives and friends is severely restricted □

DEATH PENALTY

AI has learned of 30 people being sentenced to death in 11 countries and of 11 executions in five countries during December 1980.

Uganda Binaisa freed

One of the first actions by the newly elected President of Uganda, Dr Milton OBOTE, was to release former President Godfrey BINAISA, who had been detained under house arrest since he was deposed by the Military Commission in May 1980.

The Military Commission had said he was being held for investigation of suspected illegal monetary transactions and other "irregularities"—but he was not held under a legal detention order or formally charged.

AI had adopted the former President as a prisoner of conscience after receiving a communication from Uganda's Foreign Minister saying that Godfrey Binaisa would not be charged with any offence and that his fate would be decided by the government to be elected.

On 17 December 1980 *AI* cabled President Obote welcoming the release □

Zaire National assembly dismissals

Thirteen People's Commissioners—elected members of Zaire's Legislative Council (national assembly)—were charged with subversion and either imprisoned or placed under house arrest at the end of December 1980.

The arrests began on 30 December, when NGALULA Mpanda Ndjila, who represented Kabinda constituency in Kasai Oriental region and is a known critic of President MOBUTU's government, was accused of being the author of a 51-page document signed by himself and 12 other People's Commissioners and alleged by the authorities to be subversive.

On the next day four of Ngalula's close colleagues visited President Mobutu's residence in Kinshasa to protest against the arrest. They were themselves placed under arrest and charged with "violating the neutral territory" of the Presidency and also with subversion.

Eight other People's Commissioners who had signed the document were later arrested.

On 17 January 1981 Zaire's official news agency announced that legal proceedings against the 13 were being dropped after their case had been examined by the disciplinary committee of the ruling party's Central Committee.

The committee ordered that all 13 should lose their jobs as People's Commissioners and that 10 of them should also be deprived of their civil rights for 10 years; the remaining three

lose their civil rights for one or two years. In the past the loss of civil rights has meant that people have been relegated to their home villages, which they may not leave without official permission.

PONGO Malanda

In a letter published in a Paris newspaper on 8 January 1981, Zaire's Ambassador to France stated that PONGO Malanda, prisoner of the month in November 1980, had been tried, convicted and sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment on 27 November 1980.

He was tried before the Court of State Security with three other people arrested with him in March 1980. All four were accused of conspiring to overthrow the constitutional regime by advocating support for an illegal party, the *Mouvement d'union et de réconciliation du Zaire* (MNUR). Under Zaire's 1978 Constitution the country is a one-party state ruled by the *Mouvement populaire de la Révolution* (MPR). To advocate support for any other political party is construed as an attempt to overthrow the constitution.

The three people charged with Pongo are a former MPR official, KAMBU Mavungu, who was sentenced to three years' imprisonment; a businessman, MAPANGALA; LANDU Pholo, who is reported to have been transferred to hospital in May 1980 after being ill-treated □

AI IN 'POP' CHARTS

A record album inspired by AI's campaign against the death penalty has been dedicated to the movement by the French composer of "electronic" music Bernard SZAJNER.

The album, called "Some Deaths Take Forever", headed the "Eurorock" chart of a popular United Kingdom music magazine for more than a month towards the end of 1980. Part of the profits are to be donated to AI.

An illustration on the album's jacket is based on AI's symbol and shows a hand in a chain-mail glove snuffing out a candle; AI's Stockholm Declaration is printed on the inner sleeve.

The album costs £4.50 and is avail-

able through The Initial Recording Company, 1 Melville Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 16, United Kingdom □

Stop press

South Korea: President CHUN Doo-hwan has commuted the death sentence passed on KIM Dae-jung in September 1980 to life imprisonment.

His decision was announced on 23 January 1981, only hours after the Supreme Court had confirmed the sentence. AI has cabled the President calling for Kim Dae-jung's immediate and unconditional release.

Iran Health fears for former Majlis member

The health of a 60-year-old former member of the Iranian *Majlis*, parliament, Abolfazle GHASSEMI, who was arrested in July 1980 soon after his election, is reported to have "greatly deteriorated" since his imprisonment in Evin Prison, Teheran.

In January 1981 AI appealed for his release to President BANI-SADR and Ayatollah BEHESHTI, head of the Supreme Court and leader of the Islamic Republican Party.

Abolfazle Ghassemi, who has been held without charge or trial, was one of the leaders of the Iranian National Front and Secretary General of the socialist Iran Party. He was also imprisoned under the government of the late Shah.

Religious minorities

AI continues to be concerned about the imprisonment—and in some cases execution—of members of religious minorities in Iran, including Baha'is, Christians and Jews.

- The whereabouts are still unknown of nine members of the Baha'i National Spiritual Assembly in Iran who were taken into custody on 21 August 1980.
- Members of the Christian community, both Iranian and British, have been held since August 1980 without charge or trial.
- Information has also been received by AI about imprisoned Jews who are believed to be in danger of execution.

Trial procedures

An AI report—*Law and Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran*—published in May 1980, concluded that "the guarantees necessary for a fair trial are effectively lacking in cases heard by the Islamic Revolutionary Tribunals".

