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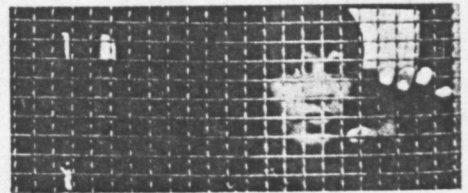
amnesty

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# international newsletter

## Illegal detention and arbitrary killings in the Philippines

Government forces in the Philippines have illegally detained, tortured or arbitrarily killed hundreds of people throughout the country in the last year and a half despite the lifting of martial law. The victims include peasants, tribal people, trade unionists, and church workers suspected of opposing government policies. On 22 September AI launched a worldwide campaign to highlight these and other serious violations of human rights in the Philippines and to try to persuade the government to end them. See article on pages 4 and 5.



## Long-term prisoners of conscience released

Three long-serving prisoners of conscience who over the years have been the subject of hundreds of thousands of appeals from people all over the world were set free during August and September 1982 and allowed to return home. They are:

- Gustavo Westerkamp, a 29-year-old Argentinian imprisoned without charge or trial for almost seven years; he was one of 29 political detainees released into "restricted liberty" in Argentina in early August.
- Dr Poh Soo Kai and Dr Lim Hock Siew, both aged 51 and both former Singapore politicians who between them had been prisoners for more than 35 years; they were conditionally freed on 26 August and 6 September respectively.

The case of Gustavo Westerkamp, who is the son of the Argentine physicist and human rights worker Dr José Federico Westerkamp, last year featured in a film on AI, *Prisoners of Conscience*.

A university student, he was arrested in Buenos Aires on 21 October 1975 and tortured by security agents for 48 hours. He was later held in harsh conditions in three prisons and is twice reported to have been badly beaten.

Gustavo Westerkamp is now reported to be staying with his family in Buenos Aires.

The two freed Singapore men were leaders of the opposition Socialist Front (SF) when they were arrested in



Gustavo Westerkamp



Dr Poh Soo Kai



Dr Lim Hock Siew

1963 in "Operation Cold Store", a round-up of people opposed to Singapore's subsequent (and short-lived) merger with Malaya. Both were arrested under the Internal Security Act (ISA) which provides for indefinite detention without trial.

Dr Lim Hock Siew, the SF's Secretary General, was imprisoned for 15 years and thereafter confined to one of Singapore's 50 surrounding islands.

Dr Poh Soo Kai, the party's Assistant Secretary General, was released in 1973 but re-arrested three years later, again under the ISA.

He and Dr Lim were released on condition that they did not take part in politics; they are also under travel and residence restrictions.

AI has learned also of the release of Vladimir Markovic, who was compulsorily confined to a prison hospital

in the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade, on 23 May 1979.

His detention resulted from a circular letter in which he had quoted a statement by a prominent Croatian dissenter, Dr Franjo Tudjman (currently imprisoned: see April 1981 Newsletter).

Vladimir Markovic, who featured in AI's Campaign for the Abolition of Torture in February 1980, is reported to have been released on 2 April 1982.

### Detainees freed in Egypt, see page 6

Emmanuel Mubanga Mwamba (prisoner of the month in June 1982) was released on a writ of *habeas corpus* at the end of July 1982 by order of the High Court in Ndola, Zambia. He had been detained without trial since 13 August 1979.

*Continued on back page*

## South Africa Ex-detainees say security police tortured them

Three former detainees in South Africa have alleged that they were ill-treated and tortured by the security police while being held in incommunicado detention without trial in late 1981.

- In July 1982 Barbara Hogan, a post-graduate student currently on trial in Pretoria for alleged membership of the banned African National Congress, brought a case of assault against two security police officers. She was detained in September 1981 and held for over seven months in incommunicado security police detention.

She alleged that, during a lengthy interrogation session at John Vorster Square security police headquarters on 22 October 1981, she was beaten on the ears, face, neck and back, threatened with electric shocks, tightly handcuffed and verbally abused.

When she was taken to see a district surgeon the next day, she was allegedly threatened with further assaults if she told him how she had come by her injuries. The doctor was reported as testifying in court that her injuries appeared to have been sustained during an assault.

The two security policemen were found not guilty of assault on the grounds that the evidence against them was uncorroborated.

- Alex and Khosi Mbatha required medical treatment from a heart specialist after spending six months in security police detention in solitary confinement. When they were released uncharged in April 1982, Alex Mbatha, a senior development worker for the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, was suffering from pain in his ears, head and back, as well as slurred speech, allegedly as a result of beatings and electric shocks.

Khosi Mbatha, mother of seven children, had suffered high blood pressure and a stroke in detention which had left her with a paralysed arm. Their two-year-old daughter was detained with them, although subsequently placed with friends. However, Khosi Mbatha reportedly alleges that she was told by security police that the child would be put in a security police institution for "communist children".

Five days after the mother's first request to see a doctor, she was taken to see a district surgeon, who diagnosed high blood pressure, prescribed medica-

tion and asked to see her again in a week. The security police allegedly neither gave her the medication nor took her back to the doctor.

Two weeks later she collapsed with a stroke, which left her partially paralysed. After five days, she was seen by a district surgeon and sent to hospital, where security police allegedly threatened her and accused her of faking illness.

Nursing staff at the hospital are said to have been told that her name was "Mrs Brown" and that she was a "SWAPO terrorist". After her release from detention, she required further hospital treatment.

- The Reverend T.S. Farisani, Dean of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Venda "homeland" in South Africa, was released uncharged in June 1982 after eight months' detention without trial. (Venda is one of the African "homelands" given its "independence" by South Africa, but not recognized as an independent state by the rest of the world.)

He alleged in July that, while in detention, he was tortured by the Venda security police; that he was made to do exercises until he collapsed; beaten until his ears, eyes, nose and mouth bled; had a wet canvas hood put over his head and repeatedly subjected to electric shocks. Three weeks later, he had a heart attack and in January 1982 was transferred to hospital.

The Reverend T.S. Farisani was one of about 20 people, including several other Lutheran church leaders, arrested in October and November 1981 after an attack on a police station at Sibasa, the Venda capital. One of the detainees, Isaac Tshifhiwa Muofhe, a Lutheran lay preacher, died in security police custody in November 1981 and the magistrate at the inquest into his death in July 1982 ruled that he had been killed by two named members of the security police. Of that group of detainees, two pleaded guilty to minor offences and received fines or suspended prison sentences after having been detained for more than six months; the rest were released uncharged.

- *AI* has appealed to the South African Government on behalf of all these detainees but has received no reply □

## Nicaragua Govt. response to AI Report

The Nicaraguan Government has sent *AI* a memorandum on the organization's concerns in the country and has invited it to carry out further missions there.

