



## Heavy Sentences on Soviet Helsinki Monitors

The heavy sentences passed on 13 and 14 July on Helsinki monitors Alexander GINSBURG, Anatoly SHCHARANSKY and Viktoras PETKUS, and on 20 July on Levko LUKYANENKO, are, *AI* says, in line with the Soviet authorities' policy thus far of imposing on defendant Helsinki monitors maximum or near-maximum sentences.

On 13 July, Alexander Ginsburg, aged 41, was sentenced in Tarusa, a town to the south of Moscow, to 8 years' imprisonment on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". He was a founding member of the Moscow Helsinki monitoring group and the organizer of a relief fund for political prisoners and their families.

The same day, in Vilnius, Viktoras Petkus, aged 49 and a member of the Lithuanian monitoring group, was given a maximum sentence of 15 years' imprisonment, also for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda".

On 14 July, Anatoly Shcharansky, a 30-year-old Jewish member of the Helsinki monitoring group, was sentenced in Moscow to 13 years' imprisonment after being convicted of treason in the form of espionage.

In Gorodnya on 20 July, Levko LUKYANENKO, a 50-year-old member of the Ukrainian Helsinki monitoring group was given the maximum sentence of 10 years in a corrective labour colony to be followed by 5 years' internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda". Levko Lukyanenko completed a 15-year sentence in January 1976 during which he was adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience.

Alexander Ginsburg, Levko Lukyanenko and Viktoras Petkus will be confined to a "special régime" corrective labour colony, the most rigorous category of labour camp. Viktoras Petkus, like Anatoly Shcharansky, will also serve part of his sentence in Vladimir Prison, a still more severe type of penal institution. *AI* believes that prolonged imprisonment in these institutions will inevitably harm their health: Alexander Ginsburg is known to be already seriously ill.

All four have been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.

On 11 July, while the trials were still in progress, *AI* said in a press statement that it knows of more than 230 people who have been sentenced to imprisonment, exile or banishment, or confined to psychiatric hospitals, for non-violent exercise of their human rights since August 1975, the period covered by the reporting of the various unofficial Soviet Helsinki monitoring groups.

*AI* drew particular attention to the plight of three other imprisoned human rights

activists in the Soviet Union who face heavy sentences: Viktor RTSKHILADZE, a Georgian; Robert NAZARYAN, an Armenian; and Alexander PODRABINEK. Rtskhiladze and Nazaryan are members of Helsinki monitoring groups; Podrabinek has been active in exposing the abuses of psychiatry for political purposes in the Soviet Union (February *CAT Bulletin*).

All three are adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience □

### MOVE TO ABOLISH DEATH PENALTY IN EUROPE

In an exemplary move by an abolitionist Western European government, Dr Christian BRODA, Austrian Minister of Justice, urged the Eleventh Conference of European Ministers of Justice, held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in June, to work for total abolition of the death penalty in Europe.

Dr Broda's memorandum was one of the subjects of debate at the Copenhagen Conference. He argued that governments have the obligation to insist upon and promote respect for human life "especially at a time when such values are questioned by terrorists". He was strongly supported by Ministers of Justice from Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany, Denmark, Luxembourg and France.

A resolution was adopted unanimously, recommending "that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe refer questions concerning the death penalty to the appropriate Council of Europe bodies for study as part of the Council's work program, especially in the light of the Austrian memorandum and the exchange of views at the present Conference, with a view to their being further discussed at the Twelfth Conference of European Ministers of Justice."

*Continued on page 2, column 1*

### ABDUCTION AND DETENTION OF PARAGUAYAN PARLIAMENTARIAN

On 8 July, *AI* called upon President Alfredo STROESSNER of Paraguay to release Dr Domingo LAINO, a former deputy and vice-president of the Authentic Radical Liberal [center opposition] Party, who was abducted in the capital, Asunción, on 7 July. Dr Laino is internationally known for his defence of human rights: in December 1977 he participated in *AI*'s conference on the abolition of the death penalty in Stockholm.

Dr Laino is also known for his opposition to the unconstitutional methods adopted by President Stroessner who has ruled Paraguay for the last 24 years. The regime has frequently been criticized for its use of torture and arbitrary detention, most recently by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in a report to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States in Washington in June.

Dr Laino had visited Washington in June as a guest of the Washington Office on Latin America, a church-sponsored human rights organization. Apparently as a result of his statements in Washington, he was declared "an enemy of the people" in Paraguay. Fellow members of his party, which was recently refused representation in the Paraguayan parliament, gave public support to Dr Laino who returned to Paraguay on 5 July.

