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**TRANSNATIONALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS: THE CASE OF AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**

City University of New York

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TRANSNATIONALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS:
THE CASE OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

by

RUDOLPH K. RIPP

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
Faculty in Political Science in partial
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale for the Study

The aim of this study is to analyze the strategy, influence, effectiveness, and limitations of Amnesty International, a London-based transnational nongovernmental organization (NGO), with respect to its efforts to protect the human rights of political prisoners in several countries. The central focus is on the interactions between Amnesty International and the governments the Organization selected for special attention during the period 1975-1979.

Having a mandate to protect specific human rights, Amnesty International works for the release of imprisoned persons who are regarded as "prisoners of conscience" -- that is, persons who are imprisoned solely for "their beliefs, color, language, ethnic origin, or religion," provided they have neither used nor advocated violence. In addition, Amnesty International works for fair and early trials and for those who are detained without being charged or without having had a trial. Finally, the Organization opposes torture and the death penalty in all cases.

Its worldwide activities are intertwined with other transnational and international actions concerning the protection of human rights. The Organization has national sections in 40 countries (1981) and additional members and supporters in some 80 other countries. It has

consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with UNESCO, and with the Council of Europe. It has cooperative relations with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and is a member of the Coordinating Committee of the Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees of the Organization of African Unity. In addition, the Organization has substantial formal and informal contacts with other NGOs. In working toward the implementation of specific civil and political rights, Amnesty International deals directly with national governments. Given the nature of these far-flung activities, it is reasonable to assume that Amnesty International qualifies as an actor in world politics.

As a nongovernmental actor engaged in world politics attempting to protect human rights, Amnesty International works within and across the system of international politics. Since this nongovernmental organization interacts with governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), other organizations, and individuals across national borders, its activities are called transnational. The definition of transnational relations as formulated by Keohane and Nye states that they consist of "contacts, coalitions, and interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments."¹

Although Amnesty International's operations are not controlled by any government, it does find itself in an essentially bipolar world where there is an East-West division with the Soviet Union and the United States being the dominant states in their respective spheres of influence. There are also other divisions or cleavages which form the backdrop upon which Amnesty International operates. The bipolar

world of the post-World War II era is slowly being changed by the emergence of Japan, China, and Western Europe as additional power centers. There is, further, a North-South division, a separation between the industrialized countries of the northern part of the world and the so-called developing countries which lie mainly in the southern part. Within this broad global pattern Amnesty International finds itself, both geographically and ideologically, in the Northern and Western subdivisions: it is Northwestern in terms of its affiliations, outlook, and goals.

In Keohane and Nye's seminal work on transnational relations the activities of a number of nongovernmental organizations were discussed by various authors. Yet the subject of human rights, which is so much a part of world politics today, was not discussed; neither were human rights organizations. This lack of attention paid to NGOs involved in international human rights has been offset only slightly by a handful of articles and studies. The literature on human rights has concentrated on the history and evolution of human rights and the development of international legal standards.

However, little is known about the process of protection and the international interactions involved. According to Thomas Buergenthal:

The interaction between international systems and techniques for the protection of human rights involves a complex process in which the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the regional organizations, and numerous governmental and nongovernmental entities interrelate in a variety of different ways and on many different levels. We need to know more about the dynamics of this process. Without such knowledge we cannot hope to make optimal use of existing international institutions for the protection of human rights; neither can we expect to be able to make truly informed predictions about the impact that proposed domestic, regional, or international measures of implementation will have in various parts of the world. 2

The criteria for future research in regard to international human rights is stated in the following passage by Forsythe and Wiseberg:

What should now be obvious is that more empirical research -- as distinct from purely philosophical or legal research -- is needed. We need to focus on the role of different types of actors in the protection of different types of rights, as well as on the interaction of both the actors and the various rights. We need case studies of successes and failures of human rights protection. We need a better understanding of the political dynamics at work in different regional contexts, in different global configurations. We need, especially, to know more about the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of nongovernmental organizations and the manner in which they interact with governments and intergovernmental organizations. 3

A similar comment concerning the need for research on human rights nongovernmental organizations was made by Buerghenthal and Torney. They said, "Thus far there exists little research relating to and assessing the techniques employed by human rights NGOs. Nor has there been a careful analysis of specified cases to determine the elements that have been associated with a given outcome."⁴

The dearth of literature is only one reason why this study was undertaken. Another reason is based on the growing importance of NGOs in world politics. Kjell Skelsbaek has written that "the relative number of NGOs has been growing precisely in those areas that are most politically active." He says further that "it is clear that the institutionalization of transnational interactions in nongovernmental organizations is continuing apace and that in a variety of ways it may be an important factor in future patterns of world politics."⁵

Specifically in regard to human rights, NGOs have become more numerous and active. It has been said by Wiseberg and Scoble⁶ that

"there has been a veritable mushrooming of organizations that have only recently become active in the politics of human rights protection."⁶

The growth of NGOs dedicated to the protection of human rights has come about partly in response to the lack of interest or ineffectiveness of governments and intergovernmental organizations with respect to the protection of human rights. In the past governments were generally reluctant to protest against human rights violations in other countries considering it as interference. Only recently have governments become more outspoken concerning violations of human rights. Since World War II the subject of human rights has evolved into a major topic of international politics. The United Nations Charter mentions human rights in the Preamble and in no less than six articles. At its first session the United Nations General Assembly affirmed the Nurnberg Principles which led to the drafting of the Genocide Convention. In 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted.

While the United Nations has made consistent progress in the promotion of human rights by developing international standards, its Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) has made only slow headway with respect to protection. In 1947 the UNCHR decided that it would not hear complaints concerning human rights violations. For 20 years the Commission took no action on individual petitions that reached the United Nations. From the late 1960s to the late 1970s the political makeup of the UNCHR allowed complaints to be discussed only in regard to South Africa, Israel, and Chile. In more recent years the Commission began to consider human rights questions relating to other

countries. For example, in 1978 the UNCHR announced that it had taken decisions on nine countries.

The regional human rights commissions cover Western Europe and the Americas. The European Commission on Human Rights is said to be working smoothly,⁷ but the process is slow and elaborate. Between 1970 and 1976 only two complaints were able to make their way through the screening procedures.⁸ Then again, Western European citizens, with some exceptions, are not generally faced with the blatant violations of human rights that confront citizens of other areas.

In recent years the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has been fairly active, producing reports on several Latin American countries accusing them of violating human rights. But the violations persist and governments frequently reject the reports. The relationship between the IACHR and the various Latin American countries is complex, having elements of both cooperation and conflict, which is influenced by the overall political alignments within the Organization of American States (OAS).

There are other areas -- Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia -- where regional human rights commissions either do not exist or are only in the embryonic stage.

Nongovernmental organizations have attempted to fill this void between international human rights standards and domestic practices. Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists, and the International Committee of the Red Cross have all been active in working to protect human rights. In 1977, in recognition of its work, Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Olle Dahlen has said, "As regards human rights all NGOs, big

and small, old and new, will have considerable influence...Even now there is no doubt that the NGOs which exert the greatest influence on public opinion play a more prominent role on the international scene than do many United Nations member states."⁹

It is in view of this increasing activity of human rights NGOs -- combined with the sparse literature in this area -- that this study was undertaken.

An Outline of the Literature on Human Rights

There are five identifiable categories into which the literature on human rights can be divided. Each of these categories contains a considerable amount of material and it would be beyond the scope of this study to discuss or analyze it in detail. However, in order to show the relevance of this study, a brief review is in order. The five categories are:

1. The definition, philosophy, and history of human rights.
2. Country-specific studies of human rights.
3. Comparative studies of human rights.
4. International law and human rights; intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations and human rights.
5. Foreign policy and human rights.

In addition, there are studies which overlap two or more of these categories.

With respect to the first category, there is still no precise agreement as to what constitutes a human right. Although various international human rights instruments exist -- for which some claim universal application -- there are still philosophical and definitional problems. As Richard Bilder has pointed out, "it remains un-

clear what the criteria are for deciding whether a particular claim is a human right."¹⁰ And since the term is vague and ambiguous there has been continuing pressure for expanding the list of rights. To the traditional civil and political rights have been added economic, social, and cultural rights. And more recently the rights of self-determination and permanent sovereignty over natural resources have been put forth as human rights. Despite these definitional problems certain rights have been incorporated into various international documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international covenants, and the Helsinki Agreement.

While these documents do exist, there are still basic differences between Western and non-Western concepts of human rights. Such differences include the question of whether economic, social, and cultural rights have priority over civil and political rights. Rights of the individual come into conflict with the rights of the group. In the Soviet Union, for example, an individual has rights only in conformity with the interests of the state. And in India a Prime Minister said it is not individuals who have rights, but states.

In contrast to Western societies, it has been pointed out by Pollis and Schwab that in non-Western societies the "philosophic underpinnings defining the nature of man/woman, the relationship of individuals to other individuals and to society are markedly at variance with the philosophic underpinnings of individualism in Western thought and society."¹¹ In Saudi Arabia, for example, a Saudi woman is legally considered as half a person. She can inherit only half of what a man can; if she is killed, her family receives half of the "blood money" it would have received had a male family member been killed.¹²

But it is not only in non-Western societies where differences arise. Lip service may be given to Western values while actual practices deny human rights. As the former Argentine political prisoner Jacobo Timerman wrote, "But the Argentine military government went further; it strove to eliminate physically all those who in any way participated in the world it wanted to alter..."¹³

The second category in the literature, studies dealing with the human rights situations in specific countries does not require much explanation. It includes, for example, articles on human rights in Japan,¹⁴ in Brazil,¹⁵ and Mozambique,¹⁶ among others.