The memorandum—received on 13 August 1982—responds to *AI*'s letter of 29 April which was published as an appendix to the 1982 *AI* report on Nicaragua released in June (see August *Newsletter*).

In its memorandum, the government reiterates points made in its prior commentary on the *AI* memorandum that formed the basis of the 1982 report but elaborates on the applicability of a Law of Pardon as a remedy for miscarriages of justice, and on the controversial Law for the Maintenance of Public Order and Security, described in *AI*'s report as "in many ways resembling a law of exception".

The government rejects *AI*'s criticism that the law was applied to detain prisoners of conscience—and applied in every case involving political dissent or opposition—or that special trial procedures applied under the law jeopardized fair trial.

The Nicaraguan memorandum recognizes that the law deviates from the norms of ordinary criminal proceedings but justifies this on the grounds that the situation in the country is "recognized internationally as extraordinary".

### Ambiguous definitions

It says that the concern expressed by *AI* and other organizations that the law provides broad and ambiguous definitions of crimes related to national security is to be taken into account in a pending reform intended to define crimes more precisely.

Although *AI* welcomes the consideration given to its concerns by the Nicaraguan Government, it has not changed its position on points made in its 29 April letter to the government and is continuing to monitor closely the application of the public order and security law.

The 73-page *Report of the Amnesty International Missions to the Republic of Nicaragua: August 1979, January 1980 and August 1980* and the Nicaraguan Government's response to the report can be obtained from *AI*'s International Secretariat, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, United Kingdom; price £2.00 □

# 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.

## Ana Margarita GASTEAZORO Escolán, *El Salvador*

*An official of a Salvadorian political party, she has been in custody since May 1981.*

Ana Margarita Gasteazoro Escolán was arrested by members of the National Guard on 12 May 1981 at the Institute of Social Studies in San Salvador. She was then Secretary for Women's Affairs of the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR), a social democratic party affiliated to the Socialist International.

Also arrested with her were Eleuterio de Jesús Cárcamo, the MNR's Secretary for Trade Union Affairs, and Rafael Barrera, a teacher.

The Salvadorian authorities originally denied that the three were being held but after worldwide expressions of concern for the detainees' safety they eventually produced Ana Margarita Gasteazoro on Salvadorian television and allowed her to speak to journalists. The arrest of the other two was acknowledged later.

Ana Margarita Gasteazoro was placed under military jurisdiction and charged with participation in guerrilla insurgency. The charges, which she has denied, were based on documents allegedly found at the place of arrest.

She was also charged with plotting against national security, working on behalf of international terrorism and using a false name. The charges apparently result from speeches she made abroad before her arrest in which she presented an analysis of Salvadorian society and the current civil strife.

Her case has been consigned to the courts but to AI's knowledge she has still not been tried.

AI considers that Ana Margarita Gasteazoro is being held because of her non-violent political activities and the expression of her views.

*Please send courteous letters appealing for her release to: Sr. Roberto d'Aubuisson/Presidente de la Asamblea Constituyente/San Salvador/El Salvador.*

## Albertino NETO, *Sao Tome and Principe*

*A former commander of his country's armed forces, he has served four and a half years of a 14-year prison sentence for involvement in a "plot" to kill the head of state.*

Albertino Neto was arrested in Sao Tome in February 1978 on his return to his country after a year's military training in Cuba. He was accused of complicity in an alleged plot to kill President Pinto da Costa.

In March 1979 he, his wife and five others were tried by a Special Tribunal for Counter-Revolutionary Acts. The court was composed of officials of the ruling party rather than independent judges and the defendants had little opportunity to defend themselves. Albertino Neto was convicted and sentenced to 21 years' imprisonment (later reduced to 14 years'); his wife and three other people were jailed on charges of complicity in the "plot".

The only evidence against Albertino Neto was another defendant's statement while in custody that he had tried to kill the President with a bomb and that Albertino Neto and his wife had been involved in the attempt. The prisoner concerned has since said that his "confession" was made under the threat of execution.

AI is aware of no other evidence of any attempt on the President's life, or to indicate that Albertino Neto was involved in a conspiracy. It believes that he was convicted of an offence which he did not commit because his political views were regarded by the authorities as being "liberal" and pro-Western and because his wife was closely related to a former minister regarded as an opponent of the government.

Since his arrest he has been held with other political prisoners in a detention centre in Sao Tome. He was initially held incommunicado and suffered from a severe beating which he received at the time of his arrest, when his arm was broken. He may now receive visits

from his family (his wife was released in July 1980) but is suffering from severe depression and hypertension.

*Please send courteous letters appealing for his release to: Sua Excelência Dom Manuel Pinto da Costa/Presidente da República Democrática de São Tomé e Príncipe/Gabinete do Presidente da República e do MLSTP/Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe.*

## Bashir al-BARGHUTI, *Israel and the Occupied Territories*

*Editor of the Jerusalem-based bi-weekly newspaper al-Tali'a, he has been under house and town arrest for two years without charge or trial.*

Bashir al-Barghuti is one of three Palestinian editors who were first issued with restriction orders on 7 August 1980 under Article 86 of the 1970 Security Provisions Order 378. The order, which confined him to the town of al-Bireh during the day and to his house between sunset and sunrise, has been renewed four times consecutively, most recently on 12 August 1982 for another six months. The order has made it difficult for him to continue exercising his profession.

Bashir al-Barghuti is a member of the National Guidance Committee (NGC), an organization set up in 1978 by West Bank Palestinians to help coordinate their opposition to Israeli occupation. It was declared illegal in March 1982. Several prominent NGC members have been placed under house and town arrest over the past two years.

AI believes that the continuing restriction of Bashir al-Barghuti's mobility is a form of punishment for the non-violent exercise of his right to freedom of expression, and limits his political activity. It is concerned also that he is being restricted without formal charge or trial.

*Please send courteous letters appealing for his freedom to: Professor Itzhak Zamir/Attorney General/PO Box 1087/ Jerusalem/Israel.*

Peasants and tribal people suspected of opposing the policies of the Philippines Government are among hundreds of victims of human rights violations in that country in the past 18 months. Details of a number of their cases are contained in the new Report of an Amnesty International Mission to the Republic of the Philippines 11-28 November 1981, published on 22 September.

## The Philippines: illegal detentions, torture and arbitrary killings

Government forces in the Philippines have illegally detained, tortured or arbitrarily killed hundreds of people throughout the country in the last year and a half despite the lifting of martial law.