At noon on 7 July, while driving through Asunción, Dr Laino's car was forced off the road at the junction of Mariscal Lopez and Peru Avenue by a Volkswagen, license number 11 88 81. Two men in civilian clothes dragged him from his car, beat him up, and abducted him.

After several unsuccessful inquiries by his family in Asunción and numerous international protests, including a cable from *AI*, the Paraguayan government belatedly acknowledged that Dr Laino was being held for questioning in the capital, at the *Departamento de Investigaciones*, a well known torture center □

### DETAINEES FREED IN SEYCHELLES

On 1 and 5 July, all 20 detainees who had been arrested in Seychelles about 29 April were released.

They had initially been charged with treason but these and other related charges were subsequently withdrawn and replaced by detention orders against all 21 held in custody. One woman was later released and expelled from Seychelles with her American husband. The government had earlier stated that the treason charges were capital offences,

*Continued on page 2, column 1*

## Move to Abolish Death Penalty in Europe

*Continued from page 1, column 2*

In his concluding remarks to the Conference, Dr Broda said: "I would like to propose that the European Ministers join in a common endeavour . . . to examine the possibilities of moral and practical support for the Declaration of Stockholm as it has been agreed on 11 December 1977 in Stockholm at the International Conference on the Abolition of the Death Penalty, convened by Amnesty International" □

## Detainees Freed in Seychelles

*Continued from page 1, column 3*

although the death penalty has, in fact, been abolished in Seychelles.

At the time of the arrests, the government claimed that several large caches of arms had been found and that those arrested had been conspiring with former President James MANCHAM to instigate an armed invasion by mercenaries to overthrow the regime while President RENE of Seychelles was visiting the People's Republic of China. Later, in court, the government did not produce any evidence to substantiate its claims and did not display any of the weapons allegedly seized.

On 2 May, the Supreme Court granted an application for *habeas corpus* made on behalf of the detainees, but the following day the government published the Preservation of Public Security (Emergency Powers) Regulations. This decree empowered the president to order detention without charge or trial on the grounds of "public safety or the maintenance of public order".

The 20 detainees, 17 men and three women, included three former parliamentarians, a retired prison superintendent, businessmen, and a senior civil servant. They were allegedly associated with the Seychelles Democratic Party—in effect, banned—which had led the coalition government from the time of independence from the United Kingdom until the coup of 5 June 1977. Three of the detainees eventually received hospital treatment. Their lawyers brought a suit before the Supreme Court alleging ill-treatment on the grounds of poor diet and restrictions on family visits. Physical brutality was not alleged.

On 2 June, *AI* cabled President René expressing concern at the use of the new indefinite detention legislation and urging that the detainees receive an early trial in open court with full legal representation. *AI* also appealed for the provisional release of the detainees until trial, particularly the women and those in poor health.

The Seychelles government replied that release of the detainees would be prejudicial to internal security. The Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr Ogilvy BERLOUIS, stated that detainees were not being ill-treated and invited *AI* to inspect the conditions of detention.

In a cable on 26 June, *AI* reiterated its view that all detainees should be either tried

or released and commented that this was the first occasion on which the human rights situation in Seychelles had caused *AI* concern. The organization appealed for the release of all detainees on humanitarian grounds, to mark the second anniversary of independence, and welcomed the invitation to visit the Republic.

When all the remaining detainees had been released from prison, *AI* cabled President René on 7 July welcoming this humanitarian measure, but requested further information on whether some were still detained under house arrest □

## RELEASES ANNOUNCED IN THE PHILIPPINES

Several amnesties have been announced in The Philippines since the beginning of June. On 11 June, President Ferdinand MARCOS announced an amnesty for 621 people, and published a list of their names the same day. According to reports, 406 of these had been charged with subversion, and a further 81, mostly Moslems from the south, with rebellion. The remainder had been held on criminal charges.

A second list of 199 names was published on 18 June. Most of these were dissidents from tribal areas, but among them were 11 Roman Catholic priests and nuns, one of whom was an American priest charged with running a church radio station for subversive purposes.

On 27 June, the release of another 565 prisoners was ordered for lack of proof. They had been accused of belonging either to the Moslem Moro Liberation Front or to the communist New People's Army.

The presidential decree granting amnesty affected not only those in detention but also those who had been previously released after being charged with violations of the Anti-Subversion Law. The number of detainees who stand to benefit from the amnesty is thus considerably lower than the figures announced by the Philippine authorities. Many names on the list are of people who had been granted "temporary release" as long as two years ago. None of those released who had been charged with subversion had been convicted in a court of law.