Information received by AI about trials occurring since the report was written does not suggest that there have been any fundamental changes in the tribunals' trial procedures and it is therefore impossible to accept without question the results of trials which have taken place before them □

Severe sentences for Soviet dissenters

Courts in the Soviet Union are reported to be passing severe sentences on dissenters as the authorities keep up a drive that has already resulted in more than 200 dissenters being imprisoned in the past 15 months. In recent months sentences of up to 15 years' combined imprisonment and internal exile have been passed for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda".

The sustained crackdown has hit dissenters of all kinds all over the Soviet Union—religious believers, human rights activists and national rights dissenters in the non-Russian republics of the USSR. Heavy sentences have been frequent: since December 1979 at least 12 people are known to have been sentenced to more than 10 years' each.

All five members of a Moscow-based group monitoring political abuse of psychiatry are now reported to have been rounded up. The last active member, Felix SEREBROV, was arrested on 9 January 1981.

Evidence of dissenters still being put in psychiatric hospitals for

political reasons came in November 1980, with the compulsory confinement of a Ukrainian librarian, Anna MYKHAYLENKO; she had been arrested for circulating unofficial reports of human rights violations.

In a news release on the crackdown issued on 21 January 1981, *AI* called attention to long sentences passed in recent months on five dissenters convicted on "anti-Soviet agitation" charges: Mart NIKLUS, 46, a leading Estonian activist, sentenced on 8 January 1981 to a total of 15 years' imprisonment and exile; Vazif MEYLANOV, 42, a mathematician from Dagestan who demonstrated peacefully against the internal exile of the dissident physicist Andrei SAKHAROV and was sentenced on 2 December 1980 to a total of nine years'; two Ukrainians, Dr Stepan KHMARA, 43, a physician, and Vitaly SHEVCHENKO, 46, a journalist, sentenced to 12 and 11 years' respectively for circulating an unauthorized Ukrainian journal; Nikolai GORETOI, 59, a leading Pentecostalist, sentenced in November 1980 to 12 years'

(see January 1981 *Newsletter*).

In the general repression of the past 15 months, three types of dissenter appear to have been hit especially hard: members of unofficial groups trying to monitor Soviet observance of human rights agreements reached at the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe; critics of the government's nationalities policy in the non-Russian Soviet republics, including Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Estonians and Armenians; religious believers, particularly Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostals and Russian Orthodox believers.

Recent arrests include those of Natalya MALTSEVA, an active feminist, Viktor BRAILOVSKY, an activist in the Jewish emigration movement, and Viktor NIITSOO, an Estonian dissenter.

The trials of a number of people arrested in 1980 are believed to be imminent. They include the Helsinki monitors Vytautas SKUODIS (Lithuania) and Tatyana OSIPOVA (Moscow), and the feminist Natalya LAZAREVA □

BOLIVIAN KILLINGS

Continued from page 1

Ministry to provide more information "to establish exactly what happened".

Those reported to have been killed are: Artemio CAMARGO, leader in the COB of the *Federación Sindical de los Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia* (FSTMB), the Bolivian Mineworkers Union—he worked at the Siglo Veinte mine and had been in hiding since the July 1980 coup, fearing arrest and exile; José REYES Carvajal, aged about 41, a former police officer elected as a deputy for the *Unión Democrática Popular* (UDP) for La Paz in the 1980 elections; José Luis SUAREZ Guzman, university lecturer; Ricardo NAVARRO Mogro, aged about 30, a university lecturer; Gonzalo BARON, a student leader; Arcil MENACHO, aged about 50, an MIR organizer in the district (*departamento*) of Pando; Jorge BALDIVIESO, aged about 35, an MIR organizer in the district of Oruro; Ramiro VELASCO Aviles, aged about 35; Gregorio ANDRADE.

Of those who survived the raid, two are reported to have been seriously wounded. All are being held by the authorities and there are fears for their safety □

The Caribbean Many detained without charge or trial

The detention of prisoners for long periods without charge or trial was one of the main subjects raised by an *AI* mission which visited the Caribbean from 1 to 7 January 1981 for talks with the Prime Minister of Grenada, Maurice BISHOP, and President Henk CHIN-A-SEN of Suriname.

Some prisoners in Grenada have been held without charge or trial since March 1979, when the present government, under Maurice Bishop, took power. Others have been detained since and there are now about 110 people in detention.

Suriname

In Suriname, the mission expressed concern to President Chin-a-Sen about extended detentions without charge or trial; about the establishment of a special court to try alleged cases

of corruption; about Decree B-9 (also concerned with corruption), the formulation of which *AI* does not consider to be specific enough—it became law in September 1980 and is retroactive to January 1970; and about allegations of ill-treatment.

According to *AI*'s information, there are now 23 people imprisoned in Suriname for political reasons, five of whom have been tried and sentenced. *AI* has received allegations of prisoners being ill-treated and of two of them dying as a result □

BAHRAIN

The latest information available to *AI* gives the names of the two men said to have died under torture in Bahrain as Jamil Ali Muhsin AL-ALI and Karim AL-HIBSHI (see November 1980 *Newsletter*) □

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