Comparative studies such as Ivo Duchacek's Rights and Liberties in the World Today: Constitutional Promise and Reality illustrate that although many countries include a broad range of rights in their constitutions, their actual practices fall far short of full implementation of those rights.¹⁷ In another study comparing capitalist and socialist third world countries Richard Falk concluded that socialist forms of authoritarianism are to be preferred to their capitalist counterparts.¹⁸ Additional studies have compared legal cultures¹⁹ and have dealt with the subject of comparative human rights in general.²⁰

The fourth category of human rights literature concentrated on the development and scope of international human rights law and the work of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations. One of the earlier works in this area was H. Lauterpacht's study which dealt with the legal effects of the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the practices of the organs concerned with their application.²¹ The legal aspects of international human rights were also

explored by Sohn and Buergenthal as they analyzed the legal institutions set up under the League of Nations, the European Convention, and the Organization of American States.²² Similar studies include Louis Henkin's article on the United Nations and human rights²³ and James Frederick Green's work on the same subject.²⁴

It has been noted that "up until the 1970s the field of human rights was largely the exclusive preserve of international legal scholars, of political philosophers and of the occasional historian."²⁵ More recently, however, some works have focused on NGOs and human rights. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was examined by David P. Forsythe. This study described the relationship between the ICRC and the various components of the Red Cross movement and its work for prisoners in conflict situations.²⁶ An earlier work on NGOs was Peter Archer's study of NGOs and human rights.²⁷

The role of NGOs in the anti-apartheid movement has been examined by George W. Shepherd, Jr. Shepherd's thesis is that "human rights NGOs play a formative role in world politics, occasionally more determinative than that of major powers."²⁸

Several works have focused on Amnesty International. Egon Larsen provided a journalistic, largely uncritical account of the Organization's work.²⁹ A descriptive account of the scope of Amnesty International's activities was provided by Scoble and Wiseberg.³⁰ A German study described some of the Organization's national sections.³¹

Another NGO which has been analyzed is the International League for Human Rights. Scoble and Wiseberg describe how the organization shifted its work from the development of international human rights standards to a more activist policy of protecting rights.³²

The final category, foreign policy and human rights, has been

the subject of a number of recent studies, spurred on no doubt by the activist human rights policy of the Carter Administration. Sandy Vogelgesang's book of United States human rights policy is a wide-ranging study dealing with case studies of that policy with respect to Cambodia, El Salvador, and the Soviet Union; it also deals with the economics and politics of human rights.³³ Another example is the volume edited by Donald P. Kommers and Gilbert D. Loescher. Although entitled, *Human Rights and Foreign Policy*, the book covers a number of other areas as well such as the monitoring of human rights and conflicting ideologies.³⁴

As can be seen from this brief overview of the literature, there have been few studies which analyze the activities of an NGO in various concrete situations detailing the interactions of transnational, intergovernmental, and governmental bodies involved in both the violation and protection of human rights.

Plan of Analysis

As noted above, the central focus of this study is on the interactions between Amnesty International and several countries that the Organization selected for special attention. These interactions will be described and analyzed in relation to the various transnational and international interactions that took place with respect to the protection of human rights in these countries. Case studies deal with separate situations in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa. The period under review is 1975-1979. In certain instances, in order to round out the narratives and analyses, the discussion will go beyond those dates. A five-year period is selected as sufficient to establish patterns of activity and to provide a comprehen-

sive picture of the Organization's strategy, influence, effectiveness, and limitations. In addition, a substantial data base will be established from which to generalize about the transnational interactions between NGOs and governments with regard to the protection of human rights.

With respect to Latin America, the focus is on Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile. In Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia are singled out. And in sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda and South Africa are the countries under consideration. In describing the international efforts to protect human rights in these countries, particular care is given to documenting the responses of the target governments.

In conducting the research special attention was given to the following aspects, which form the framework for the empirical parts of this study:

1. An overview of Amnesty International's activities with respect to each of the countries considered.
2. The reactions of the target countries to the activities of Amnesty International and others.
3. The role of the media within and outside the target countries.
4. The role of Western states with respect to the protection of human rights in the target countries.
5. The role of other NGOs within and outside the target countries.
6. The extent of Amnesty International's reliance on international human rights instruments and intergovern-

mental organizations.

7. How differences related to concepts of human rights affect Amnesty International's efforts.

8. Amnesty International's effectiveness.

These factors are discussed within the context of the relevant domestic political situations existing during the period under review.

While Amnesty International does not see itself as an educational organization as such, it does play a role in the general promotion of human rights -- as contrasted to protection -- simply by the nature of the approach it takes in trying to protect human rights. This aspect is also discussed, but it is not central to this study. Similarly, Amnesty International's work in regard to the development of international human rights standards -- such as the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment -- is an important corollary to its activities regarding political prisoners, but will be considered here only peripherally. Another area which bears on Amnesty International's work for political prisoners is the mobilization of support among interested groups and individuals. Tracing the details of the process involved in this activity is beyond the scope of this study.

Organization of this Study

This dissertation is divided into nine chapters. The second chapter provides background material relating to the historical period prior to that covered by this study. It outlines the Organization's operational structure and its guiding principles.

Chapters 3, 5, and 7 are empirical, generally nonanalytical descriptive narratives of the major actions directed toward the target countries by Amnesty International and others. The primary responses of the target countries are documented.

Chapters 4, 6, and 8 are empirical analyses based on the framework outlined in the section, Plan of Analysis, above.

The final chapter offers conclusions on Amnesty International's strategy, effectiveness, and limitations. In addition, generalizations are made concerning transnationalism and human rights.

Research Strategy and Data Sources

In conducting the research, two phases were involved. The first was a comparative and quantitative analysis of Amnesty International's activities on a world-wide scale in order to determine the countries the Organization selected as targets and the extent of these activities toward each of these countries. It was on this basis that the countries discussed in this study were chosen. That is, the countries to which Amnesty International paid the most attention were selected for review here. There would have been little reason, for example, to explore the actions of Amnesty International with respect to human rights in Albania or North Korea since little information comes out of these closed societies for Amnesty International to consider. As a result, few actions could be taken by the Organization directed at these countries. The absence of action by the Organization, however, in regard to any particular area, may be relevant as an aspect of its overall strategy. In addition to the countries singled out in this study, the Organization was highly active in regard to the United Kingdom and Spain in Western Europe. With respect to the Middle East,

Amnesty International devoted a great deal of attention to Iraq, Iran, Israel, and Syria. Within Asia a number of countries received considerable attention; they include the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan.

The second phase of the research focused on the individual countries selected. The aim was to determine the scope and kinds of actions taken by Amnesty International and others involved in the international protection of human rights. In the course of the preliminary research it was determined that since Amnesty International did not work in a vacuum, but rather in concert or in parallel with governments and other organizations, the narratives and analyses deal with these other interactions as well and the Organization's relationship to them. Since Amnesty International's mandate restricts its areas of concern to certain civil and political rights, the term, human rights, generally refers to these particular rights.

In attempting to assess Amnesty International's effectiveness and influence, the analysis is guided by the following qualification: "Impact cannot be measured with any precision in any multicausal situation...Even if one could validate...qualitative claims, there is no way to single out the contribution to progress of any one of the logically independent variables: nongovernmental actors, Carter's policy, the United Nations system, etc."³⁵ However, in considering effectiveness, there are several elements to be considered; the direct impact of the activities of the Organization on the fate of political prisoners is only one element of effectiveness. Others include:

1. The Organization's effect on the target governments.
2. The Organization's effect on other governments.

3. The Organization's effect on IGOs and NGOs.

4. The promotion of human rights.

And while it may not be possible to determine with absolute precision the effect of one factor in a multicausal situation, some general assessments can be made.

Various data sources were used in conducting the research. With respect to Amnesty International, the study centered on the public activities of the Organization as revealed by annual reports, country reports, meeting summaries, newsletters, press releases, and miscellaneous reports. Several officials of the Organization were also interviewed. So-called "internal" documents used by the Organization were not made available to the writer. According to Amnesty International's rules and regulations, "Under no circumstances can INTERNAL documents be given to the press, government officials or other organizations, sent to contacts within the country concerned or in any way circulated outside the membership."³⁶ The writer was also notified that the "material you would require for that type of research is difficult to compile and more important, not for public use, not even for research."³⁷ Nevertheless, the information obtained from Amnesty International's public documents, as well as from other sources, was sufficient for the case studies and for supporting the analyses. According to a member of Amnesty International's International Executive Committee, the details recorded in the Organization's public documents are representative of its basic activities.³⁸

In utilizing Amnesty International's "external" material the study is, in a sense, an analysis of Amnesty International's "foreign policy" and not its policy-making process. That is, the study scruti-

nizes the relationship between Amnesty International's output and other actions and the responses of target governments. Since this study focuses on the Organization's output, as generated by its International Secretariat in London, it should be made clear that for each action initiated numerous other actions are taken. The Organization's 40 national sections, its adoption groups*, and its 200,000 members follow through on actions suggested by the International Secretariat. For example, a press release issued by the International Secretariat will trigger the issuing of press releases by the various national sections. Designation of a political detainee or prisoner as "prisoner of the month" will generate numerous protests by the Organization's membership and interested others. In certain cases, however, the Organization may restrict the responses of its members to certain national sections for maximum impact.

In each of the case studies, in addition to Amnesty International's material, the research concentrated on data originating in the countries selected for review. Sources consisted of news agency reports, radio and television broadcasts, newspapers, and magazines. Particular attention was paid to governmental statements concerning the international actions taken on behalf of victims of human rights violations. Translations of this material were derived from the daily reports of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, the British Broadcasting Corporation's Survey of World Broadcasts, and the Joint Publications Research Service. Additional source material consisted of relevant documents of governmental and intergovernmental agencies, reports of nongovernmental organizations, journals, and books.