*AI* has so far learnt of 43 releases from Bicutan Rehabilitation Center in Manila; a further eight untried prisoners were released from the maximum security unit in Port Bonifacio.

The presidential amnesty decree followed the release on 5 June of more than 600 demonstrators, including opposition leaders, who had been arrested following a mass public protest against alleged fraud and intimidation in the elections for an Interim Legislative Assembly held on 6 April. Charges against all these prisoners have been dropped.

On 21 June, *AI* sent a letter to President Ferdinand Marcos, welcoming the presidential decree and asking for the release of remaining detainees held on political charges for several years without trial □

## DISSIDENTS RECEIVE LONG SENTENCES IN GDR

Rudolf BAHRO and Nico HÜBNER, two *AI* adopted prisoners of conscience in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), were sentenced in late June and early July to 8 and 5 years' imprisonment respectively. Both were charged under article 98 of the GDR penal code with "collecting of information", an article which makes the collecting and passing on of information suitable for use by organizations or individuals "hostile to the GDR" a punishable offence. It has been applied recently against a number of people whose activity has resulted in the publication in foreign media of material critical of the GDR.

In the case of Rudolf Bahro, a Marxist dissident, the charge was apparently connected with *Die Alternative*, a book by him in which he criticized socialism as practised in the GDR. On 22 August 1977 interviews with him about his forthcoming book were published in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*, and broadcast on FRG television, which can be received in most parts of the GDR. His arrest followed on 23 August. At his trial he was found guilty of disseminating through "espionage" channels "deliberately fabricated lies" and "gross distortions" to "hostile forces" in the FRG. He was also convicted under article 245 of the GDR penal code of "betraying secrets".

Nico Hübner had likewise written material critical of various aspects of the GDR system for publication abroad. He was tried in connection with this and also with his refusal to do military service on grounds of conscience □

## CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AND RELEASES IN GHANA

On 5 July General Ignatius ACHEAMPONG resigned as head of state of Ghana and Lieutenant General F.W.K. AKUFFO, Chief of Defence Staff, assumed power. The following day Lieutenant General Akuffo ordered the release of the politicians imprisoned in April for disputing the official result of the referendum held in Ghana on 30 March (*July Newsletter*).

*AI* cabled Lieutenant General Akuffo, welcoming the news of the releases and *AI* groups are currently appealing for the release of the remaining political prisoners in Ghana. These include several hundred people detained without trial under Ghana's Preventive Custody Decree, which was passed in 1972 to enable the military government to deal with political opposition. *AI* groups are also appealing on behalf of seven people sentenced for subversion in July 1976, five of whom remain under sentence of death □

## CONSEQUENCES OF CHILEAN AMNESTY

On 19 April the Chilean government declared an amnesty for political prisoners, many of whom had been in prison for more than four

*Continued on page 4, column 1*



# 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.

## Alberto ALTESOR—Uruguay

On 15 August, Alberto ALTESOR will be 65 years old. Sr Altesor, a former deputy in the Uruguayan Congress, was arrested on 21 October 1975 in Montevideo for his membership of the Communist Party and leadership of the Uruguayan Union of Railway Workers. Despite efforts by his wife to locate him, no official notification of his detention was given by the authorities until nearly two months later.

From people who were detained with him and later freed, his family gradually obtained details of his treatment and place of detention. He was first taken to a private house and later transferred to Infantry Battalion No. 13 (also known as *El Infierno*—Hell—because of the brutal tortures inflicted on detainees—July 1977 *CAT Bulletin*). While there he was subjected to beatings, electric shocks, and hours of enforced standing.

On 14 December 1975, he was transferred to Artillery Battalion No 5 where he was held alone in a room, handcuffed and hooded. His food consisted of coffee with milk and two plates of soup a day. His family was not permitted to bring him food until September 1976 and only then in limited quantities.

On 24 September 1976, nearly a year after his arrest, Alberto Altesor was charged under article 60 (V) of the military penal code with "subversive association" which carries a sentence from 3 to 18 years' imprisonment. These charges are connected with his trade union activities and membership of the Communist Party which was banned in 1973.

Sr Altesor had been in a critical state of health prior to his arrest (January 1976 *Newsletter*). He suffers from a serious heart condition which, according to a specialist who examined him in 1974, requires permanent medical surveillance and a strict diet. On 16 July 1976, the same specialist sent a medical report to the Uruguayan authorities. At the end of 1976, Sr Altesor was taken from prison to the military hospital in Montevideo, in a critical condition where he underwent treatment.

