

the Supreme Court. As the prisoners are detained by order of the executive, i.e. the President himself, Judge Woessner made strong appeals for their release in his meeting with President Stroessner.

AI has also submitted information to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), which, at its meeting in April 1973, considered the submission and resolved to ask the Paraguayan Government to release Professor Antonio Maidana, a long-term detainee who remains in prison although a judge ordered his release in 1961 after expiry of a 2½ year sentence. In October 1973 the IACHR further resolved to request the release of prisoners who had been detained over three years without trial. Three other AI-adopted prisoners who exemplify this situation are Julio Rojas, a school teacher who has been detained without trial since 1958, and Ignacio Chamorro, a peasant, and Alfredo Alcorta, an accountant, both detained since 1959. Señor Alcorta was sentenced to one year's imprisonment on minor charges, but was never released.

Peru

In May 1973, Amnesty International adopted a number of intellectuals and trade unionists. AI also protested strongly at their treatment during interrogation. Prisoners alleged that they had been hooded, beaten for several hours, plunged repeatedly into cold water, and kept without sleep for over 30 hours. These prisoners were released within a few weeks of their arrest.

In October 1973 there was a new wave of political arrests. The *Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores de Educacion* (SUTEP) organized a one-day strike on 24 October protesting against the government's educational policies, demanding official recognition for their union and increased salaries for Peruvian teachers. The strike came at the end of several months of increased opposition by trade unions to the general policies of the military government. There had been several violent clashes in southern Peruvian towns. After the SUTEP strike, approximately 500 teachers were detained and held for several months without formal charges against them. Ninety-one teachers

were detained in almost sub-human conditions in the SEPA detention center, in the midst of the Peruvian Selva, which had previously been disused for some time. These prisoners had no access to lawyers or to their families. Other teachers were detained in Lurigancho jail in Lima and in provincial prisons throughout the country. AI groups adopted 64 of these teachers, and many groups collaborated in circulating a multi-lingual petition calling for their immediate release. By May 1974 at least half of the adopted teachers had been released.

AI was also seriously concerned by the renewed application of the death penalty in Peru and by deteriorating prison conditions. There were two known cases of prisoners receiving a death sentence for killing policemen. Two political prisoners under investigation wrote to the International Secretariat, denouncing inhumane treatment to which they had been subjected, alleging that they were stripped naked and beaten by prison officers.

AI groups are currently working for a total of 71 prisoners in Peru.

Uruguay

The deepening confrontation between opposition and government led in June 1973 to the dissolution of Parliament. Some of its functions have been taken over by a council of state appointed by the executive. But all effective power is now in the hands of the armed forces, who also have jurisdiction over civilians in all matters considered to concern national security.

The Uruguayan Senate constantly protested when cases of torture were drawn to its attention. Its own commission of inquiry into allegations of torture was planning to begin hearings just when Parliament was dissolved last year.

Continuous allegations of torture have been a major concern to Amnesty International. In June 1973 the Secretary General wrote to President Juan Maria Bordaberry expressing his grave concern at the fate of a farmworker, Oscar Fernandez Mendieta, who died shortly after being detained by the combined forces (armed forces and police). Reference was also made to a prisoner who was tortured until he

reportedly tried to commit suicide, and to the case of a student who died while in the custody of the armed forces.

The Secretary General also raised with the Uruguayan authorities the infringements of legal safeguards at the time of arrest and the long period of detention before the prisoners are allowed contact with family and lawyer, referring in particular to two prominent intellectuals whose whereabouts were unknown after their arrest. A copy of the letter was released to the press and given good coverage in Latin America.

In November 1973 it was reported that nine members of the urban guerrilla movement MLN (Tupamaros) had been transferred from their prison in Libertad to different military barracks where they were subjected to ill-treatment and, allegedly, were kept as hostages to prevent any action by their organization. AI sent a telegram urging an inquiry into these reports and stressing that taking hostages is a breach of the Geneva Convention to which Uruguay is a signatory. The reports were denied by the government but later confirmed by other sources.

The emphasis of AI's group work on Uruguay has been more on the rule of law than on adoption of prisoners of conscience. Those prisoners who, despite the civilian or military judge's order for release have not been freed, have been taken up as investigation cases in an attempt to find out the reasons for this continued preventive detention.

Through national sections and groups the Research Department supplied information to professional groups for action on behalf of their imprisoned colleagues in Uruguay. Particular action was taken on behalf of imprisoned doctors and medical students, teachers and trade unionists.

Since Parliament was dissolved in June 1973 the government has become less and less tolerant of opposition, and freedom of expression has been gradually restricted. The main trade union movement, the *Convención Nacional de Trabajadores* (CNT), was banned in July 1973 and more bans followed in December on left-wing parties and groups and a number of newspapers of similar character. Accordingly the number of prisoners of conscience has grown.