*Adoption groups are defined in the next chapter.

The Significance of this Study

As noted above, there has been little empirical research dealing with the role of nongovernmental organizations in the protection of human rights. This study adds to the literature by describing the scope of a nongovernmental organization's work, the international and national context in which that work takes place, and the nature of that work. It illustrates how different actors become involved in the international protection of human rights in different contexts.

However, the primary significance of this study is that it demonstrates the extent to which the systems of international and national politics impinge upon the transnational activities of a nongovernmental human rights organization. Although Amnesty International is considered a transnational organization, the international political system has a significant impact on the Organization's strategy, circumscribes its effectiveness, and imposes limitations on its efforts to protect human rights. In addition, this study shows how the Organization's work is affected by the efforts of national governments to perpetuate the status quo and to maintain internal security and order. Additionally, this study demonstrates that Western transnational human rights organizations derive their influence from their links with Western democratic nations. This influence, in turn, has an impact (subject to limitations) on those governments selected by these organizations as targets.

Footnotes

¹Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and Robert O. Keohane, "Transnationalism and World Politics: An Introduction," in Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (eds), Transnationalism and World Politics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. xi. See also Richard W. Mansbach, et. al., The Web of World Politics: Non-State Actors in the Global System (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976).

²Thomas Buergenthal, "International and Regional Human Rights Law: Some Examples of their Interaction," Texas International Law Journal 20, Nos. 2-3 (Spring-Summer, 1977), p. 330.

³David P. Forsythe and Laurie S. Wiseberg, "Human Rights Protection: A Research Agenda," Universal Human Rights, Vol. 1, No. 4.

⁴Thomas Buergenthal and Judith Torney, "Expanding the International Human Rights Research Agenda," International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 23, No. 2 (June, 1979), p. 332.

⁵Kjell Skjelsbaek, "The Growth of International Nongovernmental Organizations," in Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (eds), Transnational Relations and World Politics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. 79 and 92.

⁶Laurie S. Wiseberg and Harry M. Scoble, "Recent Trends in the Expanding Universe of Nongovernmental Organizations Dedicated to the Protection of Human Rights," Denver Journal of International Law and Policy, Vol. 8 (Special Issue, 1979), p. 629.

⁷Thomas Buergenthal and Judith V. Torney, International Human Rights and International Education (Washington: United States National Commission for UNESCO, Dept. of State, 1976).

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CHAPTER 2

AN INTRODUCTION TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: ITS HISTORY, MANDATE STRUCTURE, TECHNIQUES, MEMBERSHIP, AND FINANCING

History

Amnesty International was founded in 1961. Its beginning was recorded by The New York Times. The article read, "A campaign called Appeal for Amnesty 1961, to work for the release of political prisoners throughout the world, was started here tonight by a group of Britons. John Foster, a conservative member of Parliament is chairman of the crusade, which he described as non-partisan."¹

The founder of the Organization was Peter Benenson, a British Lawyer who was seeking a way to protest seven-year prison sentences for some Portuguese students who had toasted the idea of freedom.² This original concern developed into a campaign for political prisoners worldwide. The appeal had four aims. It was to work for:

1. Those imprisoned for their opinions.
2. Fair and public trials.
3. The right of asylum.
4. More effective machinery to guarantee freedom of opinion.³

From the beginning the use of publicity was seen as a major weapon of the Organization. To launch the campaign, Benenson was promised and received a double-page spread for an article to appear in the London Observer. The article appeared on May 28, 1961 simultaneously with an article in the French newspaper, Le Monde. In the

London Observer article Benenson wrote, "The most rapid way of bringing relief to prisoners of conscience is publicity, especially publicity among their fellow-citizens."⁴ The use of publicity continues to be a major technique of Amnesty International.

Although the Organization received publicity upon its founding in the United States and Europe, apparently little mention was subsequently made of its activities in the United States. For instance, from November 22, 1961 to July 12, 1966 there was no mention of the Organization in The New York Times. In 1966 four articles about Amnesty International appeared in the Times; three of the articles reported on the controversy surrounding the Organization's charges that British soldiers tortured prisoners in Aden. The charges were denied by the British Government. Little mention was made of the Organization's activities in regard to other areas. Only in recent years has the Organization been the subject of scholarly articles.

In the early years some Amnesty International missions to other countries were financed by newspapers. Sean MacBride, a former Irish Foreign Minister, traveled to Ghana in 1962 and a British lawyer went to Portugal. Also in 1962 the Catholic newspaper, Universe, paid for Sean MacBride's trip to Czechoslovakia.⁵

In 1962, at the Organization's annual meeting at Bruges, the name, Amnesty International, was adopted. In November, 1963 an International Secretariat was established. It was also in 1963 that a research department was established.⁶ By 1968 the research department had four full-time employees.⁷ In its annual report for 1969-70 the Organization noted, "To have only one full-time research worker for the whole of Latin America, Spain, and Portugal is impractical for a pro-

fessional organization dependent on accurate information." It was only in 1970 that a French-speaking researcher was added to the staff to enable the Organization to obtain greater knowledge of French Africa.⁸ By 1977-78 the research department was the largest in the International Secretariat. At that time the Organization's requirements called for a research department consisting of 56 persons, of whom 18 would be researchers. According to John Humphreys, Amnesty International's head of research at the time, there were 17 researchers in 1978.⁹

In 1965 Amnesty International was admitted to consultative status with the United Nation's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), UNESCO, and the Council of Europe.¹⁰ In addition, it now has "cooperative relations" with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States and observer status with the Organization of African Unity's Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees.

In 1966 the largest National Section of Amnesty International was in Great Britain which had 177 adoption groups. (An adoption group may consist of three to 15 members who work for the release of prisoners assigned to it by the International Secretariat by directly approaching the officials of the country concerned, and indirectly through whatever publicity and support they can generate.) The Swedish section was second largest with 103 adoption groups. In the United States the number of adoption groups increased to 25 from four the year before. At that time the British section was the main source of income for the Organization.¹¹

During the years 1966-67 Amnesty International experienced an internal crisis resulting from its report which charged that British

soldiers tortured prisoners in Aden. According to Peter Archer, "Amnesty became 'irresponsible' in Britain almost overnight...Early 1967 saw the nadir of Amnesty's fortunes. Its leadership appeared divided, financial disaster threatened, in Britain it was in the position of being simultaneously unpopular with the Foreign Office and accused of being in the pocket of the government...the crusade of 1961 seemed spent."¹²

The furor over the Aden report wasn't the only crisis. Peter Benenson, the founder of Amnesty International, charged that the British Secret Service had infiltrated the International Executive Committee and that Sean MacBride, the chairman of that committee should resign because of alleged links to the CIA. MacBride was also the Secretary General of the International Commission of Jurists, which had been charged with receiving CIA funds.¹³ One of the charges was that an employee of the International Secretariat, Robert Swan, worked for British Intelligence for 20 years.¹⁴ Countercharges were leveled at Benenson accusing him of using British Government funds to support Amnesty International's work in Rhodesia. The dispute was finally resolved by an investigation of the charges and by the appointment of a neutral Secretary General. Benenson and Swan resigned.

The low period of 1967 is reflected in its budget. Amnesty International's annual report for 1979 charts the budget figures for the years 1961-1979. The 1966-67 period is the only one for which no figures are available. However, since that period the Organization has shown consistent growth. For the year ending April, 1979 Amnesty International reported expenditures of 1,202,300 British pounds or approximately \$2,100,000.¹⁵

Amnesty International's recovery from its problems of 1967 was due primarily to a renewed perception of effectiveness by its members and by influential observers. In April of 1967 a military coup took place in Greece. Amid reports of arrests and torture Amnesty International sent a mission to Greece to investigate the charges. Their report, issued early in 1968, documenting torture was circulated at the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe.¹⁶ According to one observer, "Amnesty International ...virtually led the campaign against Greece, until it was respectable for governments, notably Sweden, to take up the cause."¹⁷

The British Government also urged the Greek Government to allow an investigation into allegations made by Amnesty International that political prisoners were being tortured.¹⁸ Eventually, Greece was expelled from the Council of Europe because of the human rights violations in that country.

With the accompanying publicity surrounding the Greek case, the renewed credibility of Amnesty International's reports, and the seriousness with which the Organization's charges were viewed by various governments, the Organization once again began to expand its membership and revenues.

Dissension, however, was not totally eliminated. Another rift developed in 1970 between the British section and the American section over a report that charged Israelis had tortured Arab prisoners. The report prompted the United States section to disassociate itself from the report,¹⁹ but no permanent break occurred. In 1978 another controversy developed over the appointment of an Australian communist to be Amnesty International's head of research. A New York Times editorial

of December 14, 1978 questioned whether someone could be a loyal communist and a defender of political freedom.

The development of the Organization twice received a boost from the Nobel Peace Prize Committee. In 1974 it awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to Sean McBride shortly after he resigned as chairman of Amnesty International's International Executive Committee. In 1977 the Organization itself received the award.²⁰ Not only did this add revenues to the Organization's treasury, but it undoubtedly added to its prestige and subsequent rise in membership. The year after receiving the award the Organization's budgeted expenditures nearly doubled to approximately 840,000 British pounds.

The Nobel Peace Prize committee has also contributed indirectly to Amnesty International's work and to the human rights movement in general by naming Russian dissident, Andrei Sakharov (1975)²¹, and Argentina's Alfredo Perez Esquivel (1980), a human rights activist, as Nobel Laureates.

