



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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The bodies of two young men found on 12 March 1990, in San Salvador. A third body was discovered nearby. They had been shot in the head, "death squad" style

© Corinne Dutka

EL SALVADOR

'Death squad' killings rise

"DEATH squads" in El Salvador, widely believed to be linked to the military, reportedly killed at least 45 people between January and August this year — more than double the figure for the same period last year, according to an AI report published in October.*

At least four of these killings occurred just after the new civilian government and the armed opposition, *Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* (FMLN), Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, signed an agreement with the government on 26 July. The new agreement commits both the government and the FMLN to take immediate steps to prevent killings, torture and "disappearances".

While welcoming the new commitments made to protect human rights, AI noted that many of them reaffirm existing national and international obligations which the authorities have frequently ignored in the past, and said that human rights violations will only end if the government backs its pledges with effective action.

The report also documented a pattern of extrajudicial executions carried out more overtly in military operations, "disappearances", and torture in military and police custody, including a number of cases since July.

Thousands of human rights violations committed over the past

decade have never been investigated. AI said that the government must show the political will to make the police and military accountable for their actions. The report, presented to the government at the beginning of October, included 34 recommendations which AI believes essential for the restoration of human rights, including full investigations into human rights violations and for those responsible to be brought to justice. □

**El Salvador: Killings, Torture and "Disappearances"*

Mass arrests in Rwanda

SOME 3,000 people were arrested in and around Rwanda's capital, Kigali, and detained without charge or trial in October 1990. Most were members of Rwanda's minority Tutsi ethnic group.

The detentions followed a sudden and violent attack on Rwanda at the beginning of October by armed Rwandese exiles from Uganda. The exiles are mainly Tutsi whose families fled Rwanda when the Tutsi monarch was overthrown in 1959.

Those detained in Kigali and elsewhere were evidently suspected of links with the rebels. However, it appears that many

YUGOSLAVIA

Arrests in Kosovo

FOUR members of the dissolved parliament of Kosovo province, Nazif Matoshi, Fatos Pula, Raif Ramabaja and Ismail Sahiti, were arrested on 17 September 1990 and charged with "forming an association aimed at unconstitutionally changing the borders within Yugoslavia".

They had participated in a meeting in Kačanik on 7 September, where over 100 former members of the Kosovo parliament had gathered to proclaim a constitution of Kosovo as an independent republic within the Yugoslav federation. Around 21 September two members of the former Kosovo government, Seladin Skeja and Lekë Vuksani, were arrested on similar charges. Zenun Çelaj, a journalist and human rights activist who had attended the meeting in Kačanik and published reports about it, was arrested on 27 September. Arrest warrants against others could not be carried out as they had left Kosovo. AI regarded them as prisoners of conscience and appealed for their immediate release. On 23 October the four parliamentarians were released pending further proceedings against them.

During 1990 the authorities of

the Republic of Serbia assumed full control of the province of Kosovo. Over 85 per cent of Kosovo's population are ethnic Albanians. Considerable autonomy was granted to Kosovo province under Yugoslavia's 1974 constitution. Nevertheless, there has been continuing ethnic tension, particularly since 1981. Serbs have emigrated from Kosovo in large numbers, claiming that the Serbian community is an oppressed minority in the province, while many ethnic Albanians have campaigned for Kosovo to become an independent republic. In June the Kosovo parliament was prevented from assembling. In early July, when ethnic Albanian members demanded independence for the province, the Kosovo parliament and government were disbanded by the Serbian authorities. The only daily newspaper in the Albanian language was also banned, television broadcasts in Albanian were almost completely prohibited, and ethnic Albanians were dismissed from their jobs in large numbers to be replaced by Serbs. AI has received numerous accounts of police ill-treatment of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. □

AI delegations

Suriname: In early October, an AI delegation met the Minister of Justice, members of the National Assembly, Institute for Human Rights, local organizations and private individuals to collect information on the human rights situation, measures taken by the authorities to prevent human rights violations and to investigate past human rights violations.

Guyana: In September an AI delegation visited Guyana to conduct research into the death penalty. Eighteen people have been hanged since Guyana resumed executions in October 1985 after a 15-year moratorium. Some had been sentenced during the moratorium. The death penalty is mandatory for murder. □

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.

LAOS

Tiao Sisoumang Sisaleumsak: 72 years old, he is one of 33 people who have been detained without charge or trial for "re-education" for 15 years in Laos' northeastern province of Houa Phanh.

He is a former Minister of Posts and Telecommunications and Vice-President of the National Consultative Council (NCC), an advisory body which was set up by the Royal Government of National Union in 1973 as part of a negotiated peace settlement ending years of armed conflict in the country.

He was arrested in November 1975, together with over 20 other NCC members, at a meeting in Viengxai called by the newly formed Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) Government. Initially detained in Viengxai, he was transferred to another "re-education" camp in Houa Phanh Province. He has never been accused of any recognizably criminal offence, and AI believes he is held for his non-violent opposition to the political system instituted in 1975.

Although thousands of other suspected opponents of the LPDR Government similarly detained in 1975 for "re-education" have been released since 1985, 33 men, including Tiao Sisoumang Sisaleumsak, are still under restriction.

Living conditions for the 33 detainees, many of whom are aged in their 60s, are basic, with poor provision of housing, food and medicines.

Many are in ill-health, related to years of hard manual labour and inadequate medical treatment. One 64-year-old detainee died in August following a heart attack. Tiao Sisoumang Sisaleumsak is diabetic and was hospitalized earlier this year.

■ Please send courteous letters appealing for his immediate release to: H. E. Kaysone Phomvihhan/Chairman of the Council of Ministers/Vientiane/Laos. □

ALBANIA

Henrik Gjoka: a car mechanic from Tirana, aged 39, he was sentenced in 1986 to 13 years' imprisonment for "flight from the state", then defined as a form of treason.