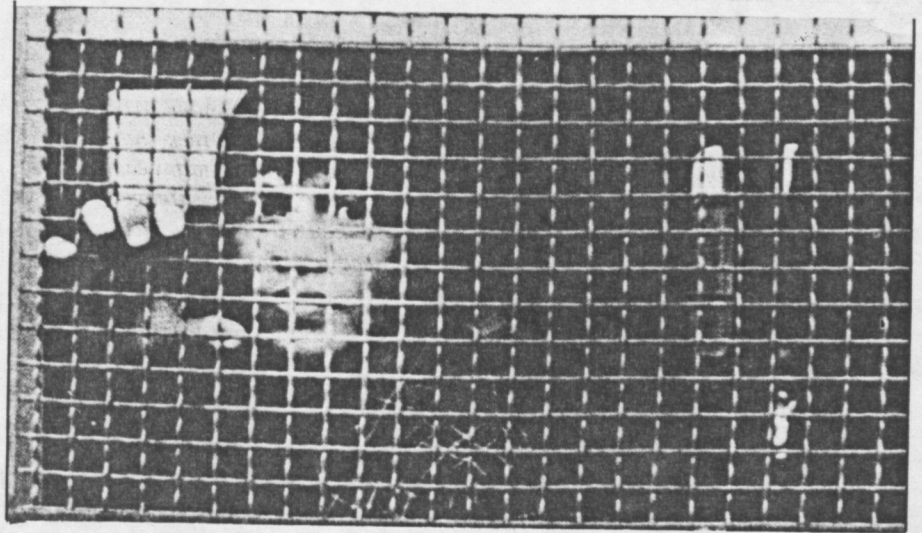
*AI* has received persistent reports of abductions and "disappearances" carried out by intelligence and security units of the armed forces as well as by irregular paramilitary groups operating with official sanction.

The Philippines Government has publicly denied responsibility and has said it would investigate alleged abuses. But *AI* has concluded from the available evidence that the government has failed to discipline guilty units effectively and is continuing to tolerate illegal acts against civilians.

The victims include peasants, tribal people, trade unionists, and church workers suspected of opposing government policies. Arbitrary arrests, often coupled with ill-treatment and death in custody, have taken place chiefly in rural areas throughout the Philippines, but have also been reported from the slums of the capital, Manila, and its surrounding industrial zones.

Reports of these abuses were investigated by an *AI* mission that visited the country from 11 to 28 November 1981, 10 months after President Ferdinand E. Marcos lifted the state of martial law he declared in 1972. The mission, whose findings and recommendations have been sent to the government, noted that the President still retains all the extensive emergency powers previously introduced under martial law, including the authority to order arrests that cannot be challenged in the courts.

The mission found that, although the number of political detainees had declined since the lifting of martial law, there was firm evidence of a disturbingly high incidence of illegal practices by government forces. These included illegal arrests and detention, torture, "disappearances" and killings.



Edwin Lopez, aged 29 . . . he was one of four people arrested after military agents raided the office of the Community Integrated Development Services in Quezon City on 26 February 1982. The agents were in plain clothes but were armed with pistols and rifles. According to Edwin Lopez's testimony, he and two others were hooded and taken away for interrogation over a period of about five days about alleged NPA connections. He says he was tortured with electric shocks and beaten in a building used by the Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group and at Military Intelligence Group No. 15's headquarters in Quezon City. Describing his electric torture, he refers to a white instrument attached to wires: "The white instrument was pressed on my right leg. I felt a shock of burning heat which spread all over my body. I cried out in terrible pain. My whole body trembled because of the high electric charge streaming through it. The white instrument was repeatedly jabbed onto my thighs, arms and nape. The trembling of my body grew stronger as the point of contact approached my nape. It came to a point when I was trembling involuntarily even after the man withdrew his white instrument. The electric shock treatment went on for about half an hour."

Edwin Lopez is still imprisoned—but as far as *AI* knows has not yet been formally charged.

They were directed against people considered opponents of the government and were committed by members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the police, the civilian militia—the Integrated Civilian Home Defence Force (CHDF)—and irregular paramilitary groups apparently operating with official sanction, such as the "Rock Christ" group and the "Lost Command".

The *AI* delegation received details of cases from all but one of the country's 12 military regions. In approximately 50 the evidence was sufficient to justify *AI's* concern that human rights had been violated. During the later years of

martial law *AI* had received increasingly frequent reports of "disappearances" and political killings attributed to government agents. Many of the incidents investigated by the mission, which had taken place since the lifting of martial law, were of this type, indicating that the pattern established before 17 January 1981 was continuing.

In 33 cases evidence was presented that individuals or groups of individuals had been illegally killed by government agents. A high proportion were in remote areas where the New People's Army (NPA)—the armed wing of the Communist Party in the Philippines—was active and the victims were accused

of being members of the NPA. These areas included the Cagayan Valley of Northern Luzon, the Bicol region of southeast Luzon, Negros Occidental and Samar in the Visayas, and several provinces of Mindanao.

Although there is armed conflict in many areas of the Philippines, the mission found no evidence in any of the cases investigated that the victims were killed in encounters with military or police personnel as has sometimes been alleged by the authorities. In many cases the evidence suggested that the victim had been killed after interrogation and torture or after being taken to a place of detention: that is, after being taken into custody.

There was also considerable evidence that killings were often arbitrary or due to the victim's involvement in non-violent activities such as union organizing, participation in the movement to boycott the presidential elections of June 1981, or membership of church-sponsored community groups.

#### Farmers killed

In one typical case two farmers, Antonio Abon and a man identified as "Temy", were killed and six others illegally detained and ill-treated after their arrest on 23 July 1981 by soldiers of the 20th Mechanised Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army in Barrio Osmena, Gebarin, southern Samar.

The army unit was on a routine operation and apparently suspected the men because they were staying overnight on their farms in the mountains. The eight were reportedly taken to Gebarin barracks where they were interrogated, beaten and humiliated.

During this interrogation Antonio Abon and "Temy" were reportedly taken out and shot dead.

The six others were later moved to army general headquarters at Parasanun where they were again reportedly beaten and ill-treated. Their families were not informed of their arrest by the authorities. However, on learning of the arrests they managed to get publicity through a radio station. The six were later transferred to the regional command headquarters at Camp Lukban, Catbalogan, where they were reported to have been interrogated under torture before release on 23 August 1981.

In a number of other cases presented to the delegation the victims had "disappeared". It was feared that they had been killed although their bodies had not been found.

On 24 June 1981 two union organizers working in the Bataan Export Processing Zone—Antonio Santa Ana and Jemeliana Paguio—were arrested by members of the 176th Company of the Philippine Constabulary (PC) in Orion, Bataan.

Antonio Santa Ana was arrested with his wife and seven-year-old daughter. They were taken to the PC provincial headquarters at Camp Tolentino, Balanga, Bataan. Their families were refused permission to visit.

On 29 June the wife and child of Antonio Santa Ana were released after relatives presented a temporary release order. The order also applied to Antonio Santa Ana but his release was refused.

On 7 July relatives of another detainee, Vivencio Santos, reportedly arrested for participation in the movement to boycott the presidential election, visited the camp. They were told that Vivencio Santos, Antonio Santa Ana and Jemeliana Paguio had all escaped earlier that day.