Mandate

Amnesty International's original mandate followed the initial four aims of its first campaign in 1961. Since that time the Organization has expanded its mandate under the pressure of its membership and as a result of its experience working for the release of political prisoners.

One extension of its mandate came about because of its restriction prohibiting the Organization to work for the release of persons who had used or advocated violence. Amnesty International had adopted a black South African, Nelson Mandela, as a prisoner of conscience. However, by 1964, after he was sentenced to life imprisonment for

sabotage "he was branded a militant activist and his British adoption group ceased to work for his release."²² However, since he was imprisoned at Robben Island, a penal institution where conditions were generally regarded as harsh, it was felt that to abandon him at this stage would have been inconsistent with the Organization's concerns. At the 1964 Amnesty International annual meeting, therefore, it was decided that although Mandela would no longer be a prisoner of conscience, the Organization could work for the improvement of his conditions, as it could for any prisoner.²³

This concern over the treatment of prisoners led the Organization in 1968 to include in its statute a provision indicating that it would work to abolish torture. In 1971, at its annual meeting in Luxembourg, it was resolved to investigate the possibility of a worldwide campaign.²⁴ In 1972 the International Council of Amnesty International launched its Campaign for the Abolition of Torture (CAT).²⁵ Originally planned as a one-year effort, Amnesty International's drive against torture evolved into a continuing campaign.

The International Council meeting in 1971 also broadened its definition of conscientious objectors. It now would work for those who were called "unconditionalists" (i.e., those who refused conscientious objector status by their governments if alternate national service was involved). The Organization also decided to increase its activities in the United States in regard to persons imprisoned for political actions connected with their race or ethnic background.²⁶

In 1977, in a further extension of its mandate, Amnesty International began a campaign for the abolition of the death penalty. In its current Handbook, published in 1977, Amnesty International says

that "since it was founded, Amnesty International has opposed the death penalty on the grounds that it constitutes a cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment..."²⁷ There is a certain value in the Organization portraying its concerns as being consistent. However, torture and the death penalty were "causes which were once considered outside the purview of Amnesty" and have been considered as "extensions of Amnesty's concerns."²⁸ While executions were undoubtedly of concern to Amnesty International's members, total abolition was not part of its mandate. In the 1964 International Council meeting at Canterbury the Organization decided to appeal to all governments "not to carry out death sentences for political offenses until six months after sentences, or until an appeal to a higher court has been heard."²⁹

According to Robert Maurer, the Associate Director for Program for the United States National Section (AIUSA), these extensions of the Organization's mandate followed naturally from its classical focus on the individual political prisoner. That is, work for the release of political prisoners led to concern over their treatment and, since political prisoners are often executed, to concern over the death penalty.³⁰

Apparently, there is constant pressure from both within and outside of the Organization to be involved in areas which go beyond its mandate. In its 1978 annual report Amnesty International's Secretary General wrote "This had led to recognition that...what is needed is an acceptance that Amnesty International cannot hope to deal equally or on a worldwide scale with all the problems in all geographical areas which fall within its mandate...Amnesty International is not an organization to solve or even research adequately the human rights of prisoners in

a time of civil war or the aftermath of a revolution...Increased international recognition of this organization has not necessarily been accompanied by a clearer public understanding of its nature and limitations. Wherever prison conditions are bad or pre-trial detention is prolonged, Amnesty International is expected to make an pronouncement. In fact, Amnesty International's mandate is restricted and its interpretation is a subject of debate within the movement itself."³¹

An indication of outside pressure on Amnesty International was evident after the 1973 Israeli-Arab War. "Worldwide representations were made to Amnesty International on behalf of the Israeli prisoners of war captured during October, 1973. Although Amnesty International is not mandated to intervene in questions relating to prisoners of war, a letter was addressed to President Assad [of Syria] requesting that the government 'observe the Geneva Conventions of 1949 in respect of the treatment of prisoners of war, and that they should in no way be subject to any kind of inhuman or degrading treatment.'"³²

Arguments against extending the organization's mandate generally center around the loss of effectiveness that would result from spreading its resources too thinly. However, an equal concern stems from the fact that as additional areas of interest are added to the Organization's mandate, these additional areas will not only tax scarce resources, but one area of interest would have to be balanced against another. A criticism of the human rights movements by Third World and communist countries is that economic and social rights do not receive the attention they deserve. Amnesty International's stance is that it "neither understands nor accepts the attempts sometimes made to create a conflict or a contradiction between these two sets of rights [poli-

tical and socioeconomic]. Nor do we accept a contradiction between the rights of...nations...and the human rights of individuals..."³³

However, at Amnesty International's International Council meeting in Vienna in 1973 there was the first serious discussion of expanding the Organization into the Third World. Recommendations were made to the International Executive Committee that in doing so social, economic, and cultural differences should be considered. In 1974, in an attempt to expand its activities in Latin America, an Amnesty International representative visited Columbia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Panama and contacted organizations and publishing houses that had an interest in its work.³⁴

Were Amnesty International to expand its mandate into the area of social and economic rights there would be inevitable pressures to concentrate its resources in those areas. Given its limited resources, priorities would have to be established. If certain rights are considered to be inviolable, balancing these rights against others would undoubtedly be viewed as hypocritical and would result in a loss of support.

More recently, there has been a debate within the Organization concerning whether it should be involved in proposing or supporting sanctions against governments in the form of boycotts or cuts in aid. While so far Amnesty International has not taken this step, it has indicated that "it is within its mandate to call for the cessation of those types of military, security, and police transfers which can be reasonably assumed to be used by recipient governments in the violation of human rights within Amnesty International's mandate."³⁵

This interpretation appears to be an extension of its original

mandate. Similarly, "natural extensions" of its concerns about political prisoners can lead Amnesty International into areas that could present difficult choices for an Organization that considers itself impartial. For example, should concern over political prisoners in a particular country involve the Organization in opposing that country's government? In Amnesty International's 1978 report on political imprisonment in South Africa the country's legal system is documented. Based on this report Amnesty International concluded that "Within this legal structure...it is inevitable that individuals will be imprisoned for reasons of conscience."³⁶ The report made no recommendations to the Government of South Africa since "Amnesty International believes that no reforms in the present structure will be sufficiently far-reaching to remove the causes of political imprisonment unless the whole system of apartheid is dismantled."³⁷ Obviously, if a country's legal system is a reflection of its political system, then opposition to the legal system becomes opposition to the political system, especially if the opposition is not aimed at certain aspects of the legal system, but at its structure. Clearly, this is a delicate area with which Amnesty International has to contend when developing its strategy and when considering extensions of its mandate.

More recently, most likely reacting to criticism that the Organization did not consider the violations of human rights perpetrated by guerrilla or liberation groups, Amnesty International began in 1979 to monitor these groups as well.³⁸ However, these particular groups must exercise administrative control over a certain amount of territory. Terrorist groups such as those that operate in Italy, which do not exercise control over any territory, are excluded.³⁹

Amnesty International's mandate finds its origin in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Although Amnesty International stresses its adherence to Articles 5, 9, 10 and 19, it generally considers the UDHR as its platform and other specific articles relate to its work.

Article 3 of the UDHR says everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of the person.

Article 5 deals with torture and mistreatment of persons.

Article 9 says no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile.

Article 10 is concerned with fair trials.

Article 18 says everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 19 deals with freedom of expression and opinion and the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas regardless of frontiers.

These articles of the UDHR have their counterparts in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. However, several of the articles in the Covenant have restrictive clauses which may limit their application. Article 12 says governments may restrict freedom of movement in order to protect national security, public order, public health or morals. Similarly, Article 19 allows restrictions on freedom of expression.

When Amnesty International comes upon information concerning matters lying outside its mandate, it frequently passes that on to intergovernmental bodies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or the International Labor Organization (ILO).

It has passed on to the ILO information concerning forced labor, imprisonment and disappearances of trade unionists, and interference with freedom of association.

In working to secure the specific civil and political rights in its mandate Amnesty International has regarded them as being universally applicable, considering that most countries of the world are members of the United Nations and that adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an obligation that they undertake under the Charter of the United Nations. Those countries that have ratified the international Covenants have added obligations.

The obligations of governments are, however, subject to their interpretations. In many respects these interpretations run counter to those of Amnesty International. Amnesty International's interpretation is that human rights are universally applicable, not only internationally, but within a society. Segments of a society or individuals cannot be singled out for arbitrary treatment.

Within many countries the actions of terrorists as well as certain statements or actions of opposition forces are considered to be threats to the security of the state. And since the security of the state is threatened, actions to preserve that security take precedence over concerns for human rights.

The Organizational Structure

The material included here is excerpted primarily from Amnesty International's currently operational Handbook published in 1977.

The main governing body of the Organization is the International Council. Representatives from the National Sections meet once a year for about three days and establish long-term policy. In addition to

approving a budget, the International Council elects an International Executive Committee and a treasurer.

The International Executive Committee consists of nine members, seven regular members plus the treasurer and one person from the staff of the International Secretariat in London. The regular members have to be from different National Sections. The functions performed by the International Executive Committee are several:

It discusses and approves AI missions, publications, participation in international conferences, initiatives at the United Nations, approaches to governments by the International Secretariat, budget proposals and administrative matters.⁴⁰

The International Secretariat consists of several departments-- a Research Department, a Program Department, the Secretary General's Office, a Legal Office, a Documentation Center, and an Administration Department. It is not necessary to document here all of the functions of these departments, but some details are relevant to this study.

The Research Department is divided into five geographical divisions--one each for Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East.