Henrik Gjoka was arrested on 12 September 1986 while visiting a friend in Kukes district. Together with this friend and another man, he was tried by the district court of Kukes in December 1986, charged with attempting to flee the country. However, according to unofficial sources, although he may have considered trying to leave he did not in fact attempt to do so.

The trial was closed and even members of Henrik Gjoka's family were reportedly not allowed to attend. He was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment, although it appears this sentence may have

since been reduced by two and a half years. His two companions reportedly received prison sentences of six and four years. Henrik Gjoka first served his sentence in the labour camps of Spac and Qafe e Barit where political prisoners mine copper and pyrites in harsh and sometimes dangerous conditions. In mid-1990 he was reportedly transferred to the high-security prison of Burrel.

Travel abroad was severely restricted by the state until mid-1990 when passports became more generally available and the paragraph of the Criminal Code under which

Habib Ben Malek: a 37-year-old assistant teacher from Sale, he was arrested on 21 April 1976 and is serving a 20-year prison sentence in Kenitra Central Prison.

Habib Ben Malek is one of over 170 members and former members of a coalition of three Marxist groups known as the *Frontistes* who were arrested between 1974 and 1976. They were held incommunicado for long periods and a number were reportedly tortured. They were tried in January 1977 on charges of belonging to an illegal association and plotting against the internal security of the state. Thirty-nine were tried *in absentia*.

The prosecution argued at the trial that in advocating the formation of a people's republic in Morocco, the defendants intended to bring about the violent overthrow of the monarchy.

Evidence produced in court consisted of radical literature and duplicating equipment. There was apparently no evidence that they had used or advocated violence.



Habib Ben Malek is one of the longest serving prisoners of conscience in Morocco. He has been in jail since 1976

An AI observer who attended the trial reported that the prisoners' rights of defence were severely restricted and that the trial procedures fell short of international standards for a fair trial.

Forty-four received life sentences and 129 were sentenced to between five and 30 years' imprisonment. All defendants received additional sentences of two years' imprisonment as a result of their protests about the conduct of the trial.

All but eight prisoners have since been released, either on expiry of their sentences or after an amnesty. The remaining eight, including Habib Ben Malek, are now the longest-serving prisoners of conscience in Morocco.

■ Please send courteous letters appealing for his release, if possible in French, to: His Majesty Hassan II/Palais Royal/Rabat/Morocco. □

PRISONER NEWS

AI learned in October 1990 of the release of 111 prisoners under adoption or investigation. AI took up 119 cases.



FOCUS

amnesty
international

Doctors and human rights violations

The medical profession has a long tradition of respect for human rights. However a small number of doctors and health professionals have betrayed ethical norms and assisted in abuses against detainees and prisoners. AI medical groups in some 30 countries around the world campaign for an end to medical participation in human rights violations.

In countries where human rights violations are widespread, medical personnel can have access to prisoners in circumstances where the prisoner is denied other protective contacts such as with legal counsel or with family.

For this reason the doctor's role in safeguarding the health and security of the prisoner is of considerable importance. Where human rights violations are not systematic or not even a major concern, the doctor can still play a protective role. But in many countries this protective role is negated by the failure of medical personnel to adhere to basic tenets of medical ethics.

Information gathered by AI in the 1980s suggests that medical personnel assist in the practice of torture, participate in executions and play a role in corporal punishment and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatments or punishments. Medical associations and human rights organizations have an obligation to combat such abuses.

The scale of the problem

It is not possible to determine the number of individual abuses involving doctors nor the number of

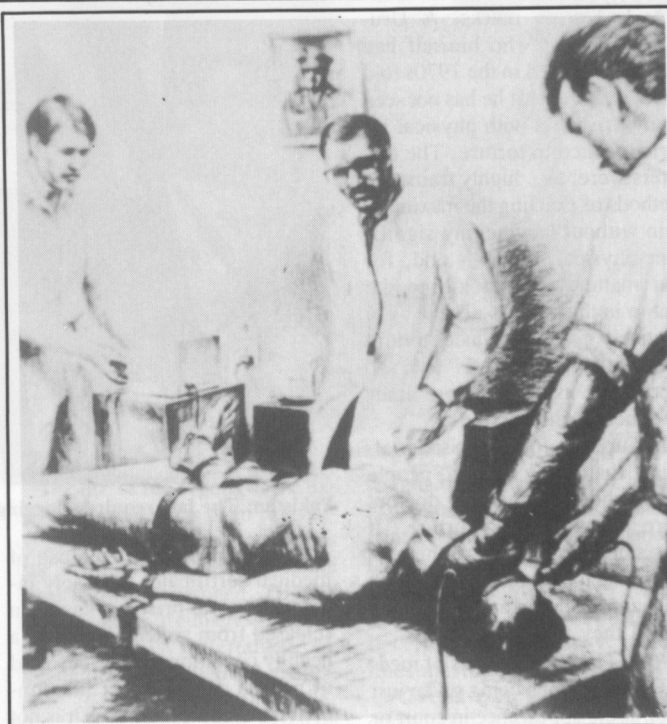
doctors involved in human rights violations around the world. Moreover, the definition of what constitutes medical involvement is not clear. In both the USSR and Uruguay, for example, commentators have suggested that there was widespread knowledge in the profession that abuses were taking place — in the USSR by psychiatrists, in Uruguay by military physicians — but there are differences about the point at which individuals could be regarded as culpable (as opposed to unwilling victims of the system).