After the alleged escape none of the three contacted relatives. The families wrote to President Marcos on 19 July expressing doubt that they had in fact escaped, especially since they were all eligible for release. The three had still not reappeared by September 1982 and it is feared that they have been killed.

The AI mission found that very few people taken into custody were presented with a warrant or Presidential Order of Arrest (POA) at any stage. (A POA is a warrant issued by the President under emergency powers retained since the lifting of martial law.) Even in those cases there was evidence of procedural irregularities. Most people arrested were detained illegally:

- in some cases they were held incommunicado in secret places of detention, known in the Philippines as "safe-houses";
- in others the authorities refused to acknowledge their detention and grant access to families and legal counsel;
- in others there was a delay in delivery of the detainee to the proper judicial authority.

Delay in delivering the detainee to the proper authority was sometimes justified by a "waiver of detention" signed by the detainee, in which the prisoner had agreed to continued detention and waived the right to a judicial hearing within the time prescribed by law. The AI delegation received evidence that this procedure had been abused

and that detainees had been coerced into signing "waivers of detention" which were sometimes backdated.

Detainees are commonly subjected to torture, which may include beatings, death threats and electric shocks, and are often released without any charge having been brought. In a number of cases reported to AI after its mission, prisoners are said to have been beaten and ill-treated even after having been visited by relatives:

- Marco Palo is one of about 20 people arrested in the Manila area during January and February 1982 (17 of them filed detailed complaints of ill-treatment or torture after arrest). He says he was tortured on four separate occasions in four different locations—twice before his wife visited him on 1 March and twice afterwards. His wife described his condition about 12 hours after the last alleged torture session on 3 March: "We saw Marco at about 6.00 pm (3 March). He was blindfolded and handcuffed. I was shocked by his condition. When he left our house on Friday morning (26 February). . . he was strong and in good health. But last night, he was so weak he could hardly get out of the car."

#### Detention centres

Detainees who are charged may be held in military detention centres. Those arrested during the martial law period continue to face protracted proceedings before military tribunals that do not conform to international legal standards.

Civilians still undergoing trial by military courts include those who have been held for the longest periods in detention, one of them for over eight years.

AI has asked the authorities to set up impartial commissions of inquiry to investigate complaints of torture, "disappearances" and killings by Philippine Government forces and by paramilitary groups operating with official sanction. It has also urged the release of people imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of their rights, the protection of detainees in custody and the immediate transfer of civilian political prisoners to the jurisdiction of civilian courts.

AI is also seeking the abolition of the death penalty, which can be invoked in the Philippines in politically related cases. More than 800 people are under sentence of death. A third of them have been under sentence of death for the past 10 to 25 years□

## USSR Peace activist detained in psychiatric hospital

A 25-year-old Moscow artist who helped found an unofficial peace group earlier this year is reported to have been forcibly confined to a psychiatric hospital for just over a month after his arrest on 6 August 1982.

Sergei **Batovrin** is reported to have been released from Moscow's Psychiatric Hospital No. 14 on 7 September.

According to his wife, he was forced to take drugs four times daily and threatened with electric shock treatment. Hospital doctors are reported to have told him his actions as a member of the peace group were "socially dangerous" and "induced by illness".

He is a founder-member of the unofficial "Group for the Establishment of Trust between the USSR and the USA". The group announced its formation on 4 June this year at a press conference held in the Batovrins' flat. It consisted initially of 11 academics and professional people from the Moscow area but others have since joined and about 170 people from various Soviet republics are reported to have signed its declaration of intent.

Members have emphasized that they do not regard themselves as "dissidents" and that their aims—to increase formal and informal contacts between the USSR and the USA—coincide with the declared aims of the Soviet Government.

### Registration plea

The group, which has appealed to both the USSR and the USA for a halt to nuclear testing, has asked to be registered as an official organization but the Soviet authorities have not responded to the request.

Within days of the press conference members of the group were summoned for questioning by the police. They were warned that their activities were "provocative, anti-social and unlawful" and threatened with criminal proceedings.

Members and supporters continued to be harassed by the authorities. They were repeatedly summoned for questioning; their flats were cordoned off, visitors were turned away and they were refused contact with foreign press correspondents.

On 16 July the group planned another press conference in connection with the international "Peace March

'82", scheduled to arrive in Moscow on 21 July. The marchers—mostly women from Scandinavian countries—had come to the Soviet Union with the help of the official, government-organized "Soviet Peace Committee".

Two members of the unofficial group—Yury **Khronopoulo** and Yury **Medvedkov**—were arrested on their way to the second press conference and charged with "hooliganism". The two, both distinguished academics, were each sentenced to 15 days' imprisonment.

At the same time three other members of their group were ordered to leave Moscow for limited periods under threat of losing their jobs.

The arrests and "banishment" orders coincided with the arrival of the Peace March in Moscow.

### Paintings confiscated

On 5 August a third press conference was called to mark the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. The group planned also to hold an exhibition of Sergei Batovrin's paintings on anti-war themes in Yury Medvedkov's flat. However, the police barred the entrance to the flat and confiscated 88 of the paintings.

Sergei Batovrin was arrested in the flat the next day and confined under civil procedures to the psychiatric hospital.

It was the second time this has happened to him. In 1975 he was arrested and confined for two and a half months after participating in an unofficial art exhibition in Moscow. He was then diagnosed as suffering from "sluggish schizophrenia", an illness commonly attributed to people holding non-conformist views.

- On 11 August *AI* appealed for Sergei Batovrin's immediate release. According to Soviet law, no one may be compulsorily confined in a psychiatric hospital unless they are a danger to themselves or others. *AI* knows of no evidence to suggest that this is true in Sergei Batovrin's case and believes he was confined because of his membership of the unofficial group. *AI* knows of hundreds of cases in which mentally healthy people have been confined in Soviet psychiatric hospitals for peacefully expressing views disapproved of by the authorities □

## Syria Public hangings in Damascus

Five people are reported to have been publicly hanged in the Syrian capital, Damascus, during August 1982.

Two people were hanged in a central square and a third on the outskirts of the city on 7 August after being sentenced to death for looting, burglary, kidnapping and rape.

On 10 August Zuhair **Butros** was hanged in central Damascus after his conviction on charges of deserting the Syrian army and spying for Israel.

On 23 August Salahuddin al-**Faqir**, the manager of a bank in the southern town of Dera'a, was hanged in the capital after being convicted of embezzling \$4.5 million worth of public funds and trying to burn down the bank to cover his crime.

*AI* has expressed its concern about the executions to President Assad and urged him to commute existing or further death sentences □

## Egypt More than 1,500 detainees freed

More than 1,500 detainees are reported to have been released in Egypt during the past two months: 1,261 during August and a further 272 on 1 September.