In January 1977, he was transferred to the Libertad Prison (*Establecimiento Militar de Reclusión No 1*) where his treatment has reportedly improved. His family and lawyer are permitted to visit him once a week and he is able to mix with other prisoners and take short walks in the prison grounds. He is also allowed to use the prison library.

*Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the immediate release of Alberto Altesor to: Sr Ministro de Defensa Nacional, Dr Walter Ravenna, Ministerio de*

*Defensa Nacional, 25 de Mayo 279, Montevideo, Uruguay; and to: Sr Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, Adolfo Folle Martinez, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 18 de Julio 1205, Montevideo, Uruguay.*

## Willibordus Surendra RENDRA, Indonesia

Willibordus Surendra RENDRA, aged 42, was arrested on 1 May, following a period of intense student unrest in the main university centers in Indonesia. He is widely acknowledged to be one of Indonesia's leading poets and playwrights, and four collections of his verse have been published, the last, *Sadjak-sadjak Sepatu Tua* (Songs of Old Shoes), appearing in 1972. He has travelled widely, and studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Art in New York.

Student unrest in Indonesia began in August 1977 with demands that the widespread corruption rife in Indonesian administration and political life should be investigated and checked. This unrest continued into 1978, focusing around the uncontested re-election to the presidency of President Suharto. Earlier this year several hundred students were arrested, many of whom remain in detention. At the same time, on 20 January, the Indonesian government temporarily banned seven of Jakarta's leading newspapers for allegedly exaggerating reports of student activities.

On 24 January Mr Rendra, together with 13 other prominent intellectuals, issued a statement condemning the government's actions. It urged the government to revoke its decision of freezing the Student Councils and Student Committees, taken in the previous weeks in an attempt to control student action, to release the detained student leaders, "cease the persecutions against them", and to revoke the banning of the newspapers. Mr Rendra was himself outspoken in his criticism of government action, accusing the government of "fighting words with guns". In February, security officials banned any newspaper reporting of Mr Rendra's speeches or activities.

On 28 April, Mr Rendra gave a reading of his poems at the Jakarta Arts Center during which unidentified persons tossed ammonia smoke bombs into the audience. Two days later he was arrested for allegedly inciting anti-government feeling. Other prominent dissidents have also been arrested.

Mr Rendra is now being held in a police interrogation center in Jakarta but has not yet been formally charged. His family, who live a considerable distance away in Jogjakarta, are only permitted to visit him **once a week** for one hour. *AI* has received

information that during the first days of his detention, Mr Rendra was ill-treated by criminal prisoners at the instigation of military guards.

*Please send politely worded letters appealing for the immediate and unconditional release of W.S. Rendra to: His Excellency President Suharto, Istana Negara, Jalan Veteran, Jakarta, Indonesia.*

## Nasir bin Abdullah AL-WAHIDI, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY)

Nasir bin Abdullah AL-WAHIDI is a former Sultan of the Wahidi Province and an ex-Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries in the Federal government which was formed in 1963, when Aden and 17 of the 23 protectorates federated under British control.

In February 1967 he was first detained on suspicion of being involved in the blowing up of an aircraft carrying the Wahidi State Secretary. He remained in detention but was never tried reportedly because of lack of evidence.

When the PDRY became independent in November 1967, Mr al-Wahidi was still in prison. At that time many of those associated with the former Federal government fled the country. Of those who remained, a large number were arrested; most were never charged and only a few were brought to trial.

In February 1968, a number of prominent members of the former Federal government, including Nasir bin Abdullah al-Wahidi, were charged retroactively under Republic Decree No 27 of 10 January 1968 with high treason and feudalism. A newly formed State Security Supreme Court, which was established to "hear cases prejudicial to the interests of the people and the revolution", sentenced him to 10 years' imprisonment with hard labour and confiscation of all property. He has since been detained at al Mansura Prison in Aden.

*AI* has adopted as prisoners of conscience Mr al-Wahidi and five others who were also sentenced to terms of 10 to 15 years' imprisonment in February 1968.

Although Nasir bin Abdullah al-Wahidi has now completed his sentence, there has been no news of his release and the PDRY authorities have not responded to numerous inquiries as to his present whereabouts.

*Please write courteously worded letters, in Arabic where possible, appealing for the release of Nasir bin Abdullah al-Wahidi to: Ali Nasir Muhammad, Chairman of the Presidential Council, Aden, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and to: Abdul Fattah Ismail, Secretary General of the National Front, Aden, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.*

## Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in June of the release of 321 prisoners under adoption or investigation and took up 151 new cases.

## Consequences of Chilean Amnesty

*Continued from page 2, column 3*

years. However, *AI* is concerned that the more than 1,500 prisoners who have disappeared, following their detention, since September 1973 were not covered by the amnesty (July and August CAT *Bulletin*).

