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HISTORICAL FILE

COUNTRY DOSSIER	SECTION 6
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EXTERNAL **

AI INDEX: AMR 52/41/80
DISTRIB : PGs

(DECEMBER 1980)

To : All Medical Groups
From : Medical Adviser/Research Dept.- Latin America
Subject : PROMPT MEDICAL LETTER-WRITING ACTION

Francisco Lorenzo PONS - URUGUAY

A prompt medical letter-writing action by you is requested on behalf of Francisco Lorenzo PONS (see Urgent Action 130/78, AMR 52/29/78), aged 34, adopted by AI as a prisoner of conscience. He is an architect, journalist and political cartoonist, also a youth leader of the Uruguayan Socialist Party. He was previously arrested and tortured in 1973. In 1976 he was publicly denounced in the press and radio as a "militant communist" and wanted for immediate arrest. He went underground but was re-arrested in 1978. After detention in the barracks of the Fusileros Navales, notorious torture centre, he was later transferred to Penal de Libertad prison. Originally he was sentenced to 9½ years imprisonment, later reduced to 6½ years, for "subversive association and usurpation of identity".

An AI Adoption Group in California has had repeated reports about Francisco Lorenzo Pons' failing health. He suffers from a chronic, feverish urinary infection and epididymitis - probably as a result of previous torture - and has been examined for a month in a military hospital. Unfortunately the X-ray films have been lost and though antibiotics (presumably on the basis of bacteriological examination of the urine) were presented, these have been administered quite haphazardly and in short courses since his return to prison so that his symptoms have never been controlled. It is highly probable that on this regime, bacterial resistance to the administered antibiotic has developed. We have no information on how far his renal function has been affected by this chronic infection but there is good cause for concern.

Sr. Pons' condition appears to be sufficiently grave to warrant a concerted action by all medical groups.

Recommended Action :

Please write courteously worded letters, in both individual professional capacity and in groups, avoiding the mention of Amnesty International to the addresses overleaf, requesting :

- a) immediate release on humanitarian grounds either into the care of his family or into exile, where proper treatment would be available, and

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- b) if (a) were not granted, then that he be transferred into a hospital where proper investigations and treatment (on a prolonged basis as the condition requires) would be given and his cure ascertained.

Appeals to :

Sr. Ministro de Salud Publica, (Minister of Health)
Sr. Antonio Canellas,
18 de julio 1892,
Montevideo, Uruguay.

Sr. Fernando Britos, (Medical Director at
Director Medico, Libertad Prison)
Establecimiento Militar de Reclusion no.1,
Libertad,
Departamento de San Jose,
Uruguay.

Copies to :

Dr. Caporale, (Doctor at Military
Hospital Central de las hospital)
Fuerzas Armadas,
8 de Octubre,
Montevideo, Uruguay.

and to the Uruguayan diplomatic representative in your country.

Note :

Photograph of the prisoner and copies of his very clever political cartoons are available from the International Secretariat if these would help you in your appeals.

**Pleas Note : Any publicity (ie. medical journals, press) given to this information should be done in consultation with your national section.