The number of doctors consciously and deliberately engaging in torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment represents a tiny proportion of the profession. The number of those who are aware of the abuses carried out against prisoners by police, security or prison officers (sometimes with the acquiescence or active involvement of this minority of medical personnel) is much more substantial.

Torture

Medical involvement in torture ranges from the infliction of torture by doctors themselves, through acting as an adviser or medical supervisor of torture, to the false certification of health or of death after torture has been inflicted. In many cases, the behaviour of the doctor encompasses more than one of these roles.

The role of the doctor in torture stems from his medical expertise. For that reason, the doctor appears to play an advisory or supervisory role during torture rather than inflicting torture personally. However, there is a fine line between inflicting torture and



Chile: Artist's representation of electrical torture based on the testimony of former victims. A doctor stands by to monitor the effects

assisting others to carry it out, and doctors who are present during torture can easily slip from one role to the other.

In some cases a "medical" activity such as administering medication by intravenous injection may appear to the prisoner to be threatening or even a form of torture, particularly if it is given without explanation or sympathy. And when doctors administer substances in the absence of therapeutic need and with the intention to cause suffering they become torturers.

Moreover, the vulnerability of the prisoner and the sense of betrayal which he or she experiences when confronted by a doctor who is working with torturers can itself amplify the suffering. An engineering student who was held in a clandestine prison in Argentina and tortured over several months in the late 1970s later recounted that on one of the two occasions he was seen by a doctor during his detention: "samples of my urine were collected because one of my kidneys had been injured. I felt like an animal in a laboratory experiment, with a professional taking care of my vital functions but not of me as a human being."

AI has received evidence and numerous testimonies from prisoners and former prisoners

from Latin America — particularly Chile and Uruguay — that during the 1980s doctors examined prisoners to evaluate their health in order to assist torturers. In Chile for more than a decade after the 1973 coup, ex-prisoners testified that medical examinations were made on arrival at the secret detention centre and at various times during their stay.

One prisoner testified that after he was brought to a detention centre he was taken to a room and stripped naked. "Here the doctor examined me all over, measured my blood pressure and said: 'He is suffering from arterial hypertension', and other things I didn't understand...I would like to point out that after the thorough medical examination carried out by the physician who authorized the torture and as a result of his diagnosis...the brutal beatings stopped."

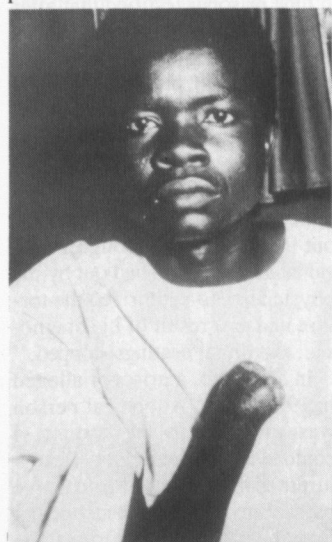
In Morocco, a prisoner alleged in 1986 that: "A medical person was involved in the torture. I could see him. He helped the torturers to select the more sensitive parts of my body and said whether I could still stand the torture. He told me to confess so that the torture would end. Afterwards he gave me some medical treatment."

Doctors may be present during torture to prevent the death of the prisoner or to ensure that the tor-

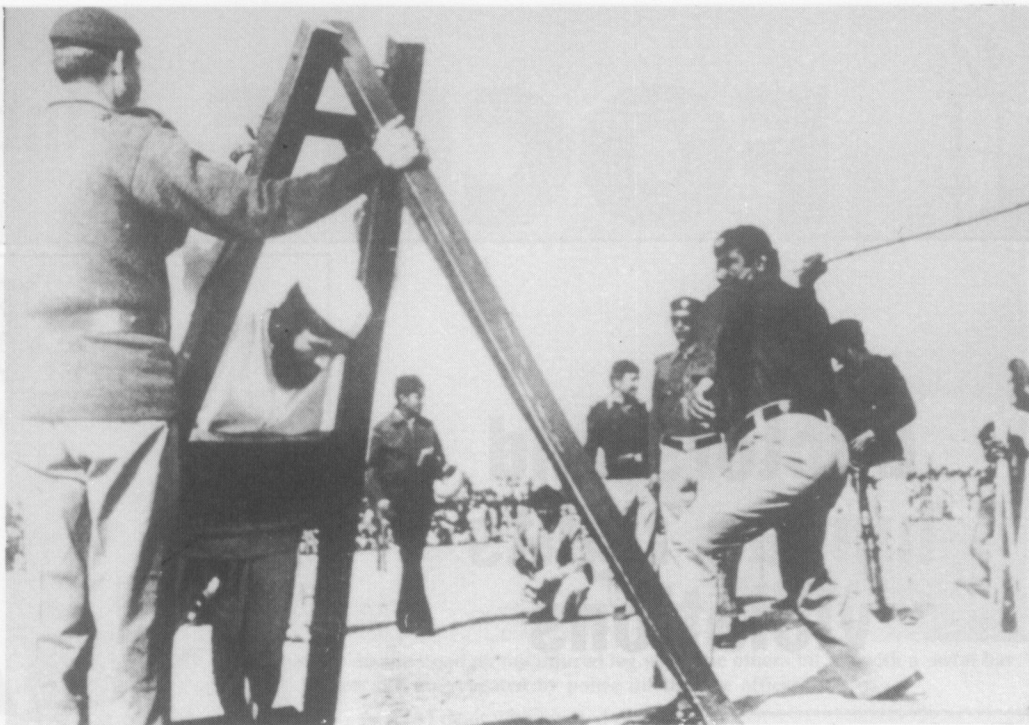
ture leaves no marks. A Uruguayan doctor who himself had been imprisoned in the 1970s told an interviewer that he has not seen many prisoners with physical injuries related to torture. The torturers were: "... highly trained in methods of exacting the maximum pain without leaving any significant physical traces — and, for that matter, without killing the victim in the process. There were relatively few deaths under torture in Uruguay. This was because there were usually doctors in attendance at the sessions."