Most had been held since October 1981, when thousands of people were arrested after the assassination of President Sadat. They were held without charge or trial under State of Emergency procedures imposed that month. The majority were alleged to be members of illegal militant religious organizations.

Those released also included some of the 1,536 people arrested during the first week of September 1981 on President Sadat's orders (see October 1981 *Newsletter*).

The semi-official newspaper *AI Ahram* announced on 18 August 1982 that a total of 1,900 detainees would be freed before 8 October □

### Death penalty

**AI has learned of 57 people being sentenced to death in 13 countries and of 50 executions in nine countries during August 1982.**

## Turkey Peace group on trial — fears for health of leader

Serious medical fears have been expressed for the life of a 66-year-old defendant in the martial law trial in Istanbul of 26 detained members of the Turkish Peace Association (TPA).

On 9 September 1982 the judge presiding at the trial hearing refused an application by lawyers of the TPA's President, Mahmut Dikerdem, for him to be allowed to undergo urgent surgery in a civilian hospital.

This followed recommendations by doctors that the ailing defendant should have an immediate operation to remove a tumour in his prostate gland which a biopsy has shown to be malignant.

He is reported to have had an operation in the Kasimpasa naval hospital in Istanbul on 13 September.

### Military custody

Mahmut Dikerdem, a former Turkish ambassador, and other leading members of the TPA were taken into military custody on 26 February 1982 and their trial has been continuing since 24 June.

The defendants are charged under Articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code with membership of an illegal organization and making communist propaganda. Although the TPA was a legal organization in Turkey until the military coup of September 1980—when all political organizations were banned—the prosecution maintains that its members' activities turned it into an organization banned under Article 141.

The 91-page indictment accuses the TPA of having "used the holy name of Peace from the beginning as a cover, under which it carried out... the directives of the USSR".

The TPA is accused of trying to undermine Turkey's agreements with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and of intending to replace the existing order in Turkey with a Marxist-Leninist system and communism.

The indictment states that the TPA set about achieving these aims by collaborating with political parties, associations, trade unions, professional organizations and people of the same opinion inside and outside the country by making their opinions known through the printing of brochures and

bulletins and the organizing of congresses, meetings and marches.

In particular, the TPA is said to have made propaganda in eastern and south-eastern Turkey—where most of the Kurdish ethnic minority live—"to promote racism and thus provoke division".

In *AI's* view none of the charges brought against the TPA members or the evidence cited in the indictment to support them indicate that the defendants have used or advocated violence. *AI* believes that the defendants have been indicted solely on the basis of their non-violent beliefs and activities; it has adopted the detained defendants as prisoners of conscience and has appealed to the Turkish authorities for their immediate and unconditional release.

On 29 July 1982 *AI* issued an urgent call for the release of Mahmut Dikerdem after learning that he had a tumour in the prostate gland and had been moved from prison to a military hospital. It has since issued two further urgent appeals on his behalf.

### Other defendants

Other TPA defendants include Kemal Anadol, Nedim Tarhan and Nurettin Yilmaz, former members of parliament; Orhan Apaydin, President of the Istanbul Bar Association; Dr Erdal Atabek, President of the Turkish Medical Association; Professor Melih Tumer, Dean of the Istanbul Academy of Political Sciences; and Reha Isvan, former Deputy Head in Istanbul of the Department of Education and wife of Istanbul's former mayor, Ahmet Isvan, who is also imprisoned—in connection with the DISK trial before a military court in which 52 trade union leaders are facing the death penalty (see May 1982 *Newsletter*).

- The fourth session of the trial was observed on *AI's* behalf on 17 August by Professor Otto Triffterer, of the Institute of Criminal Law at the University of Salzburg, Austria. The following day he attended a session of the DISK trial on *AI's* behalf. A member of *AI's* International Secretariat attended previous sessions of the DISK trial during January 1982 (the trial opened on 24 December 1981). All the DISK defendants have been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience□

## Saudi Arabia Condemned man is beheaded

Deviko Friyol, a Filipino, was beheaded in Dammam, eastern Saudi Arabia, on 6 August 1982, after being convicted of killing three people during an armed robbery.

*AI* has cabled its concern about the execution to Prince Naif bin Abd al-Aziz, the Saudi Arabian Minister of Interior, reiterating its opposition to capital punishment in all cases on humanitarian grounds and urging commutation of all such sentences□

## AI council takes new decision on group work

In a new decision, *AI's* International Council—meeting in Rimini, Italy, from 9 to 12 September—has agreed that each *AI* group should in future work for all of the movement's central objectives:

- freeing prisoners of conscience;
- seeking fair and prompt trials for political prisoners;
- opposing torture and executions.

In the past, some groups have specialized in pressing for one or another of these goals. They will now be called on to mount public pressure both through appeals for individual prisoners and participation in broader campaigns on human rights issues.

Some 300 delegates from 48 countries attended the International Council to establish the movement's program in the coming year.

### International budget

The council approved an international budget for 1983 of about £3.5 million, an increase of some 20 per cent over 1982. All of this money is raised by the membership of some 350,000 volunteers. No contributions to the international budget are sought or accepted from governments.

The council elected four new members to its nine-strong International Executive Committee, which will govern the movement until the next council meeting. They are the Austrian political scientist Wolfgang Heinz; the US publisher Whitney Ellsworth; Jan Willem den Herder, a Dutch graduate student, and Franca Sciuto, an Italian lawyer□

# French priests jailed in Brazil

Two French Roman Catholic priests have been sentenced to a total of 25 years' imprisonment after being convicted by a military court in Brazil of inciting "violent struggle between social classes". The priests, who have appealed against the sentence, have been adopted by *AI* as prisoners of conscience.

Father Aristides Camio was sentenced to 15 years' and Father François Gouriou to 10 years' imprisonment under Article 36 of Brazil's Law of National Security (LNS). They were found not guilty of an additional charge of inciting "collective disobedience of the laws".

The priests may also face expulsion under Brazil's Foreigners' Law.

The priests, who are being held in the Federal Police Department, Brasilia, have entered an appeal to the Superior Military Tribunal. The prosecution has also appealed, asking for the sentences to be increased to the 30-year maximum.

## Peasants convicted

The sentences were handed down by a court in Belém, in the state of Pará, on 22 June 1982. It also convicted a group of 13 peasant co-defendants under Article 31 of the LNS of using violence "for reasons of dissidence or socio-political non-conformity against those in authority". The peasants were given sentences of between 8 and 9 years' imprisonment each.

All the defendants had been arrested after an incident at Cajueiro on 13 August 1981 when peasants ambushed a convoy of government land agents, federal police and hired gunmen. One person died and six others were wounded.

A member of *AI*'s International Secretariat, attended the trial.