...researchers are responsible for preparing background information and briefing papers on which AI's policymaking and initiatives are based--both with regard to top-level diplomatic approaches as well as membership activities. To do this the Research Department must maintain a wide network of private and official contacts, prepare and participate in research missions, monitor news reports on each region and keep a close watch on developments within the particular countries with which they are concerned.⁴¹

"The Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General are responsible to the International Executive Committee for the day-to-day running and servicing of the organization" and coordinates the work of the entire International Secretariat.⁴²

Within the Program Department a campaign unit, working with the

Research Department, prepares actions connected with "urgent action" appeals, among other functions.

Techniques

In conducting its activities Amnesty International utilizes a number of techniques. Its basic technique, central to its work for political prisoners is "adoption." Initially, an adoption group was assigned one prisoner from a Western country, one from a communist country, and one from a third world country. The Organization sought to maintain this type of balance in its other activities as well. However, in recent years the Organization has loosened this requirement of strictly balancing its actions. In its annual report for 1968-69 Martin Ennals, Amnesty International's Secretary General wrote, "...the original concept of communist, non-communist, and third world is perhaps no longer entirely valid in 1969...this balance must not reflect the cold war of the fifties, but rather the world of the 70s where communism no longer has a sharp geographical definition and the world can no longer be divided into 'East,' 'West,' and 'Third World.'"⁴³

The problems of obtaining information from certain countries, or a lack of cooperation with governmental authorities, coupled with the reality that violations of human rights do not occur according to neatly balanced patterns, undoubtedly brought about a loosening of the requirement of strict balance.

Since its beginning Amnesty International has consistently increased the number of political prisoners that it adopts. Its first annual report for the years 1961-62 indicated that there were 210 prisoners under adoption. By 1965 there were 1,200. In 1970 there were 2,000.⁴⁴ The increase in the number of adoptions was matched, of

course, by the number of adoption groups. In 1961-62 there were 70 such groups in seven countries (Australia, Britain, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States). By 1965 there were 400 groups in 19 countries. The number of groups increased to 850 in 27 countries in 1970⁴⁵ and to 2,283 in 39 countries in 1979. Also using 1979 figures, there were 200,000 members, subscribers, and supporters in 125 countries.⁴⁶

Amnesty International has frequently published in its annual reports and elsewhere statistics of the number of prisoners adopted and released. For example, in its annual report for 1964-65 it listed 1,200 prisoners under adoption and 800 released over a four-year period. In its 1968-69 report the Organization listed a total of 4,000 prisoners adopted since its founding and 2,000 released. By 1975-76 Amnesty International had stated that 7,251 Amnesty International-adopted prisoners had been released.⁴⁷ In 1977 the Executive Director of AIUSA, David Hawk, wrote that "In its sixteen years, Amnesty International has aided in securing the release of over 8,000 of the 15,000 individual cases of prisoners of conscience on whose behalf Amnesty members have worked."⁴⁸

The implication of publishing together statistics of prisoners adopted and released would appear to be that the fact of adoption brought about the release of prisoners. However, Amnesty International's official position is that "it is not the policy of Amnesty International to claim credit for the decisions of any government to release an imprisoned individual. This is regardless of whether the organization has been investigating the case or seeking the prisoner's release."⁴⁹ While this disclaimer is in the record, it seems that the publication

of numbers of prisoners adopted and released serves the purpose of indicating to Amnesty International members and interested outsiders that the Organization's work is effective.

From early in its existence Amnesty International has published a number of reports. In 1965 it published reports on prison conditions in Portugal, South Africa, and Romania; in 1966, on Paraguay, Rhodesia, and East Germany. A report on torture in Greece was published in 1968. Later, in 1973, a report on torture worldwide was published. Reports on individual countries are as a rule presented to the governments of the countries concerned prior to publication for comments. Publication of a report is a technique used to increase pressure on a government by appealing to a wider audience through the publicity generated. Reports also serve educational and developmental purposes. Amnesty International's report on torture documented the practice worldwide and served to launch the Organization's campaign to abolish torture.

In addition to the adoption of prisoners and the publication of reports, Amnesty International utilizes a number of other techniques. For example, there are various types of campaigns. For its long-term campaign to abolish torture (CAT) Amnesty International established a separate department to work solely on this problem. The CAT department initiates urgent action campaigns to give "instant global publicity on behalf of victims of torture" and to mobilize various groups and international bodies on their behalf. "Urgent actions" are also used for other purposes, when a prisoner is in need of immediate medical care, is under sentence of death, has disappeared, or is on a hunger strike.

Each month the Research Department selects three prisoners for its "prisoner of the month" campaign who are said to be in need of

urgent assistance. "The three cases are carefully selected to reflect the political impartiality of Amnesty International's work."⁵⁰ The Organization estimates that about 20,000 persons participate in this campaign each month.

In addition to the prisoner of the month campaign, each year during its "Prisoner of Conscience Week," a dozen prisoners are selected for special action. Similarly, on Human Rights Day, December 10th, 36 prisoners are singled out for special campaigns.

In situations where it is determined that focusing on individual prisoners is inadequate Amnesty International has adopted entire prisons; in other cases it organizes country campaigns. In 1976, for example, an international campaign against torture in Uruguay was initiated. During the 1978-79 period major country campaigns were directed at Argentina, Guinea (Conakry), El Salvador, Romania, Ethiopia, and Tunisia.⁵¹

An integral part of Amnesty International's work includes sending missions to various countries for talks with government officials, to conduct research, or to observe trials. In some years the missions to various countries reflected the balance that Amnesty International strives to achieve in its work. In more recent years the missions to Western and third world countries greatly outnumbered those to communist countries. In 1976, out of 34 missions, only four were to communist countries, and two of these were to Czechoslovakia. In 1977, three missions were to communist countries and 28 were to Western and third world countries.

In addition to the publicity attained by its publications and reports, Amnesty International issues a number of press releases each

year. All press releases sent out by the International Secretariat are generally duplicated by the National Sections. In the United States press releases are passed along to some "600-800 newspapers, wire services, columnists, and other media."⁵² The coverage that Amnesty International receives, however, is not balanced. According to Larry Cox, the Press and Information Officer for the United States section, the information in a press release, in order to receive coverage, has to be new or novel. A statement indicating that torture is continuing will not receive much coverage. On the other hand, if a report on torture is a new development, then coverage is attained. Generally, reports on the Soviet Union and Israel receive wide press coverage while other reports on countries which are less newsworthy do not.⁵³

Visits to embassies and consulates by Amnesty International members are another way of focusing attention on particular cases or of explaining the Organization's concerns. In the United States an AIUSA survey taken in May, 1977 showed that 36 adoption groups had written a total of 416 letters to Congress or the State Department over a six-month period.⁵⁴ An AIUSA publication pointed out that adoption groups in Western Europe turn more frequently to parliamentarians and government officials to support Amnesty International's causes than do adoption groups in the United States.⁵⁵

In addition to appealing to government officials, submissions are made to international organizations on a formal, as well as on an informal basis. The Organization has, for example, submitted information to the Organization of American States "on hundreds of individual cases."⁵⁶

A lesser-known aspect of Amnesty International's work is relief. Funds are made available to help a prisoner or his family while he is in prison and for other purposes. In the 1977-78 period the total amount for relief emanating from the International Secretariat was 190,000 British pounds, with the major part of this money going to Southern Africa. Additional funds for relief are administered separately by the National Sections.

Membership

According to the Amnesty International Handbook, "members come from all walks of life and include social workers, teachers, trade unionists, lawyers, housewives, students, doctors, news media personnel, businessmen, retired people and artists." The Handbook notes that the majority are said to be from Western Europe, North America, and Australasia. In the United States members tend to be white and middle-class. According to Robert Maurer, the Associate Director for Program for AIUSA, their involvement with Amnesty International is, for most of them, their first political experience, other than perhaps voting.⁵⁷ Maurer says that members are political moderates; some were anti-war activists during the 1960s. Third world members, Maurer says, are generally professionals who have the means to be able to take time off to devote to Amnesty International's causes and activities. In Germany, where there are some 650 local groups, a form of "mass membership" is said to exist. However, this designation is a relative term. There are, it is said, about 20,000 members in West Germany. Similarly, in Sweden, Amnesty International is said to be a household word. In Australia, government officials "from the Prime Minister down" are Amnesty International members.⁵⁸ However, this should not be construed

to mean that the Government is in Amnesty International's pocket or vice-versa.

Looking at Amnesty International's membership from another viewpoint, Andrew Blane, the Organization's vice-chairman of the International Executive Committee, pointed out that it's easier to determine which social groups are not represented among the members. For example, he says that generally those minorities who are under some form of pressure do not belong. In the United States there are few blacks or Hispanics in the Organization.⁵⁹ In short, those sectors of societies that are busy fending for themselves or trying to secure their own human rights cannot be expected to be active on behalf of persons in other countries of whom they never heard. If we consider that minority groups are often also in the lower socioeconomic strata, the pattern described by Blane is consistent with studies that show low levels of political participation by persons in these lower strata.

In regard to where members fit into the political spectrum, it seems to depend upon the particular National Section. In the United States, the generation of the 1960s is said to be in charge. Judging from the nature and the source of criticism of the Organization and from the observation that anti-war activists of the 1960s play a significant role, it would appear that the U.S. section can be placed somewhere left of center.

On the Amnesty International USA board of directors in 1980 there were five college professors, five attorneys including Ramsey Clark, former United States Attorney General, one psychiatrist, an author, an editor of a trade union newsletter, a former Russian dissident, and the director of the Human Rights Office of the National Council of Churches, among others.

The members of the board are generally well-educated, affluent, upper middle-class professionals--elites. As elites they seek to influence other elites who are in positions of authority in governments and intergovernmental organizations.