Among the crimes which are covered by the amnesty are those apparently committed by government security agents, such as abduction. A number of cases where prisoners disappeared following their detention by members of the security forces were being investigated in Chilean courts: the amnesty has facilitated the closure of these investigations. Consequently, the amnesty has been denounced by political, humanitarian and other organizations, including the Catholic Church, as improving the image of the Chilean government rather than helping prisoners.

Before the amnesty it was announced that 109 prisoners would be released, including people who had been sentenced or were being tried by military courts. Most of the prisoners on the list which was officially published had already applied to have their sentences commuted to exile under the provisions of Decree Law 504: the granting of their applications would in any case have led to their release into exile. Others whose names appeared on the list were already free. In theory the released prisoners were given a choice as to whether to remain in Chile or take advantage of the visas offered to them by foreign governments. However, most have had to leave even though they wished to stay in the country. They were constantly harassed by members of the security forces and some felt that their lives were in danger.

When the amnesty was announced the Minister of Justice, Señora Mónica MADARIAGA, stated that people in exile could be authorized to return to Chile if they applied to do so at their nearest Consulate. However, it soon became clear that the amnesty did not apply to the majority of Chileans in exile.

On 4 May the Minister of the Interior, Señor Sergio FERNANDEZ Fernández said that "no one involved in the international campaign against Chile and no activist in international marxism" would be allowed to return to the country. Since the Chilean government has always classified as marxists all those who supported or sympathized with the Popular Unity government of President Salvador ALLENDE, practically all Chilean exiles could be refused permission to return to the country.

A group of about 60 prisoners who are being held for politically motivated offences but are being tried for common crimes were not included in the amnesty. They had previously been held with those political prisoners who were released, which meant that they had a certain recognition and were reasonably treated. Now they are held with common criminals and have far less chance of being granted political status.

The ex-political prisoners remaining in Chile have formed the *Agrupación de Ex-Presos Políticos de Chile* (Association of Ex-Political Prisoners of Chile). Its stated objectives will include working for the release of political prisoners and establishing the whereabouts of disappeared prisoners, it will also help resolve the problems of ex-political prisoners—for example, help them obtain work and housing □

## ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS NOW FREED IN SUDAN

*AI* has now been informed that all the remaining political prisoners in Sudan who had not previously benefited from the government's General Amnesty Law of August 1977 have now been released. These releases were central to the government's "national reconciliation" program which includes a review of legislation concerning indefinite detention and security courts (September and December 1977 *Newsletters*).

Over 1,000 political detainees and sentenced prisoners associated with the clandestine opposition Sudanese National Front had been freed earlier; about 120 supporters of the banned Sudanese Communist Party (including Gasim AMIN, February *Prisoners of the Month Campaign*) have now also been freed.

*AI* wrote to President Jaafar al-NIMEIRI congratulating his government on this humanitarian action and welcoming the fulfilment of the policy of reconciliation. *AI* said it hoped this would be a model for similar initiatives in other African countries and elsewhere □

## AI-ADOPTEE RELEASED IN URUGUAY

On 21 June, Ricardo VILARO Sanguinetti, ex-vice-president of the Uruguayan National Convention of Workers (CNT), was reunited with his wife and three children at Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam, Netherlands, after four and a half years in prison in Uruguay.

Ricardo Vilaro was arrested on 10 September 1973 for his trade union activities and later charged with membership of the *Grupos de Acción Unificadora* (Groups for Unifying Action), a non-violent political group whose aim was to unify leftwing parties and groups in Uruguay.

Trial proceedings in his case did not begin until 4 April 1974, after he had been held in detention without charge for six months. Ricardo Vilaro was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on the charge of "subversive association", effective from the date of his arrest.

The presiding judge signed his release order on 28 March this year. After which he was taken from *Punta Carretas* Prison, where he had been held since April 1974, to the *Jefatura de Policía* (Police Headquarters) in Montevideo. On 7 April, his family asked when he would leave the *Jefatura* and were told that he would be

released the following day. When the family returned the next day, they were told that Sr Vilaro had been picked up by naval personnel immediately upon his release from the police headquarters the previous night. His detention at the *Fusileros Navales* barracks was later confirmed by the authorities.