During the trial the defence repeatedly stressed that the formal charges against the priests were vague and

## PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

*AI* believes that Father Aristides Camio and Father François Gouriou have been imprisoned for expressing their conscientiously held beliefs and for practising, in the course of their normal pastoral duties, the official policy of the Roman Catholic Church.

*AI* believes that the hearings in Belém failed to meet internationally recognized standards for a fair trial. The climate of hostility and intimidation created by the excessively large military presence in the town during the trial was not conducive to an independent and impartial hearing. There appear to have been irregularities in the police investigations.

The organization is concerned about allegations by prosecution witnesses that federal police pressurized them to commit perjury and about evidence that similar pressure may have been applied to the co-defendants to implicate one another.

general, and contended that the prosecution had failed to demonstrate how the actions of either priest were linked to the ambush on 13 August.

The defence argued that there was insufficient evidence to infer that any actions by the priests had been undertaken with the express purpose of undermining the state, an essential component of any LNS prosecution.

Defence lawyers argued that far from having a great influence over peasants in the area, the priests had visited it only once, on 8 August, to say a mass arranged months before and listed on the diocese calendar.

During the mass, Father Gouriou did not speak at all; Father Camio preached a sermon about the need of the peasants to support and help one another "like a hive of bees".

The majority of the peasant co-defendants had not attended the mass. Before the trial, the court and centre of Belém were sealed off by military police. Local newspapers estimated that up to 2,000 soldiers were brought into the town and one of the defence lawyers protested to the judges about the intimidating military presence.

The priests were charged with having instigated the attack on the convoy in their sermons at a mass on 8 August, five days earlier.

The prosecution claimed that the priests' influence over people in the area had been the main factor behind the ambush; that they had used their sermons for the purposes of incitement and had tried to provoke conflicts over land tenure and violence towards the government's agrarian policy, using slogans such as "The land belongs to those who work it"; that the priests had had in their possession subversive material advocating communism and socialism—in particular, a document allegedly linking them with the banned Maoist party, *Partido Comunista do Brasil* (PC do B); and that on the day of the mass they had brought the peasants into the "plot" and planned the ambush with them.

## Police pressure alleged

The defence produced statements by witnesses who alleged they had been pressurized by federal police into committing perjury. Similar pressures, the defence said, appeared to have been brought on co-defendants in the trial.

Statements were also produced in court from families of several of the accused peasants alleging that they had been tortured in detention.

The defence said that important prosecution evidence had been completely discredited in court, including a document in French alleged by the state to establish links between the priests and the banned PC do B. The document—a report for the priests order, *Missions étrangères de Paris*—had been shown not to have been written by the priests and, furthermore, the translator had admitted making serious mistakes.

The defence maintained also that:

- documents seized at the priests' home and claimed by the police to be subversive were either freely on sale in Brazil or else were official Church documents;
- the "subversive" slogans mentioned in the indictment had been used by the Brazilian Government itself □

## PRISONERS RELEASED

*Continued from page 1*

Johnny James Issel, a black community worker in South Africa (prisoner of the month in April 1982), was released from detention at the end of June 1982, after being held without trial for more than seven months.

He remains adopted by *AI* as a prisoner of conscience since he is still restricted under a three-year banning order imposed in January 1981 □

## Prisoner Releases and Cases

The International Secretariat learned in August of the release of 100 prisoners under adoption or investigation; it took up 209 cases.

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## CAMPAIGN FOR PRISONERS OF THE MONTH

*DEAR READER . . . YOUR COOPERATION IS IMPORTANT*

From time to time Amnesty International tries to evaluate aspects of its work. This is important to ensure that we help prisoners in the most efficient way possible.

We are now carrying out a survey of the number of individual participants in the *Campaign for Prisoners of the Month*.

Please fill in the questionnaire on the other side of this postcard and send it to the office of the Amnesty International national section in your country. *If there is no section in your country*, send the postcard to: Amnesty International/  
International Secretariat/ 10 Southampton Street/ London  
WC2E 7HF/ United Kingdom



## QUESTIONNAIRE

[*please tick appropriate boxes*]

● I/my group participate(s) in the  
*Campaign for Prisoners of the Month*

every month

sometimes

● I/we usually send appeals on behalf  
of:

all three prisoners

one or two prisoners

● I/we usually send a total of .....  
letters each time.

Affix  
stamp  
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# amnesty international supplement

PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE WEEK, 11–17 October

AI's Prisoners of Conscience Week campaign this year focuses on human rights violations in rural areas and the particular difficulties of helping rural dwellers who are imprisoned, tortured or killed for the non-violent exercise of their human rights. This supplement examines some of these difficulties and cites cases of rural victims of political repression in countries of widely differing political and social systems. It begins with an account of a new counter-insurgency program by security forces launched in the Guatemalan countryside earlier this year.

## Victims without voice

### Human rights violations in rural areas

Guatemalan forces massacred more than 2,600 Indians and peasant farmers in a new counter-insurgency program launched after General Efraín Ríos Montt came to power in March this year.

Military and newly formed "civil defence" units destroyed entire villages, tortured and mutilated local people and carried out mass executions in at least 112 separate incidents between March and July.

Reports still coming in show the pattern has continued in more recent months. Exact details of all the incidents are hard to establish but *AI* believes the death toll is probably higher than the figures reported to it so far.

In one Indian village in Quiché province on 5 April troops were reported to have forced all the inhabitants into the courthouse, raped the women and beheaded the men, and then battered the children to death against rocks in a nearby river. Raids elsewhere on the same day left some 100 people dead in the village of Mangal and 35 at Covadonga.

In a house-to-house operation in Quiché province in May, armed agents killed 25 children between the ages of 4 months and 14 years, 15 women and three men.

In other localities, people have been burned alive in their huts, hacked to death by machete and machine-gunned. Information about other atrocities is coming in to *AI* daily.



A Guatemalan Indian woman grieves for her dead after a massacre in Santo Tomás Chichicastenango district in May this year.

Government forces have cleared all local people from several areas where insurgents were reported, killing many and driving others away.

Guatemalan officials maintain that the dead are guerrillas who died in clashes with government forces or civilians killed by guerrillas. But *AI*'s information repeatedly points to government responsibility for a program of mass killing of unarmed civilians in rural areas.

*AI* previously reported the existence of a government-run assassination program under former President Romero Lucas García in which "death

squads" eliminated suspected opponents of the government, many of them in Guatemala's cities. Now, wholesale massacres are being reported from the countryside.

The situation in Guatemala provides a grim example of human rights violations in rural areas. Such violations are not confined to any one country or political system. In countries all over the world—this supplement cites cases from more than a dozen—rural dwellers are imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of their human rights or subjected to torture, the death penalty or extrajudicial execution.