Financing

According to Amnesty International, it depends almost entirely on its membership for financial support. It does so in order to maintain its independence. Its Handbook notes that "under no circumstances can a group or national section seek or receive funds from any governmental or other agency for the purpose of establishing Amnesty International's work or contributing to any special project."⁵⁹ However, the Organization does accept governmental funds which it administers for its relief work.

Contributions are subject to various guidelines which were adopted at the International Council meeting in Strasbourg in 1976. The guidelines are designed to maintain the Organization's independence, its volunteer base, and its objectives.

On certain occasions the Organization has been awarded prizes which added considerable funds to its treasury. The amount the Organization received from the Nobel Peace Prize was about 80,000 British pounds. Another award, the Erasmus Prize, resulted in approximately 23,000 British pounds being added to the treasury.

As indicated above, funds for relief may be derived from government sources. For example, the Organization received in 1979 nearly 98,000 British pounds from the Commission of the European Economic Communities.⁶⁰ The total amount of money received for relief work in 1979 was over 300,000 British pounds.

Up until the 1972-73 period Amnesty International's expenditures did not exceed 100,000 British pounds. Prior to the 1971-72 period, it was below 50,000 British pounds. Reflecting the Organization's low point in 1966-67, no figures are available for that period. Beginning in 1970-71 the Organization's income began to increase substantially with its growing membership, with each year showing a significant rise over the previous year. Its 1973-74 expenditures were approximately 150,000 British pounds. This increased to over 250,000 British pounds in 1974-75. By 1975-76, expenditures increased to about 350,000 British pounds and to about 450,000 British pounds for 1976-77. With the added income generated by the Nobel Peace Prize, expenditures for 1977-78 nearly doubled to 850,000 British pounds. In 1978-79 expenditures again increased to over 1,200,000 British pounds. For the 1979-80 period the Organization's income jumped again to over 1,900,000 British pounds.

Footnotes

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- ³⁰Interview with Robert Maurer, September 25th and October 2, 1980.
- ³¹Amnesty International Report 1978, (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1979).
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CHAPTER 3

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY, ARGENTINA, AND CHILE

Introduction

Amnesty International's activity in South America during the years 1975-1979 concentrated on five countries--Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. If all of Latin America is included, El Salvador and Guatemala would then be added to the list. However, the Organization has issued statements and initiated actions concerning virtually all of the Latin American states.

While Amnesty International focused its resources on the countries named above, relatively little attention was paid to others including: Bolivia (until the 1980 coup); Columbia (until 1980, despite the fact that a state of siege had been in effect with short exceptions since 1948); Ecuador; Grenada; Haiti; Honduras; Jamaica; Peru; Venezuela; Guyana; the Dominican Republic; and Cuba. Slightly more attention was paid to Mexico and Nicaragua.

Uruguay

Background

Amnesty International's focus on Uruguay stemmed from the large number of arrests and reports of torture that occurred since the military took control of the Government in 1973. The problems relating to human rights violations, however, began earlier. The left-wing Tupamaro urban guerrilla movement which emerged in the 1960s engaged in robberies

and political kidnappings. To deal with this threat the Uruguayan President, with congressional approval, had assumed emergency powers with congressional approval which brought about censorship, "exceptional arrest and search procedures," closing of newspapers and thousands of arrests.¹ All constitutional guarantees were twice suspended in 1970 and 1971. The terrorist attacks gained widespread publicity in 1970 when a U.S. aid official, Dan Mitrione, was kidnapped and killed.

"On April 14, 1972, following Tupamaro attacks and the killing of government officials, President Bordaberry requested and received congressional approval to declare 'a state of internal war,' placing the armed forces (rather than the police) in control of antiguerrilla activity, giving the military de facto martial law powers, and suspending constitutional guarantees."² In initiating de facto control by the military the Government justified its actions by saying that "Uruguay was a victim of terrorist actions" and "when terrorism...threatened to really finish the country, the authorities reacted and the Armed Forces could finally directly confront the aggressors."³ The terrorists were linked by the Government to the Uruguayan Communist Party and in 1975 large-scale arrests were made of party members⁴ and others.⁵

Reacting to this situation, the World Council of Churches in 1972 issued a report about torture in Uruguay and called for an end to United States police and military aid.⁶ Amnesty International, in 1973, said that the authorities were using torture when interrogating prisoners. In June, 1974 Amnesty International, with the International Commission of Jurists, issued a joint report charging that systematic torture continued to occur in Uruguay. During 1974 Amnesty International was initiating "urgent actions" directed at Uruguay, Chile, and Brazil

at the rate of one a week. According to the Organization, these three countries were singled out not only because detainees were in danger of being tortured, but reliable information was obtained quickly enough for the Organization to intervene.⁷

The International Commission of Jurists issued its own report in January of 1975 charging that prisoners who had been released were rearrested and that more illegal arrests had occurred. It followed this up with another report in January, 1976.

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1979

As the situation concerning human rights in Uruguay had not improved, Amnesty International on July 28, 1975 published "a survey of the regime's violent suppression of peaceful political dissent during the past four months, including the widespread use of torture."⁸ The published statement indicated that for over two years the Organization "made numerous personal and written representations to the Uruguayan authorities, in particular regarding the lack of legal safeguards and the regular occurrence of torture..."⁹ In addition to this statement the Organization issued several press releases during the year.

With continuing concern over the situation in Uruguay, Amnesty International asked the Uruguayan President to undertake an impartial investigation of the charges of torture.¹⁰ However, no reply was received from the Government. In its Newsletter the Organization said that "repeated and consistent appeals by Amnesty International have so far not met with any response. Amnesty International is therefore planning an intensive international campaign during February and March to halt torture in Uruguay."¹¹ Prior to the start of the campaign

the Organization issued another press release criticizing the continuation of torture.¹²

In launching the campaign Amnesty International sought support from many other individuals and organizations including "professional bodies, churches, trade unions, businessmen, teachers, students, parliamentarians, and journalists."¹³ The Organization approached some 50 nongovernmental organizations requesting support and "took initiatives at governmental level."¹⁴ In the meantime, it continued to use other techniques to maintain pressure on the Uruguayan Government. The worldwide campaign continued until the middle of April, 1976. In May it forwarded to the Uruguayan President a letter protesting the human rights violations signed by 40 human rights activists in the Soviet Union, including Andrei Sakharov, Andrei Amalrik, and Alexander Ginzburg.¹⁵ Another petition, one signed by nearly 350,000 persons from 70 countries, urged the Uruguayan Government to allow an independent investigation of torture allegations. The petition was presented to Uruguay's Permanent Mission to the United Nations; copies were sent to the UN's Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, and to the President of the General Assembly.¹⁶

Amnesty International's publicity phase of its campaign slowed in 1977. Only three press releases were issued during the year; one was issued coincident with a cable to the Uruguayan Government stating that the Government was not using its authority to safeguard its citizens' rights. Although the international campaign was over, the Organization's adoption groups continued to work for 296 political prisoners during 1977-1978. In addition, the Organization mobilized its groups for a

"prisoner of the month" campaign and for appeals against torture.

There are indications that persons associated with political prisoners adopted by Amnesty International were in some way being placed in jeopardy by the Organization's continuing work. According to Robert Maurer, AIUSA's Associate Director for Program, the Organization found that it would have been unwise to continue its major campaign; there was concern over retaliation.¹⁷ Subsequent actions by the Uruguayan Government lent some credence to this view. According to Amnesty International 14 Uruguayan citizens, including five women, were being held in secret detention. All of the 14 were relatives or friends of political prisoners previously adopted by the Organization. In December of 1977 the Organization sent a cable to the Uruguayan Government expressing concern over these persons.

As part of its multifaceted strategy Amnesty International had submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) cases of persons whose "human or legal rights" were said to be violated.¹⁸ Additional information was sent to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), the UN Secretary General and to the Human Rights Division. At the UNCHR's 34th session in February-March, 1978, it was announced that decisions had been taken on nine countries, including Uruguay; the content of those decisions was not revealed.¹⁹

Throughout 1978 and 1979 Amnesty International continued to focus attention on Uruguay. In an attempt to gain still wider support for its work the Organization published in March of 1978 a document about imprisoned lawyers; lawyers in other countries were asked to intercede with the Uruguayan Government on their behalf. Another document, published in April, described the cases of twelve additional persons

who had died while in official custody.²⁰ Additional attempts were made to gain publicity for its cause by such actions as holding a press conference while the February, 1979 session of the UNCHR was underway and by making public testimonies on torture in Uruguay.²¹ Although no submission had been made to the UN in 1978, three were made to the UN Secretary General and to the Human Rights Division²² in 1979.

From May, 1978 to April, 1979 the Organization initiated "urgent actions" on behalf of 38 persons and stated its concern over a new wave of arrests in early 1979.²³ On several occasions its groups continued to be activated for "prisoner of the month" campaigns and appeals against torture. Other actions included an organized telegram campaign on behalf of 19 persons imprisoned in Uruguay, among others

Amnesty International's campaign was augmented by several members of the United States Congress, by the actions of several governments, and by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Other International Actions

In the United States Congress Representative Edward Koch, citing Amnesty International's report on the 22 deaths from torture, criticized United States military aid to Uruguay and offered an amendment to end it. Koch said, "The military have taken total charge of the Uruguayan Government and are doing away with dissidents through a campaign of arrests, torture, and murder."²⁴ Koch's statement was criticized in an editorial in the pro-government newspaper, El Pais,²⁵ and by other papers.

The United States Foreign Assistance Appropriations Act of 1977, which included the Koch Amendment cutting off military aid to Uruguay,

was signed into law by President Ford on October 1, 1976, even though the Administration had opposed the cut. Others had also opposed the cut, including the United States Ambassador to Uruguay, Ernest Siracusa.²⁶ The Uruguayan Government said the aid reduction was "an inadmissible intrusion into Uruguay's domestic affairs" and withdrew its request for aid.²⁷

In addition to Koch's efforts, a United States House of Representatives subcommittee held three hearings on human rights in Uruguay. The hearings, chaired by Donald M. Fraser, currently an advisor to AIUSA, heard testimony from a number of persons including Dr. Edy Kaufman of Amnesty International.