In Montevideo, the capital, there was a massive civic demonstration protesting against the closure of Parliament and the CNT called for a general strike that lasted for about two weeks. This led to the arrest or exile of several leaders of the left-wing coalition *Frente Amplio*, among them its presidential candidate, General Liber Seregni, and to the arrest of many leading members of the CNT. Many of those arrested were subsequently adopted by AI.

Following the death in October 1973 of a student at Montevideo University while handling an explosive device, the rector, deans of faculties and other staff and students were arrested for alleged responsibility for Marxist infiltration of the university and for the student's death. AI supplied information to international academic organizations and some national sections expressed their concern at the government's handling of this incident. Most of those arrested were released after one or two months' detention, while 25 of them were committed for trial in the spring of 1974.

Following the publication in the renowned weekly newspaper *Marcha* of a prize-winning short story which the authorities called "pornographic and subversive", the author of the story was charged under military justice and the 71-year-old chief editor and founder of *Marcha*, Carlos Quijano, and three other journalists were detained for 3½ months.

The daily newspaper *Ahora* which represents largely Christian Democrat views and which had been closed several times in the past, started anew as a weekly in March 1974. After four issues it was closed again and both its editors and the Christian Democrat Senator Juan Pablo Terra were arrested. All were released on 5 June.

After previous agreement with the Uruguayan authorities a joint mission was sent by Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in May 1974 to study the legal procedures under military justice with regard to political suspects. The Secretary General of the ICJ, Niall McDermot, and Inger Fahlander from the Research Department had talks with government officials, senior members of the judiciary, and military officers. They also met with lawyers, rep-

representatives of the unions, relatives of prisoners and released prisoners. They concluded in their final report that "the laxity of the legal procedures is serious from the point of view of legal protection against ill-treatment of suspects". They expressed the hope that Uruguay would soon return to a system of ordinary justice for civilian offenders and, among other things, recommended establishment of a central bureau of information to help lawyers and families to find out by whom a person has been arrested and where he is being held; that a prior written authority should be issued for all arrests (except *in flagrante delicto*); and that confessions extracted under torture should never be admitted as a basis for conviction.

United States

With indictments continuing to be handed down to conscientious objectors to the Vietnam war, war resisters still dominate the list of adopted prisoners in the United States. Accordingly, in July, Amnesty International issued a statement of support for the campaign currently being waged in the United States for a general unconditional amnesty for all war resisters. This statement, which was widely disseminated in the United States, was also submitted in February to a sub-committee of the House of Representatives' Committee on the Judiciary which was holding hearings on the amnesty question. In an accompanying letter to Representative Robert W. Kastenmeier, Chairman of the Sub-Committee, Secretary General Martin Ennals stated:

Now that the direct involvement in the Indochina conflict of uniformed United States military personnel has ended it seems particularly urgent that the wound caused by the war, especially among American youth, be healed. The provision by Congress for a universal, unconditional amnesty, that is, total exoneration, would be an indispensable component of the healing process.

A growing number of the US adoptees are political activists, particularly blacks, who find themselves the victims of miscarriages of justice on trumped-up criminal charges. Thus, the "Charlotte Three" have

been adopted: Dr James Earl Grant, T. J. Reddy and Charles Parker, all of whom were involved in black community organizing in North Carolina. (Dr Grant was adopted last year.) They were convicted of burning the "Lazy B" riding stables on the evidence of two persons with long records of criminal violence, who had admitted guilt of the crime. Their sentences—25, 20 and 10 years respectively—are among the highest in recent North Carolina history, exceeded only by the 35 to 38 years' sentence passed on a policeman convicted of seven instances of arson.

Juries continue to treat sceptically political conspiracy trials brought against anti-war activists by the Department of Justice at the time when it was headed by persons themselves now under indictment on Watergate-related charges. Thus, the "Gainsville Eight", members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, were acquitted of spurious charges of conspiracy to disrupt the Republican National Convention in Florida in 1972. In a letter to US Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson, AI's Legal Officer, Nigel S. Rodley, had called for the dropping of charges against the eight. Finding it "difficult not to conclude that the only purpose to be served by the trial is either to justify the earlier immobilization of the defendants prior to the convention or to continue diverting citizens from exercising their rights by tying them up in the legal process", Mr Rodley argued that to "respond to non-violence with violence—and injustice is violence—is to provide a situation in which those engaged in the political process lose faith in the value of eschewing violence"

Venezuela

Owing to lack of staff, Amnesty International has been unable to develop its work in Venezuela. Five cases were taken up during the year: all were peasants who had been detained for several years without trial on ambiguous charges of having links with guerrilla organizations.

Information received over the course of the year has shown that very many civilians in prison for political offences have been