The main problem for human rights organizations working for these victims of human rights violations is lack of information. Rural dwellers often have little contact with the communications network of their own countries or with international agencies interested in their welfare. In many cases, these areas are remote and hard to reach for people from the cities. Local community or union organization is often weak, limiting access to information and inhibiting contact with urban-based organizations such as trade unions and political parties which could give effective support.

Awareness of human rights and of the legal and political remedies available under national or international law is often very limited in rural areas; the level of literacy is often low, as is knowledge of the legal system. In addition, many people from rural areas have suffered from bias in the application of legal protections. There is consequently often little motivation to try to use existing political or legal machinery to protect human rights.

As a result, governments are able more easily to violate legal and moral standards when dealing with isolated rural groups.

Government forces and administrative agencies in a number of countries have suppressed real or suspected opponents in rural areas unchecked, because of the absence of public watchdogs such as the news media and civil rights organizations.

Publicity can help such prisoners. For example:

- Six farmers were released in the Philippines after a radio station publicized their "disappearance". They had been ill-treated by the army and two of their friends had been killed.
- The leader of the Bolivian Rural Workers Confederation, Genaro Flores, who was shot and critically wounded when arrested in July 1981, was allowed to leave the country for treatment in France after *AI* and other organizations interceded on his behalf.



Genaro Flores

## Caught in the crossfire . . .

In countries where government and opposition forces are in armed conflict, people living in rural areas tend to be particularly susceptible to human rights violations.

Armed opposition movements often use rural areas for their bases, leading to attacks by government forces; government forces may also be less constrained to respect legal norms and human rights standards in remote villages.

Victims of human rights violations in these circumstances are often accused of being guerrillas or active supporters of guerrillas. The security forces commonly have special powers to arrest people on these grounds; often they are not required to produce substantial evidence to support the allegation. *AI* has encountered many instances of non-combatant civilians being arrested, tortured, and even executed without any evidence that they had been involved in armed activity, because of their ethnic origin or political sympathies imputed to them.

In Colombia, operations by the army to combat guerrillas have been accompanied by violence against members of the rural population suspected of collaboration with the guerrilla forces. Ramón Cardona, a farmer, and his workers Fabio Herrera and Gilberto Duque, aged 70, were detained by the army at the end of April 1981 and were tortured and then killed.

The army told the press that the three were guerrillas who were killed during an ambush on members of the security forces. Eye-witnesses said that this was not so, and further evidence supported their declaration. For example, the victims were alleged to have chosen to ambush the army in the very place where they lived and worked (in Albania, Caqueta). Injuries to the victims did not appear to have been inflicted during exchange of gunfire. One victim, Ramón Cardona, had a broken jaw, a broken arm and his hands cut as if with a machete.

*AI* has received numerous reports of the killing of unarmed villagers by the army in Uganda during military operations in areas of guerrilla activity (see September 1982 *Newsletter*.) In June 1981 about 60 people—including several children—were killed by soldiers while sheltering from the fighting in a mission station in Ombachi in West Nile Province, apparently in

reprisal for medical treatment given by Red Cross doctors in the mission to wounded guerrillas. In another incident in September 1981 Ugandan soldiers reportedly killed about 16 people at Wakiso Village in Mpigi North-East District. They were lined up and shot some hours after a guerrilla attack on an army unit there. A few days later, about 30 people were killed at Matuga Village, not far from Wakiso Village, after further guerrilla action.

In remote areas of the Philippines, where the New People's Army, the military wing of the Communist Party in the Philippines, is active, government agents have killed people and claimed the deaths occurred in armed clashes. In a number of cases investigated by *AI* it appeared that the victims had not in fact been killed in encounters with the army or police. All the evidence suggested that the victims had been killed after interrogation and torture, or after being taken to a place of detention. (See pages 4 and 5 of this month's *Newsletter*.)

In Guatemala, security forces have been charged with responsibility for a large number of "disappearances" and extrajudicial executions in rural areas where guerrillas were believed to be active. Such abuses have continued since the coup of 23 March 1982 (see front page of this supplement).

### PROGRAM OF TORTURE

In El Salvador the security forces have been carrying out a systematic and widespread program of torture, "disappearances" and individual and mass killings. The victims have included not only people suspected of opposition to the authorities, but also thousands of people who were simply in areas targeted for security operations and the peasant population in certain areas where opposition forces were believed to be strong.

A refugee from Cabañas province who fled to Honduras in 1981 told an *AI* mission in August 1981 that he and his fellow villagers were forced to flee because of continued killings by Salvadorian security forces:

"... on 28 February 1980 they penetrated the Cabañas zone where they killed seven *compañeros*, humble peasants who were working cultivating. . . On 18 June a force of. . . *guardia*, police and soldiers came and assassinated 23 *compañeros*. On 29 July they returned. . . and assassinated 18 *compañeros* and *compañeras*, among them a young woman who was seven months pregnant, called Adelaida Aleman. After they killed her, they sliced open her

belly and took the child out and they cut it up with a *corvo* (curved knife) and threw it to the dogs. . . On 13 August they came back and assassinated five *compañeros*. . . (and) also raped seven young women of between 14 and 30 years of age; they raped them and even hung them up by their necks.

"On 3 September they returned and killed another five *compañeros*. . . Then in March (1981) they came back . . . Then we had to flee to Honduras because of the repression which was too much with the mortars and the bombings and they tracked us by land."

## Rural organizers killed

People living in rural areas often face more difficulties than those living in cities when they try to organize to safeguard their rights. The population is likely to be scattered and communications poor. Many rural organizations have less protection under national laws than organizations in cities. In some cases, the rural organizations are city-based and, in times of persecution, can easily be cut off from the people they are trying to represent.

Governments in many countries are particularly sensitive about the development of rural organizations, regarding their growth as a threat to government control.

In the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Im Tong-kyu, aged 42, who had worked for some years with farmers' organizations in setting up cooperatives, was arrested in March 1979 along with seven other people. He was accused of being the leader of a group working for a communist revolution in South Korea and was sentenced to life imprisonment in October 1979.

The allegations included "masterminding" student demonstrations against the government's economic policies and the repression of civil rights, and of having attempted to spread anti-government and pro-communist ideas through the publication of an agricultural magazine and at lecture meetings. The group was accused also of illegally possessing books such as a history of the German farmers' struggle against feudalism.

While in prison, Im Tong-kyu was accused of being a member of another alleged pro-communist group, and



Pastor Anaya Cuadros

was served with a second life sentence in May 1980.

Jan Kulaj, leader of the Polish independent trade union of private farmers, Rural Solidarity, was placed under house arrest after the suspension of his organization and other trade union bodies when martial law was imposed in December 1981.

He was one of a number of union activists belonging to Rural Solidarity who were interned at that time. Jan Kulaj was released on 28 April 1982 when, according to reports, most other internees belonging to Rural Solidarity were also released.