In addition to the support from the United States Congress and later, by the increased attention paid to human rights by the Carter Administration, Amnesty International's efforts were given a boost by the actions of several European countries. It was reported that the British Government was considering sending a protest note to the Uruguayan Government in the wake of the Amnesty International Report.²⁸ At the end of 1977 the European Community, in a note to the Uruguayan Government, indicated its concern over human rights and called for an amnesty. In 1979, at the Fourth European-Latin American Interparliamentary Conference, it was agreed to set up a commission to study the violation of human rights in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. However, it was reported that Uruguay would not recognize the commission.²⁹

Several Latin American Governments also became involved in the human rights situation in Uruguay. In 1976 the Venezuelan Government broke off relations with Uruguay because a Uruguayan police official violated the Venezuelan Embassy to remove a woman seeking asylum.

Later, in 1979, the Venezuelan Foreign Minister, Jose Zambrano, held a press conference in Paris with the mother of the seized woman being present. Zambrano said his government wished to resume relations with Uruguay, but only under specific circumstances which must be in tune with the interests of the two countries.³⁰

In Bolivia, two former presidents demanded that an amnesty be declared in Uruguay. A statement to that effect was given to several leaders of the Uruguayan Party for the People's Victory (PLVP) who were touring Latin America seeking solidarity for an international campaign supporting an amnesty.³¹

The Mexican Chamber of Deputies, in 1976, had approved a denunciation of the human rights violations in Uruguay.³²

Uruguayan exiles played a varied role, some with more prominence than others. Wilson Ferreira Aldunate, the head of the National Blanco Party in Uruguay was outspoken in his criticism of the Government. He testified before the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on International Organizations in 1976.³³ He also held a press conference in Washington that was organized by Amnesty International.³⁴ Another exile, the Secretary General of the Uruguayan Communist Party, Rodney Arismendi, was active in Eastern Europe and with the Western European communist parties. For example, in 1975, he appealed to the Italian Communist Party (CPI) to intervene in the Uruguayan human rights situation.³⁵

Western countries were not alone in their criticism of the Uruguayan situation. The Soviet Union was particularly concerned over Communist Party members in Uruguay. In 1979 TASS issued the following statement:

The reactionary regime in Uruguay is stepping up reprisals against the patriots seeking to suppress their devoted struggle for democracy and social progress. Over 350 members of the Communist Party of Uruguay (CPU) were imprisoned by the authorities, dispatches in here report. A total of 7,000 political prisoners, including 4,500 communists, are languishing in jails and concentration camps of the country.³⁶

Actions Taken by the OAS and its Commission on Human Rights

An important actor involved in the human rights situation in Uruguay was the Organization of American States (OAS). Pressure was directed at the country by that organization and by its Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Actions taken by these bodies frequently worked in favor of the goals being sought by Amnesty International. During 1977 it was reported that the United States had set a condition that Uruguay accept a visit by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights if it was to be the site of the OAS General Assembly meeting in 1978. The condition was considered unacceptable by the Uruguayan Foreign Minister³⁷ and the meeting was held elsewhere. At the subsequent OAS General Assembly meeting Amnesty International was allowed to participate as an observer. Uruguay's Foreign Minister considered this step a "novelty" and along with Argentina voted against it.

In late 1976, at its 39th session, the IACHR decided to prepare a report on the human rights situation in Uruguay.³⁸ In order to verify charges of human rights violations, the IACHR had requested permission from the Uruguayan Government to carry out an on-site investigation. Uruguay's Foreign Minister, Alejandro Rovira, denied the request and said the commission lacked objectivity.³⁹

One of the cases that had been submitted to the IACHR by Amnesty International was that of Alvaro Balbi, who died while under detention. Upon considering the case and the response of the Uruguayan Government,

the IACHR concluded that there was circumstantial evidence that "Balbi died as a result of acts of violence which the commission presumes to be confirmed."⁴⁰ The Uruguayan response was that the resolution had "no legal value whatsoever inasmuch as it was adopted in clear violation of the statutory provisions governing the activity of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights."⁴¹

The overall conclusion of the IACHR's Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Uruguay was that serious violations of human rights had occurred.⁴² Commenting on the report to the press Uruguay's Foreign Minister Rovira said, "Uruguay objects to the report...because it is based on lies and uses details provided by Amnesty International" which had organized a campaign to defame Uruguay at the international level."⁴³

The IACHR's report was subsequently adopted by the General Assembly of the OAS. Later in its annual report for 1978 the IACHR indicated that the human rights situation in Uruguay had not changed significantly since its report was published.

The Actions of Nongovernmental Organizations

Nongovernmental organizations other than Amnesty International were involved in varying degrees in the human rights situation in Uruguay. The work of the International Commission of Jurists was cited above. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) appeared to work in conjunction with Amnesty International. Amnesty International had made submissions to the Secretary General of the IPU on several occasions in 1979 and 1980. And it was said that "the Inter-Parliamentary Union pursued its work for imprisoned parliamentarians who are all adopted prisoners of conscience" of Amnesty International.⁴⁴

In Eastern Europe the German Democratic Republic Jurists Association in 1977 protested the treatment of "eminent jurists" and higher education teachers and demanded the release of all political prisoners in Uruguay.⁴⁵

In the United States the American Bar Association cited serious breaches of the rule of law, after sending a mission to Uruguay in April, 1978. In this instance the Uruguayan Government decided to publish the recommendations made by the Bar Association in the local press.⁴⁶

From time to time various solidarity groups issued statements on conditions in Uruguay. One example occurred in March of 1980 when a Conference of Solidarity with the Brother Uruguayan People was held in Havana.⁴⁷

The Uruguayan Response

Throughout the period under review the Uruguayan Government adamantly denied that torture was taking place or that other human rights were being violated. The allegations were seen as a worldwide communist propaganda offensive which Uruguay was financially unable to counteract.⁴⁸ On the eve of Amnesty International's worldwide campaign Uruguay's Foreign Minister, Juan Carlos Blanco, issued a statement. It is quoted here at length:

The Uruguayan Government is in a position to report to both the country and the world that a new phase will be launched in the campaign to undermine Uruguay by giving a false image of our country. On previous occasions the campaign has increased each time the police have dealt a hard blow to enemies of the fatherland. While our peaceful country has been forced to fight to stop subversion and foreign intervention, a silent conspiracy--even if not publicly supported--has been in existence.

The Foreign Ministry can now report--on the basis of a report it has received--that tomorrow the private institution Amnesty Inter-

national will hold press conferences in various Western European capitals and in New York to launch a long-term campaign against Uruguay. This is an attempt to create an unfavorable atmosphere for our economic and political relations.

In view of this, the Uruguayan Government is compelled to state:

1. That it does not recognize the organization Amnesty International, nor does it recognize its legal status or the moral authority which allows it to get involved in Uruguayan affairs.

2. That it does not, nor will it maintain any relations with this entity.

3. That under no circumstances will it enter into polemics on this issue, which would debase Uruguayan dignity.

4. That tendentious criticism of our country from whatever source will not stop the government from carrying out its duty of maintaining the spontaneous and free development of Uruguayan political processes and of maintaining the condition of nationwide security reached through the joint efforts of the people, the government, and the armed forces...

I want to read a cable sent to the Foreign Ministry by our London Embassy. It reports receiving a letter from Amnesty International asking for a meeting with our diplomatic representatives...The letter reads as follows: "You must be aware that Amnesty has many friends and contacts among newsmen, including reporters specializing in economic affairs..."

This is a clear threat to our embassy that their reporter friends with contacts in financial circles will undermine our country. This clearly points out the nature of this campaign being carried out against Uruguay.⁴⁹

This statement was followed by a communique issued by the Uruguayan Press Secretariat of the Joint Armed Forces which said that "international communism had organized a campaign to discredit the facts to serve its objectives..." and that organizations such as Amnesty International operate in favor of communism.⁵⁰ But this was not the last.

In a radio broadcast on September 23, 1976, Brigadier General Jorge Borad said:

...there is a worn-out international organization with very doubtful objectives which organizes campaigns against our country--campaigns according to the organization, in defense of political prisoners. It is a pity that the organization does not do anything about the thousands of political prisoners under Marxist regimes...It will be useless for disruptive forces to subject us to a campaign of slander, to a barrage of already worn-out adjectives.⁵¹

Despite the pause in 1977 of Amnesty International's publicity campaign the Uruguayan press and government officials continued their attacks on Amnesty International. The Foreign Minister, Alejandro Rovira, expressed great surprise at the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Amnesty International. He said in the case of Uruguay, "I am sure that...Amnesty International has acted with tremendous deceit and falseness."⁵²

The newspaper, El Pais, commenting on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize said the only explanation for the campaign against Uruguay was that the Organization had been infiltrated by Marxists and was partial. It questioned what it perceived as Amnesty International's lack of concern over Cuba or countries in Africa or Asia. And finally it said:

...It is inexplicable that this organization which ought to be more mindful of its responsibilities should lend its prestige and authority to achieve propagandistic and politically inspired goals. Similarly, it is impossible to understand its use of tendentious information furnished by elements with more than dubious penal records. These individuals' testimony forms the basis of a series of campaigns and actions which cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be identified with Amnesty International's stated objectives.⁵³