In Turkey a former prisoner alleged that: "in Metris, people talked about the fact that doctors were present during torture...It was said that they were there to determine the moment when death was approaching and only then would they stop the torture."

AI has received reports of medical examinations being given just prior to the appearance in court or the release of a prisoner, the objective of which appears to have been to ensure that the prisoner would appear to be fit and with minimum signs of torture. A prisoner in Chile testified: "I was examined five times by the staff of the medical room...Of course on the first four occasions the diagnosis was implacable: fit for torture. I suppose the fifth check-up was to make sure I was fit to be presented to the military prosecutor."



Sudan: Mohamed Yahya El-Fadhil had his right hand amputated after a conviction for theft in 1983. Between 1983 and 1985 more than 100 sentences of amputation were imposed in Sudan. Prison guards who carried out the sentences were trained by a surgeon



Pakistan: The law requires flogging to be carried out in the presence of a medical officer

© Popperfoto, 1985

AI has documented the use of medical certificates to falsely indicate that the prisoner has been released from police custody in a healthy condition or that they died of natural causes rather than under torture. In some cases it is not clear whether certificates have been deliberately falsified or are incompetently prepared.

Pressure is sometimes applied to medical personnel to withhold or to falsify evidence. Cem Ali Temuçin was detained in Ankara, Turkey on 1 March 1988. He was transferred to prison on 10 March and a medical report issued on that day described his health as good. However, four days later a second doctor examined him and found bruises and abrasions which had been inflicted while the prisoner was still in police custody.

In 1986 a Turkish magazine reporting on the death of detainee Hasan Hakki Erdogan on 30 September 1984 noted that the inquest report had taken 15 days to prepare because one of the three signatories had refused to endorse the report.

Punitive amputation appears to be a lawful punishment only in certain Islamic states. AI does not have exact figures on the number of amputations carried out but has documented the use of amputations as punishment since 1980 in Mauritania, Sudan, Iran, Yemen Arab Republic and Saudi Arabia. In Pakistan, sentences have been handed down but not carried out, reportedly because no surgeon was willing to participate.

The participation of doctors in such punishment has been documented. For example, the involvement of doctors in the three amputations which took place in

Mauritania in September 1980 is undisputed and evoked an expression of deep concern from the Mauritanian Association of Doctors, Pharmacists and Dentists: two amputations carried out in 1982 were performed by medical auxiliaries after doctors refused to participate. A change of government by coup in 1984 saw an end to the application of Shari'a-based laws in criminal cases.

The Government of President Nimeiri in Sudan introduced laws based on Shari'a in 1983. By the time the government fell in 1985 it had imposed more than 100 sentences of amputation. The first of these sentences were closely supervised by a British-trained Sudanese surgeon. In an article published in a Toronto daily newspaper, he was quoted as saying:

"I devised the operation. I wanted the thing done quickly and without pain. I trained the guards in the prison where to give the local anaesthetic and how to clean the hand. I trained them how to use the surgical scalpel. I wanted it to be done so that the patient would not lose blood..."

"I attended the first six or seven just to make sure my system was working all right, to see if there was anything to improve. I am very happy that it went without accident, not a single infection."

In Pakistan, the Execution of Punishment of Whipping Ordinance, 1979, specifies that whipping should be carried out only in the presence of an authorized medical officer and in a public place. An examination of the prisoner must first be carried out by a doctor "so as to ensure that the execution of the punishment

will not cause the death of the convict". The doctor must also indicate when an ill prisoner is fit enough to undergo being whipped. Branches and members of the Pakistan Medical Association have periodically voiced opposition to the participation of doctors in such roles.

Similarly, in Jordan, Malaysia and South Africa, doctors are required to examine prisoners to certify them fit for punishment and to be present at the whipping. (In South Africa a doctor's presence is necessary only if the prisoner is over the age of 21.) Between 1986 and 1988 South African courts handed down some 75,000 sentences of whipping. In Mozambique, the sentence of whipping — a colonial punishment which was re-introduced in 1983 — was abolished in 1989.

During the 1980s, AI received allegations that psychiatric assessments were being used for political purposes in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. Only in the USSR was it a systematic and widely-used procedure, where under the direction of Soviet authorities, participation in certain political activities could be regarded as a sign of a severe and dangerous mental abnormality. Political prisoners could then be ruled unaccountable for their actions and confined for indefinite periods in maximum-security psychiatric hospitals.

However, as exiled Soviet psychiatrist Dr Alexander Voloshanovich pointed out, it would be a mistake to see the issue as hinging on whether or not those detained were in perfect mental health: "Among [alleged victims

of psychiatric abuse] whom I examined, I found a few cases where I was convinced of, or suspected, mental illness. There were individuals with apparent personality disorders or personality developments. There were people suffering psychological problems and there were sane people too. What was common in all these cases was that, without exception, there was no legal or medical reason for the patient to be confined in a psychiatric hospital."

Recent changes in Eastern Europe and in the USSR give cause to hope that such abuses will disappear.

Powerful antipsychotic drugs have in the past been regularly administered to prisoners in Soviet psychiatric institutions, frequently without accompanying medication to control the unpleasant physical side effects. In Uruguay up until the mid-1980s similar allegations were made concerning political prisoners held in Libertad prison. In neither case did medical indications seem to be the determining factor in the administration of the drugs.

Medical personnel have also failed to protect patients from arbitrary violence inflicted by "nurses" or guards. In some cases doctors or psychiatrists are reported to have encouraged such violence.