Following this arbitrary re-arrest, several lawyers' groups, *AI* national sections and Ricardo Vilaro's adoption group appealed to the Uruguayan authorities for his immediate release. The European Parliament, as well as several governments, also intervened on his behalf. On 29 May, Ricardo Vilaro was released and later allowed to travel to the Netherlands □

## CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENS CALL FOR ABOLITION OF DEATH PENALTY

In a letter on 21 March 1978 some 300 Czechoslovak citizens called on the Federal Assembly of the CSSR for the abolition of the death penalty on the grounds that it is morally wrong, inhuman and ineffective. The letter states that a campaign against the death penalty was organized in Czechoslovakia 10 years ago (that is, during the "Prague spring") and that professional experts consulted by the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly at that time recommended abolition.

Under the Czechoslovak penal code a number of criminal offences are punishable by discretionary death sentence. The penal code also lists 13 military offences carrying a discretionary death sentence. In the year ending 30 June four people in Czechoslovakia are known to have been sentenced to death. One execution took place in August 1977, but to date *AI* has no information on the other three cases □

## NEWS OF PAST CAMPAIGNS

- On 1 June, William "Joe" WRIGHT II of the United States, one of the group known as the Wilmington 10 (February *Prisoners of the Month Campaign*) was released on parole. Eight of the Wilmington 10 are still in prison.

- The Israeli Attorney General, Professor Aharon BARAK has informed *AI* that Maher al-KHAYYAT (May *Prisoners of the Month Campaign*) was released on 19 June. Mr al-Khayyat, who had been detained since June 1977 without charge or trial under article 111 of the Defence (Emergency) Regulations of 1945, appeared before the Appeals Committee on 15 May when it was decided not to renew his detention order □

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amnesty international

## campaign for the abolition of torture

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MONTHLY BULLETIN

# Uganda Report Details Torture and Killings

In June *AI* released a report on human rights violations in Uganda under the military regime of President Idi AMIN. The report, which concentrates on the events of 1977 and 1978, describes the overthrow of the rule of law; the extensive practice of murder by government security officers, which often reaches massacre proportions; the institutionalized use of torture; and the regime's persistent disregard of the extreme concern expressed by international opinion and by organizations, including the United Nations.

*AI* is unable to campaign on behalf of individual prisoners of conscience in Uganda because many of those arrested are tortured and killed within a short period of time. Very little information is available on detainees because their relatives fear reprisals if there is any publicity or if appeals are made.

The report states that large numbers of politicians, civil servants, church leaders, academics, students, businessmen, writers, soldiers, police officers, and citizens of other nations have been detained and killed since General Amin seized power in 1971. Recent victims were Archbishop Janani LUWUM, killed by security forces while in custody on 16 February 1977 (March 1977 *Newsletter*); Byron KAWADWA, artistic director of the Uganda National Theatre and UNESCO representative, killed by the State Research Bureau later the same month; and Raphael SEBUGWAAWO-Amooti, president of the Uganda Industrial Court, killed on 13 March this year. On 9 September 1977, 12 prisoners of conscience and three others were publicly executed after condemnation by a secret military tribunal. Particularly subject to mass arbitrary killings have been members of the Acholi and Lango ethnic groups who are continually suspected of supporting former president Milton OBOTE.

The use of torture by the State Research Bureau and the police Public Safety Unit is extremely common. Prisoners have been tortured at the headquarters of these units, in military centers, and in private houses and offices used for this purpose. *AI*'s report gives detailed testimonies of some torture victims who survived. Methods of torture include very painful and humiliating "exercises", severe beatings while the victim's head is placed inside the rim of a truck wheel, electric shocks, sexual tortures and rape, slashing with bayonets and other forms of mutilation. Many prisoners have been killed, either by guards or by prisoners forced to murder their fellow-detainees by hitting their heads with hammers.

*AI* expressed deep dissatisfaction at the outcome of various official government inquiries into allegations of disappearances or deaths caused by the security forces.

*Continued on page 2, column 1*

### CHILEAN GOVERNMENT DENIES RESPONSIBILITY FOR 'DISAPPEARANCES'

Relatives of disappeared prisoners in Chile ended their hunger strike on 9 June (July *CAT Bulletin*). Statements by the Chilean government and comments in the media show that the government is not prepared to give an adequate answer concerning the disappearance following their arrest of more than 1,500 persons since the coup of September 1973.

In a widely publicized speech in Chile on 15 June, Minister of the Interior Señor Sergio FERNANDEZ Fernández said that the government had no records to prove that any of the disappeared persons had been detained and consequently denied government responsibility for the disappearance of any detainees. He also suggested that some of those on the lists of disappeared prisoners could have been killed in confrontations with security forces while holding false identity papers and consequently it was not possible to identify them. He claimed that some of them could be living "underground" or abroad. Señor Fernández Fernández said that the hunger strike was a political campaign against the military regime and not a human rights issue. He said that the government would act without weakness on future actions of this nature and that the most the government could do to help the relatives of those who had disappeared would be to make a special judicial provision to help relatives to solve their legal problems.