In Malaysia, Ong Loong Sheng was organizing secretary of the United Malayan Estate Workers' Union when he was arrested in May 1967 after helping to organize workers engaged in a strike at the Tring Estate.

He was detained without charge or trial under the Malaysian Internal Security Act (ISA). He was accused by the authorities of helping to organize the striking workers, of teaching songs of a "communist nature" to children and young estate employees, and of possession of three books on Marxism. He was released under an amnesty on 30 August 1982.

In March 1980, about 20 *campesinos* in Paraguay commandeered a bus to take them to the capital, Asunción, to plead their case in a land dispute. Among them was peasant leader Victoriano Centurión.

The bus was stopped by customs police and the *campesinos* fled. The incident was apparently used by the authorities as a pretext for general repression of *campesinos* in the area. Approximately 18 were killed and many more arrested the day after the bus incident. Most of those arrested

were subsequently released but 10 *campesinos* remained in prison. Among them are the sons of Victoriano Centurión, Luciano, aged 18, and Andrés, aged 22. Although they were reportedly not involved in the bus incident, they were arrested at their home in San Lorenzo on or about 12 March 1980 when the security forces were unable to find the peasant leader himself.

Land rights are a common problem for rural organizations. In disputes with big landowners, companies or the government over the ownership of and the right to cultivate land, peasants and farmers are usually at a disadvantage. They lack the resources to fight long legal battles in courts and often have to face a biased local administration.

Human rights violations connected with disputes over land ownership are not unique to any particular type of political or economic system. In some countries with communist governments, collectivization of land by the state was accompanied by the imprisonment of those who resisted or advocated resistance. In other countries such human rights violations have accompanied the activities of privately owned economic enterprises.

### CONTROL OF LAND

In Mexico, control of the land has been an explosive issue and there have been numerous reports of human rights violations against workers' and peasants' organizations by security forces. In many cases *campesinos* involved in land disputes and trade union activities have been sentenced to many years' imprisonment on charges of murder, robbery, or property damage on the basis of confessions allegedly obtained under torture.

A leading member of the independent peasant organization, *Coordinadora Nacional Plan de Ayala* (CNPA), Arturo Albores Velasco was arrested on 6 April 1981 by security forces in the state of Chiapas, allegedly at the direction of local landowners. He was humiliated and beaten at the time of arrest and was accused of murder and kidnapping.

He and a group of students had worked on a university social service project, creating parks and common areas, and building houses in San Cristóbal de las Casas. Arturo Albores became a target for persecution because he and his wife stayed on in Venustiano Carranza, where the group had helped develop textile projects.

AI believes Arturo Albores was arrested because of his continuing work liaising between the university

students and the Indians, his efforts on behalf of the Indians to regain land, the links he established between the Tzotzil Indians of Venustiano Carranza and other similar Indian groups throughout Mexico, and the publicity he obtained for their cause.

Pastor Anaya Cuadros, teacher and leader of a peasant community near Lima in Peru, has been detained since 10 February 1982, charged with "terrorism". Pastor Anaya was detained after about 300 Civil Guards raided the Jicamarca *comunidad campesina* (peasant community) on 10 February.

The primary target of the raid was a community development institute which had helped develop the area. Pastor Anaya was the institute's director and former president of the community's administrative council.

The raid followed a court case in which a local landowner had unsuccessfully claimed title to community lands. Before the raid landowners claiming rights to community lands had placed advertisements in Peruvian newspapers accusing it of terrorism. Under Peruvian law, if a community loses its status as a *comunidad campesina* its land may be sold.

In a statement to a press conference the day after the raid, a Civil Guard representative said Jicamarca should not have its *comunidad campesina* status, suggesting that it was a "façade" for subversive activities. He said Pastor Anaya was the head of a "terrorist" organization and was responsible for "inciting land takeovers".

The evidence presented to the conference included a slide projector and reels of film from a Dutch documentary on the building of Jicamarca's reservoir by community women. No specific acts of violence were alleged by the authorities. AI believes that Pastor Anaya Cuadros did not use or advocate violence and is imprisoned for his activities as a community leader.

## Ethnic minorities

Members of ethnic minorities often face discrimination, prejudice and repression: if they live in isolated rural areas they are unlikely to have effective access to the legal and political remedies to protect their human rights.

In many countries demands by ethnic groups for social and cultural rights, autonomy or self-determination conflict with the government's determination to retain central control. In



Indian women behind barbed wire in the Guatemalan village of Chajul. . . In its bid to isolate guerrillas, the government has moved many rural people into confined areas where their activities can be controlled by the security forces.

AI's experience, the result of these tensions has often been the violation of the basic human rights of rural-based ethnic minority groups.

Political movements arguing for or trying to protect the rights of ethnic groups have frequently been branded as "subversive", "separatist" or "terrorist" by governments, even though there are no grounds for accusing them of violence.

In Guatemala thousands of indigenous Indian farmers (*campesinos*) have died during the counter-insurgency operations of Guatemalan security forces in areas where the armed opposition movement was believed to be active (see front page of this supplement).

In Bangladesh security forces are reported to have arrested, tortured and killed members of non-Bengali Buddhist ethnic groups living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, an area in southeast Bangladesh. These ethnic groups opposed the mass settlement of landless Bengali Muslims from the plains, a policy encouraged by successive governments. They also demanded greater autonomy. Up to 300 people were killed by the defence forces on 25 March 1980 according to widely-circulated press reports.

In Bulgaria Pomaks, ethnic Bulgarians of the Muslim faith, have been under intense pressure to renounce their religious identity and submit to an official campaign of assimilation, requiring them to exchange their Muslim names for traditional Bulgarian ones. In 1973, Pomak peasants protested; many were arrested and an unknown number sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

In the Philippines at least 127

Tingians, members of an ethnic minority group were arrested and held for periods of up to several months after a land dispute with a government-owned corporation. They were arrested and accused of links with the New People's Army between October 1977 and December 1981, in the period when the government-owned logging and timber company, Celophil Resources Corporation, began operations.

Tingians living in the uplands opposed the project because it disregarded tribal rights to ancestral lands. Their opposition intensified later as a result of the coercive methods adopted by the government, involving a substantial military presence.

Military units have imposed restrictions on freedom of movement in the province and have recently been forcing the population into "strategic hamlets".

Nine members of the Druze community of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights were placed under administrative detention for three months each in February 1982. Their orders were extended at the expiry of the first period of detention and they were eventually released at the end of July. The detentions followed several weeks of tension resulting from the annexation of the Golan Heights by Israel on 14 December 1981, which was opposed by the Druze community. Many Druze resisted the Israeli policy of issuing Israeli identity cards to the Druze community.

A number of Druze were placed under house and town arrest for refusing to accept Israeli identity cards and opposing Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights and its policies in the area □