The death penalty

AI is unconditionally opposed to the death penalty as the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and violation of the fundamental human right to life. The penalty fails to offer a proven deterrent, it cannot be rectified in the event of a judicial error and it risks escalating the climate of violence in society.

AI believes that health professionals can play an important role in opposing the death penalty, firstly by ensuring that medical ethical standards forbid, and are seen to forbid, medical participation in executions and, secondly, by emphasising the essential inhumanity of the death penalty.

The US Supreme Court ruled in 1989 that executing juveniles and mentally retarded prisoners was not an inherently cruel or unusual punishment. However, legal practice has shown that mental retardation and mental illness can

constitute lack of competence for execution. It is likely, therefore, that evidence will be presented by both defence and prosecution on this issue with the latter introducing medical, psychiatric or psychological testimony which, if persuasive to the jury, may contribute to the execution of the prisoner.

Similarly, when a prisoner appears to have become mentally disturbed after sentence has been pronounced, the courts in the US may call upon mental health professionals to counter defence appeals for a commutation on grounds of insanity, again with the possibility that, if accepted by the court, their testimony could lead directly to the prisoner's execution.

A corollary of the above is that when a prisoner has been found incompetent to undergo execution, he or she may be required to undergo medical or psychiatric treatment in order to be rendered fit for execution. In the one such documented case, that of Gary Alvord in Florida, the prisoner was sent to a mental hospital where some staff members refused to treat him, and others did so only after much debate and with great ambivalence. Eventually he was assessed by three state psychiatrists and found competent to return to death row.

There has been a long tradition of medical attendance at executions in Europe and North America. Since the introduction of lethal injection in the USA as a "humane" form of execution, there has been a growing debate in the medical profession about the ethics of the increasing medicalization of the death penalty. While initially the fear related specifically to direct medical involvement in administering the injection itself, the debate has widened.

From the reports received by AI, it is clear that the presence of doctors in the execution chamber could result in their having to participate in the execution process even where the method is not at all "medical". For example, several executions in the USA have been characterized by a failure to kill the condemned at the first attempt and the doctors attending the execution have advised the executioner of the need to continue or renew the execution procedure.



Mauritania: A medical auxiliary examines the victim of a firing squad

The use of the organs of the executed prisoner has been suggested by a US doctor, on the grounds that it would give meaning to the death of the condemned. To AI's knowledge his arguments have not been seriously entertained by legislators or the medical profession in the USA. In 1985, however, Florida state officials acknowledged that the brains of executed prisoners had been given without authorization to a neurobiologist for medical studies. The practice was halted after public outcry.

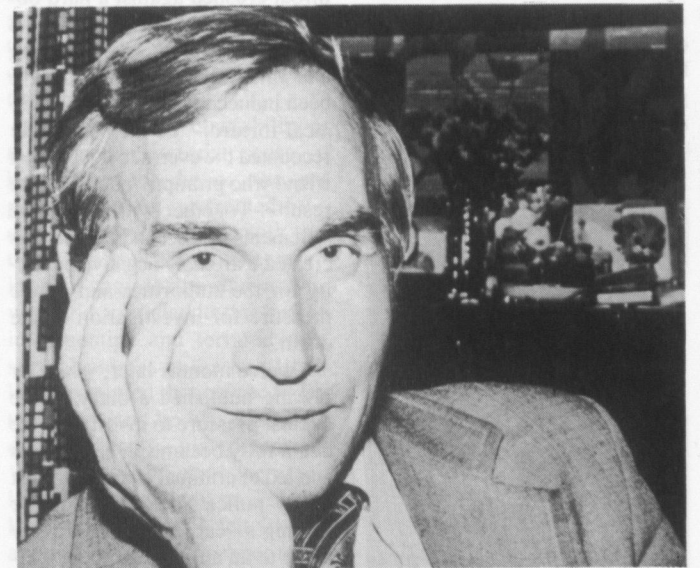
In Taiwan, a daily newspaper reported in July 1988 that some Taiwanese hospital doctors were urging that executions take place in such a manner as to allow the use of the heart of the executed prisoner for transplantation. The World Medical Association

sought the views of the Chinese [Taiwanese] Medical Association which replied that it is "in general not in favor of this proposal". However, the Ministry of Justice agreed to the doctors' proposals if certain comprehensive guidelines are followed.

AI received reports in 1984 that condemned prisoners in Iraq were being drained of large quantities of blood before execution to supply the field hospitals in the Iran-Iraq war zone.

Inadequate health care

AI is concerned when any cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is inflicted on prisoners or detainees or when the lives of prisoners are put at risk. In prac-



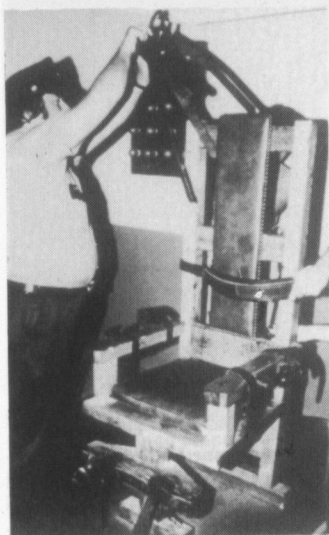
USSR: Anatoly Koryagin, the psychiatrist imprisoned in 1981 after publicly criticizing the political abuse of psychiatry in the USSR, was released from prison on 18 February 1987. Before his arrest he had examined 15 people known to hold non-conformist views who had been forcibly confined to psychiatric hospitals and concluded that in none of the cases was compulsory confinement justified on medical grounds

tice, a deliberate policy of inadequate medical care can cause cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