In a press conference on 29 June, the relatives rejected the government's reply and said that if they did not receive information on each individual case they would take further action □

### OFFICIAL INQUIRY IN INDIA MAY BE HELD IN SECRET

On 23 June, *AI* protested to the government of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh about a move which would render secret a public inquiry into allegations of torture and killings of political prisoners.

An inquiry commission was established

last year by the state government to investigate "allegations of murder, torture and brutal treatment" of alleged "Naxalite" prisoners (May 1977 *Newsletter*). On 6 June 1978, the state government of Andhra Pradesh requested the commission, headed by Justice V. BHARGAVA, to hold proceedings *in camera* "in the public interest".

*AI*'s cable to Chief Minister Mr Chenna REDDY of Andhra Pradesh said the organization was greatly concerned at the government's request and considered it most important that the facts regarding allegations of such serious human rights violations as the torture and killing of political prisoners be established openly and publicly. If the facts regarding these serious allegations were to be established beyond any doubt any official inquiry committee should function openly and subject to public scrutiny. It should have full access to all relevant evidence, and its findings should be made public in their entirety.

*AI* sent a copy of its cable to the Indian Home Minister Charan SINGH, urging the union government to take steps to ensure that the inquiry into such serious allegations be effective, public and impartial.

The Bhargava Commission was set up on 20 June 1977 to investigate allegations that political prisoners had been tortured and killed in incidents officially described as "encounters" with the police.

Official statistics show that between 1968 and 1977, the period covered by the commission's terms of reference, 214 people died in "encounters" with police in the state. Indian civil liberties organizations and others have alleged that the "encounters" were staged by the police. Those killed were allegedly "Naxalites"—Maoist revolutionaries, officially known as members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)—who have been active in Andhra Pradesh since the late 1960s and have advocated revolutionary methods including the use of violence.

Witnesses willing to testify before the Bhargava Commission have reportedly been intimidated and arrested by the police. *AI* is most concerned, however, at the state government's request that the commission proceed *in camera* on such vaguely defined grounds. *AI* has received reports that Justice V. Bhargava had asked to be relieved of his assignment on 30 June and that lawyers appearing before the commission, producing evidence concerning the allegations of killings, have now withdrawn □

### Uganda Report Details Torture and Killings *Continued from page 1, column 1*

Following the United Nations Commission on Human Rights decision in March this year to take unspecified and confidential "measures" on human rights in Uganda, President Amin established a "Human Rights Committee" in Uganda. The members of this government committee are drawn mainly from the security forces, including the Public Safety Unit and the State Research Bureau. *AI* stated: "Since the security organizations are accused of responsibility for torture and killings, and since even judges now face reprisals if they conflict with the military regime, such a committee can have no independence or impartiality."

President Amin announced that 1978 would be a year of "peace and reconciliation". Although the mass killings of 1977 have not so far been repeated, there are still numerous arbitrary detentions and killings of ordinary Ugandans in all parts of the country: the structure of repression is unchanged. *AI* said: "There is good reason to fear that unless international pressure about the human rights situation in Uganda increases, human rights violations of this nature and on this scale could continue in Uganda for a long time to come" □

### MEXICAN LAWYERS ACCUSE NARCOTICS POLICE OF TORTURE

On 16 June, the results of a two-month survey on torture by a human rights commission of the Mexican Bar Association were announced by Jesus Michel JACOBO, Vice-President of the Bar Association of Culiacan, Sinaloa state. He stated that affidavits taken from 457 prisoners revealed that torture is commonly practised by the Federal Police in Mexico.

The lawyers report that prisoners accused the police of subjecting them to a variety of tortures including severe beatings, electric shocks, rape, cigarette burns, hanging by the thumbs, and forcing gasoline, wine or carbonated drinks into the nasal passages. The director of the country's anti-narcotics campaign, Carlos Aguilar GARZA is accused of these practices along with federal police under his command.

It was decided to mount the inquiry after Jesus Michel Jacobo had himself been arrested. Four persons arrested at the same time claimed, when they appeared in court in early June, that while they were held incommunicado by the Federal Police for nearly two weeks, they were blindfolded with adhesive tape, beaten, given electric shocks with cattle-prods, and had carbonated drinks forced up their noses to make them confess to charges in connection with the seizure of heroin. The judge, Horacio CARDOSO, said that the proof of torture was so strong that he was recommending a full investigation by the federal district attorney's office. That office is, however,

under the command of Señor Aguilar Garza who has so far refused to let the investigation proceed. The lawyers are now considering taking the matter to the Attorney General of Mexico, Sr Oscar FLORES SANCHEZ.