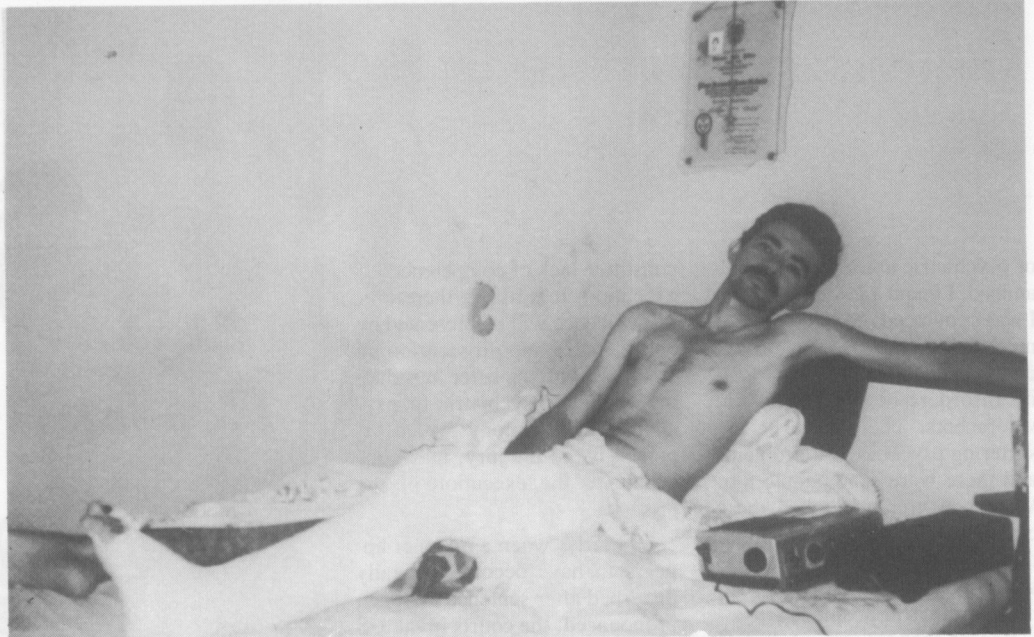
Some caution has to be exercised in attributing blame to medical staff in cases of medical neglect. It is often by decision of the prison authorities that individual prisoners do not receive treatment which prison doctors have recommended. The question of the appropriate response by prison medical staff this becomes crucial. In other cases there may be genuine difficulties in providing necessary medical treatment.

In some cases however, the problem seems to lie with the medical staff. A prisoner held in Kars prison in Turkey alleged that in 1984 he developed sores on his feet which the prison doctor responded to unsympathetically. When these sores worsened, he was prescribed a salve and though he eventually could not walk unaided he was not recommended for a hospital visit. After he complained about the doctor's behaviour, the prisoner was confronted by the doctor who ordered guards to beat him. When he was eventually transferred to hospital he had developed gangrene and had first his toes and later his foot amputated.

Some doctors have placed the interests of the security forces above those of the prisoner. Marcus Thabo Motaung was arrested in South Africa in March 1982 for treason and other offences. During his arrest he was shot in the hip and groin. The District Surgeon who attended him in security police



USA: Prison officers check the electric chair
© Doug Magee



Colombia: "The man they called the doctor stood on my injured leg while the others hit me with a metal bar." Gilberto Lasso, a student, was beaten and interrogated by police intelligence officers

custody later told the Pretoria Supreme Court that she thought it more important for him to assist the police with their inquiries than to receive treatment, which was refused for two days.

In the Republic of Korea, however, one doctor exposed a fatal episode of torture and had a major impact on political reforms in that country but also paid a serious personal price. Dr Kwang Chok Chun, a pathologist with the National Institute of Scientific Investigation, was called to examine the body of a 21-year-old student, Park Chong-chol, after he had died in detention. The police tried to pressure Dr Kwang to state that Park had died of "shock".

However, Dr Kwang saw immediately that Park had swallowed large amounts of water and had died as a result of having his throat crushed against a hard object, possibly the rim of a bath tub. "I found internal bleeding and concluded that it could have been induced only by highly technical torture," he later said. He recounted the events to a journalist friend who promptly published the results. Together with the public statements of a second doctor, this created extremely negative publicity for the authorities and public pressure for investigation of the death.

Twelve months later, when Dr Kwang published a diary of the events, pressure to investigate the death fully became an issue again and led to criminal charges against other police officers. But Dr Kwang's career in pathology came to an abrupt halt shortly after the student's death and the subsequent leaking of his conclusions. He felt forced to resign, explaining to a US journalist: "I would not have been able to work any longer in that place...The

people I dealt with every day were the police. They were creating an impossible atmosphere...I used to lecture at the police academy. And the atmosphere there was hostile as well. I was getting threatening phone calls at home. I just couldn't go on after that."

The need to address the dilemma of the doctor (or any other health worker) having to confront situations of serious abuse was succinctly summed up at a seminar convened by the Council of Europe in 1982 to discuss the doctor and human rights:

"The intolerable choice between complicity and heroism — between the side of the torturers and that of the victims — should not be left to the individual conscience. It is incumbent on all of us, on each national and supranational community, to elaborate rules and conventions, but above all, concrete rules, which not only prohibit participation in torture but effectively protect the doctor against the risks to which refusal to assist torture will expose him or her."

Abuses such as these suggest the need for a serious review of the ways in which the organized health professions can act singly and in concert with other non-governmental organizations to bring about an end to medical involvement in human rights violations, and to support individuals and national organizations which are actively opposing such involvement.

In addition, those individuals found to be colluding in torture and other abuses should be sanctioned, both professionally and legally. Over two thousand years after Hippocrates, it is surely time that all medical practitioners observe the dictum "above all, do no harm". □

United Nations

Extracts from the UN Principles of Medical Ethics, adopted by the General Assembly in 1982.

- It is a gross contravention of medical ethics, as well as an offence under applicable international instruments, for health personnel, particularly physicians, to engage, actively or passively, in acts which constitute participation in, complicity in, incitement to or attempts to commit torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

- It is a contravention of medical ethics for health personnel, particularly physicians:

- a) to apply their knowledge and skills in order to assist in the interrogation of prisoners and detainees in a manner that may adversely affect the physical or mental health or condition of such prisoners or detainees and which is not in accordance with the relevant international instruments;

- b) to certify, or to participate in the certification of, the fitness of prisoners or detainees for any form of treatment or punishment that may adversely affect their physical or mental health and which is not in accordance with the relevant international instruments...

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Buddhists detained in Tibet

TWO Tibetan Buddhist monks and at least 14 nuns were reportedly detained during August and September in Lhasa, capital of the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China, for peacefully expressing their support of Tibetan independence.

Officers of the Public Security Bureau (PSB, police) reportedly detained and later beat five nuns and a monk who were leading a procession of religious and laypeople around the Barkhor, a pilgrimage path in central Lhasa, in September. They are

thought to have been seized for participating in a pro-independence demonstration.

The incident occurred after the PSB had been ordered to ensure "stability" before the Asian Games, which began in Beijing on 22 September, and China's National Day on 1 October. Although martial law was lifted in Lhasa on 1 May 1990, military vehicles paraded in Lhasa during September.

Others were reported detained in August, after chanting pro-independence slogans during the

traditional *Shoton* festival at the Dalai-Lama's former summer palace. Among those still believed to be in detention are nine nuns, apparently from Gari and Mijung Ri nunneries near Lhasa, a monk, identified as Lobsang Dorje from Sera monastery, and three students from Lhasa University.

In September 1989, nine nuns who had allegedly chanted pro-independence slogans at last year's *Shoton* festival were sentenced — without trial — to terms of two to three years' "re-education through labour". □

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Government opponents arrested

TWENTY people were arrested in Bangui in September 1990 after holding a meeting, apparently to plan a pro-democracy demonstration. They included opposition party leader and former prisoner of conscience Abel Goumba and several former ministers.

In October further arrests took place after a meeting calling for a conference to discuss multi-party democracy was broken up by police. The police action led to riots which lasted several days.

AI is also concerned about the continuing detention without charge of 12 government opponents, including former govern-

ment minister General François Bozize, held since August 1989. The detainees, who had been living in exile in the Republic of Benin, were arrested by the Beninese authorities in July 1989 and forcibly repatriated without any legal proceedings. They are held in military custody without access to lawyers and family. AI believes some of them may be prisoners of conscience. A four-page report* issued in October 1990 describes their cases. □

**The Central African Republic: Detention without charge or trial of government opponents* (AI Index: AFR 19/04/90)

USA

Surprise move on death penalty

IN a surprise move, a congressional committee has removed all death penalty provisions from a federal crime bill passed by the US Congress on 28 October.

The US Senate and House of Representatives had earlier approved draft bills which would have enabled the death penalty to be reintroduced for a number of federal crimes and extended to crimes previously not punishable by death. The bills would also have limited federal *habeas cor-*

pus appeals in state death penalty cases — a stage at which many state death sentences are currently overturned.

The House bill had included an amendment which would have allowed defendants to seek reversal of their death sentences if they could show a pattern of racial discrimination in death sentencing. A similar amendment was defeated in the Senate.

The bill will now go to President Bush to sign into law. □

NIGERIA

Executions follow secret trials

TWENTY-seven people were shot on 13 September, bringing to 69 the total executed for involvement in the April 1990 coup attempt (see *AI Newsletter* October 1990). They were convicted after secret trials before a government-controlled tribunal. Denied any right of appeal, they were executed the day after the court's verdicts were submitted to the military government for approval.

The speed with which the government reviewed the convictions suggests that a thorough examination of the court records did not take place. Their death sentences were not announced publicly until two days after their execution.

The executions appear to have been carried out for political reasons, without adequate attention being given to the fairness or safety of the convictions. □

MOROCCO

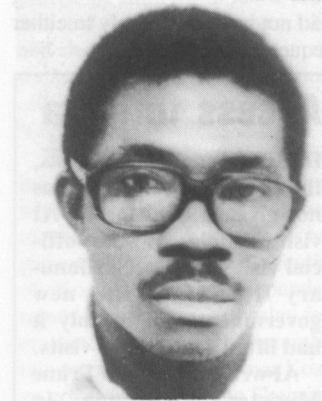
Appeal for the 'disappeared'

SEVERAL hundred civilians from the south of Morocco and the Western Sahara are believed to have "disappeared" since 1975, when Morocco annexed the former colony of Spanish Sahara. They were reportedly arrested by Moroccan security forces and imprisoned in secret jails. They were apparently suspected of sympathizing with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO), which has been in armed conflict with the Moroccan Government. AI takes no position on the conflicting claims to the Saharan territory.

Those arrested came from a wide range of backgrounds and from every age group. Whole families are among those said to have "disappeared". Some are believed to have died in custody but others are said to be still alive, detained in secret detention centres or camps. The Moroccan authorities have denied that "disappearances" have taken place.

AI has appealed to the Moroccan Government for over a decade to clarify the fate of those reported to have "disappeared", some of whom are known to have been released after periods of secret detention. The organization has asked the government to conduct a full investigation into their fate and to release all those still held without trial.