*AI* has recently received further evidence of torture: in December 1977, an American citizen, Kirk SEDASSY, was arrested in Monterrey and subjected to physical violence in order to make him confess to murder and robbery. In letters to his family, he described his interrogation after he had been stripped and blindfolded: "I was led a few feet and made to lie on my back. The head of the six foot by two foot [two meters by 60 centimeters] board was about six foot off the ground. My right hand was 'cuffed to something. A canvas type of material was wrapped around me, pinning my hands to my sides and my body to the board. I was wrapped from my knees to my shoulders. A couple of hands held my ankles. A knee was resting on my stomach. I also believe that the owner of that knee was also putting the cloth over my nose while the tap was running. The water was running for 35 to 45 seconds; all I could breathe in were bubbles of water. The cloth was pulled away and I was asked a question: 'Did you kill that man in Chapultepec?'"

"I said, 'No.' This went on for quite a few times. I was even asked questions while the water was pouring over my face. I just couldn't answer. They kept pouring more. In my mental turmoil, I heard a voice say: 'You can't win. Nobody knows that you are here. Nobody knows you even exist.'

"The voice was like something out of a horror movie. I kept getting the same words."

After four days the police tried to make him sign a piece of paper. He would have done so had he not been told by the interpreter who was present that it was a confession. Mr Sedassy is still detained in the *Reclusorio Oriente Preventivo* in Mexico City where he is awaiting sentence □

## appeals

### SOH Joon-shik and SOH Sung, South Korea

SOH Joon-shik, aged 30, was arrested together with his brother, SOH Sung, aged 33, in April 1971. At the time of their arrest, the brothers, who are Koreans born in Japan, were students of Seoul National University in South Korea. They were arrested after large-scale student demonstrations in connection with the presidential elections of 1971. They were indicted under the Anti-Communist Law and the National Security Law on charges of alleged involvement in spying activities on behalf of North Korea.

The South Korean government alleged that the Soh brothers had been the leaders of a spy ring working under instructions from North Korea. But the brothers were convicted on the evidence of confessions which are believed to have been extracted under torture. At his trial in January 1972, Soh Joon-shik described beatings and other forms of torture to which he said he had been subjected during interrogation. Soh Sung's face is badly disfigured, apparently as the result of burns sustained in a suicide attempt to evade torture.

Soh Joon-shik was due for release on 27 May after completing a 7-year sentence. But he was transferred from the prison where he had been held to Daejon Prison in South Chungchong province. He is now held there under the Public Security Law, which empowers the South Korean government to impose arbitrary restrictions, including detention, on former political prisoners. Soh Sung remains in the Taegu Prison, where he is serving a life sentence. Both men are adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.

The case of Soh Joon-shik was taken up in an urgent action on 1 June and *AI* subsequently wrote to South Korean Minister of Justice LEE Sun-choong on 19 June reiterating its concern that Soh should be released from prison immediately.

*Please send courteously worded appeals urging the immediate and unconditional release of Soh Joon-shik and his brother Soh Sung, to: President Park Chung-hee, The Blue House, Seoul, Republic of Korea; and to: Mr Lee Sun-choong, Minister of Justice, Ministry of Justice, Seoul, Republic of Korea.*

### Yevgeny NIKOLAYEV, Soviet Union

Yevgeny Borisovich NIKOLAYEV, a 39-year-old member of the Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers in the Soviet Union, was detained on 15 February and confined to the Kashchenko Psychiatric Hospital in Moscow. Mr Nikolayev has been forcibly hospitalized on a number of previous occasions and has been an active participant in dissenters' efforts to expose psychiatric abuses in the USSR. In November 1977 the unofficial trade union group's first press conference was held in his Moscow flat.

Between 3 March and 14 April Mr Nikolayev was reportedly treated with injections of triftazin (stelazin), a neuroleptic drug used in many countries but which causes distressing and damaging side-effects if prescribed and administered incorrectly.

*Please write courteously worded letters appealing for the immediate release of Yevgeny Nikolayev to the Chief Doctor of the Kashchenko hospital, Valentyn Mykhaylovich Morkovkin. Write to: SSSR, g. Moscow, Zagorodnoye shosse 2, Psikhiatricheskaya Gorodskaya Klinicheskaya Bolnitsa No 1 Kashchenko, Glavnomu Vrachu V.M. Morkovkinu.*