In November 1990 AI published *Morocco: "Disappearances" of people of Western Saharan origin*. □



Guillaume Sessouma reportedly died under torture

BURKINA FASO

Death under torture

GUILLAUME Sessouma, a biochemistry teacher at Ouagadougou University who "disappeared" after his arrest on 21 December 1989, is reported to have died as a result of torture within a week of his arrest. The government had claimed that he escaped from detention. According to highly credible information received by AI in September 1990, after his death his body was taken by security officials to a hospital in Ouagadougou in early January but was then returned to the *Conseil de l'Entente* building in Ouagadougou which is used as a detention centre. His family has still not been officially notified of his death.

Guillaume Sessouma and 30 other civilians and soldiers were arrested in connection with an alleged conspiracy against the government. All were associated with former President Thomas Sankara who was killed in the coup in October 1987 which brought President Blaise Compaoré to power. AI believes that many of those arrested in December 1989 may be prisoners of conscience. □

AI delegation visits Romania

An AI delegation visited Romania from 24 to 27 September. They discussed AI's concerns in Romania with President Ion Iliescu, Prime Minister Petre Roman, the Ministers of Justice and the Interior, the Prosecutor General, the chief of Bucharest police and senior officials in the foreign ministry.

These included the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience; the alleged complicity of local officials in violent attacks on civilians, in some instances apparently on the basis of the victims' ethnic origin, and the failure of security forces to prevent such attacks; the ill-treatment of detainees; and the lack of legal safeguards in some trials. □

INDIA

Human rights violations in Manipur

AI CALLED on the Indian government to curb extraordinary security force powers which have led to extreme violations of human rights in the northeast province of Manipur.

In a report published in October AI details a pattern of arbitrary arrests, detention and torture of hundreds of people in Oinam village in Manipur province over a period of several months in 1987. Villagers were beaten, hung upside-down or given electric shocks. At least 11 men were apparently extrajudicially executed after being tortured. In two of those deaths, the courts have ruled that the killings were illegal.

The violations were committed by the security forces in a counter-insurgency operation following an attack by armed secessionists on one of their outposts in which nine soldiers were killed. The powers granted the security forces to deal with insurrection allow them to arbitrarily arrest people and shoot to kill on sight — all with legal immunity from prosecution.

Both the previous and current governments have failed to investigate the incidents, despite repeated calls from AI and other organizations. A number of people who complained to the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the time were arrested and in some cases tortured. Several witnesses in an ongoing civil court case to get compensation for victims were again tortured in December 1988 after giving testimony and pressurized to sign statements clearing the security forces.

The security forces still have the

extraordinary powers that led to these violations and recent reports indicate that the abuses in Manipur continue. There have been reports of torture and deaths in custody, including that of a 17-year old who reportedly died in March this year after being beaten.

On 20 July AI wrote to Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh asking for the government's comments on its report and requesting to visit Manipur to discuss it but at the time of writing had not received a reply to either request. □

Access to India

DESPITE repeated requests, the Indian Government has not given a date for an AI visit to India. AI's last official visit took place in January 1978 and the new government said in July it had lifted a ban on AI visits.

AI wrote to the new Prime Minister, VP Singh, in March and July, and in August the government confirmed that the organization could visit India but only "for private visits and normal dialogue with the government". However, AI's request to visit Kashmir and Punjab was not acknowledged.

AI is still trying to finalize dates for a visit to Delhi to meet the government, during which it hopes to clarify the question of access to Punjab, Kashmir and other areas. □

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER is published every month in four languages to bring you news of AI's concerns and campaigns worldwide, as well as in-depth reports. Available from Amnesty International (address below)



An Israeli police officer points his rifle at a Palestinian in Jerusalem, after the killings on 8 October

© Popperfoto

ISRAEL/OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Killings in Jerusalem

ON 8 October 1990, at least 17 Palestinian civilians were killed by Israeli forces on the Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount) in Jerusalem. All victims were apparently killed with live ammunition. Among them was a boy aged 15.

Government officials stated after the incident that the killings were the result of legitimate use of force. They said Palestinians had been throwing stones at police on the Haram al-Sharif and at Jewish worshippers at the adjacent Wailing Wall and were endangering lives.

However, initial reports from local human rights groups and others suggest that many of the victims died as a result of indiscriminate and unjustifiable use of firearms. Medical personnel are said to have been fired upon and injured while attending

casualties. Others were reportedly shot while fleeing.

AI called for a full judicial inquiry into the killings, repeating its fears that the official guidelines for the use of firearms may allow unjustifiable killings and that the standard process of investigation of any related abuses was inadequate. Some 670 civilians, including children, have been shot dead by Israeli forces since December 1987.

A three-person commission of inquiry, headed by a former head of Israel's external intelligence service, was appointed by the government on 9 October to investigate the incident, but AI is concerned that this may not be seen as sufficiently independent or impartial. On 18 October a judicial inquest into the killings was also opened. □

USSR

New information on death penalty

RECENT articles in the official Soviet press have shed light on two aspects of the death penalty that have been secret for decades: statistics and the method of execution.

The head of the USSR's parliamentary clemency body explained during an interview in October that the number of people sentenced to death each year is still secret but that an approximate figure could be obtained from the number of cases heard by the clemency commission, to which all death sentences are referred. He revealed that it examines on average 25 to 30 such cases a month but grants only three to five per cent of appeals. The resulting estimates of up to 360 death sentences a year, of which only 18 may be commuted, are far higher

than those previously available to AI.

In August the press carried the first known interview in recent times with an executioner. He described how he carries out the sentence by shooting the condemned person from behind as they are led unawares to a cell immediately after being told the final appeal has been turned down.

Previously, it was unclear if execution was by firing squad or a single shot. The executioner is in favour of abolition.

Both men interviewed denied the possibility of a judicial error.

However, this issue received wide media attention several years ago after it was revealed that one man had been executed and 13 others imprisoned after being wrongly convicted of murder. □