As Amnesty International continued its work for political prisoners, the Uruguayan Government continued its counterattack. In March, 1978 the Government issued a decree establishing a new office to handle queries about political prisoners. It said the requests were "often part of a campaign prepared by the enemies of national institutions aimed at discrediting the truth." The new office, according to the Government statement, would "improve the country's international prestige, counteracting propaganda against the national objectives."⁵⁴ As part of this counterattack the Uruguayan Army General Command issued a 500-page report entitled, Testimony of a

Nation Attacked, which detailed infiltration activities by communists, church, labor unions, cultural institutions, the press, and others.⁵⁵

Newspapers in Uruguay also continued its attack on the international campaign and on Amnesty International. La Manana said that "disseminations of worldwide disinformation continue to fill European and North American minds with visions of a Uruguay in which dead victims of 'repression' pile up in the streets."⁵⁶ The La Manana article went on to recap Amnesty International's campaign noting that in 1975 the Organization was "literally unknown in our circles." The intensification of "Amnesty's slanderous campaign was giving it a prominent place among concerns of all Uruguayans." The article also revealed to some degree the actions stimulated by Amnesty International. It said:

Accompanied by a full orchestra of organizations aligned under various pretexts--judicial, humanitarian, cultural, religious--the "Amnesty" campaign gradually reached paroxysmal proportions. Its apparent triumph came when it managed to align against Uruguay and the rest of the anticommunist countries of Latin America, several influential Western countries which were also victims of Amnesty International--the United Kingdom, for example, has been the target of "Amnesty" for supposed systematic use of torture in military units.⁵⁷

The wrath of the Uruguayan Government, however, was not reserved for Amnesty International. Great Britain and the European Community were also singled out for criticism. When the Uruguayan Foreign Minister learned of a report that Great Britain was considering sending a protest note to Uruguay over the human rights situation, he responded by saying that:

...nobody is more concerned about human rights in Uruguay than the Uruguayans themselves...the human rights question cannot be politically used with a factional point of view; an equilibrium should be found between the international norms on this question and sovereignty of each state over its internal affairs. In this question the Uruguayan position is extremely inflexible. Nobody will give us orders to take this or that political action. We Uruguayans

are the only ones responsible for what happens in our country and we do not intend to give satisfaction to any country, group, or association about our actions.⁵⁸

When the nine European Community countries sent their note to Uruguay it was considered to be interference in Uruguay's internal affairs. The official response of the Uruguayan Government said:

The Uruguayan Government has taken notice of the EEC proposal with surprise and regret, not only because of the inadmissible judgment issued regarding the Uruguayan situation, something the Uruguayan Government categorically rejects and deplores for its misinformation, but rather for the undeniable and clear attempt to intervene in its domestic affairs under the pretext of appealing on humanitarian grounds clearly violating principles and norms of international law which are universally accepted...

There are no persons who are detained or imprisoned in Uruguay because of their struggle for freedom of speech or political conviction, freedom of expression, religious beliefs or creed.⁵⁹

Summary

For the entire period under review the observance of human rights in Uruguay fell far short of internationally recognized standards--according to Amnesty International, the IACHR, members of the U.S. Congress and the Administration, several European Governments, and others. Throughout the period Amnesty International kept constant pressure on Uruguay, with major publicity and campaigns at certain points. The following chapter will analyze these activities in relation to the other elements involved in the international protection of human rights in Uruguay.

Argentina

Background

Amnesty International's concern over the human rights situation in Argentina predates the period covered by this study. In 1973, in its report on torture, Amnesty International noted that information on torture had been collected by the World Council of Churches and the Inter-

national Commission of Jurists and that systematic torture increased rapidly during the previous decade.⁶⁰ In May of 1974 the Organization sent a mission to Argentina to investigate allegations of human rights violations.

The abuse of human rights in Argentina stemmed from the increasing violence of an unstable society. Beginning in about 1969 leftist urban guerrillas known as the Montoneros began a campaign of assassinations and kidnappings. In response, a right-wing group known as the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance began to kill Montoneros "or those assumed to be Montoneros."⁶¹

In addition to these groups there were "rural and urban Trotskyist guerrillas; right-wing Peronist death squads; armed terrorist groups of the large labor unions...parapolice groups of both the left and the right...and terrorist groups of Catholic rightists."⁶²

Prior to 1976, more than 2,000 persons died in a three-year period as a result of terrorism and conflicts between left-wing and right-wing groups.⁶³ The 1975-1976 Amnesty International annual report indicated that 2,000 political assassinations were attributable to a right-wing organization known known as the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance, which had been associated with the Peron Government. It also estimated that over 4,000 persons were under detention.⁶⁴

In addition to the political violence, prior to the military coup of March 24, 1976, there was serious economic instability. The consumer price index, for example, had been increasing at an annual rate of 566 percent.⁶⁵

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1979

Argentina was one of five Latin American countries that Amnesty

International focused on in 1975. During the year the Organization initiated about 82 "urgent actions" on behalf of persons in Latin America; presumably, many were directed at Argentina. Concern over the political murders taking place led the Organization to send a letter to the Argentine President along with a list of 461 persons who were said to have been killed.⁶⁶

Additional publicity was given to events in Argentina by Amnesty International through its Newsletter. Articles relating to the human rights situation in that country were published in March, June, July, September, and November.

In 1976, after the military coup, the political violence continued and more than 200 persons died between the time of the coup and the end of May. "Right-wing assassination squads were held responsible for most of the killings."⁶⁷ By September, 1976 the death toll from the violence rose to 875. The security forces continued their attack against the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the Montoneros, the two major guerrilla groups in Argentina.⁶⁸ By the end of the year the number of deaths exceeded 1,400, the majority of these being suspected leftists who were said to have been killed by security forces or death squads.⁶⁹ Amnesty International estimated that by June, 1976 more than 20,000 persons had been arrested.

In May of 1976 Amnesty International asked the Argentine Government to investigate the murders of two well-known Uruguayan parliamentarians and others who had been living in exile in Argentina.⁷⁰ It was during 1976 that Amnesty International had initiated a major campaign against Uruguay; the problems of that country spilled over into Argentina, as refugees fled from Uruguay into Argentina. However, instead of

finding refuge, they were often arrested or killed. In attempts to protect these refugees Amnesty International activated its groups as part of its campaign against torture, intervening on behalf of the refugees. Some of the refugees arrested in Argentina had been living in hotels under the protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).⁷¹

Also in May Amnesty International issued two press releases protesting the arrests and deaths of Uruguayan refugees living in Argentina. Another press release was sent out in July which indicated that Uruguayans who were abducted in Argentina were still missing. These press releases, including another in September asking the Argentine Government to investigate the kidnappings by Uruguayan security forces, were directed as much at Uruguay as they were at Argentina, perhaps in an attempt to draw attention to the collaboration between the security forces of the two countries.

During 1976, despite the increasing violence in Argentina, Amnesty International's activities focused on the plight of refugees living in exile in Argentina rather than on Argentinians. However, this attitude began to change in September. At its International Council meeting the Organization expressed its concern over the "deteriorating human rights situation in the 'southern cone' of Latin America--Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay."⁷² A report of this meeting was carried in The New York Times of October 31, 1976.

In response to the "deteriorating situation," as outlined by its International Council, Amnesty International sent a mission to Argentina to hold talks with Government officials and to conduct an investigation.⁷³ One of the members of the mission team was United States

Congressman, Robert Drinan. The mission, while permitted, was not greeted with enthusiasm in Argentina. After visiting the country in November, 1976, the mission produced a 92-page report that was submitted to the Argentine Government on February 22, 1977. It is assumed that there was no response from the Argentine Government or that the response was negative since Amnesty International decided to make the report public. Aiming for maximum publicity the report was released on the anniversary of the military coup. A press release announced the publication of the report.⁷⁴ The report noted that human rights violations had escalated over the previous year and the evidence of these violations conflicted with statements by the Argentine Government.

During 1977 Amnesty International activated its groups in at least two actions involving its campaign against torture and one "prisoner of the month" campaign on behalf of persons in Argentina. For the 1977-1978 period it also initiated "urgent actions" on behalf of 114 persons who had disappeared.⁷⁵ In addition to its other actions Amnesty International presented information on the Argentine situation to the Council of Europe.

In 1978 the World Cup Soccer championship games were held in Argentina. Amnesty International planned and carried out a major international campaign to coincide with these games. The aim was "to inform public opinion about the serious violations of human rights in Argentina and to call on the government there to acknowledge the detention of people who have disappeared."⁷⁶ As part of its campaign the Organization made use of extensive mailings and sent material to other NGOs, lawyers, the news media, trade unionists, medical personnel, and churches. In addition, it sent material to its adoption groups

pressing them into service for further actions. All of these groups and organizations were urged to intervene on behalf of persons who had been detained or had disappeared. Amnesty International also contacted sports journalists and provided material to them on the human rights situation in Argentina "to encourage them to report on political prisoners and disappearances."⁷⁷

During the following year Amnesty International continued to apply pressure on Argentina in a number of ways. Its adoption groups worked on behalf of 275 political prisoners and intervened in regard to 100 persons who had been abducted. In April of 1979 the Organization "launched a major action" on behalf of the disappeared by publishing a list of some 2,500 persons who were missing.⁷⁸ Prior to a mission to Argentina by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) Amnesty International presented it with a list of 2,655 names of persons who had disappeared.⁷⁹

Since 1979 was declared by the United Nations General Assembly to be the International Year of the Child, Amnesty International's groups worked on behalf of missing children.⁸⁰

Several submissions were made to international organizations during 1979. In its submission to the United Nations, in May, the Organization reported that there was "a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights" in Argentina and several other countries.⁸¹ In June, the Organization made a submission to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Previous submissions had been made to the United Nations in June, 1977 and June, 1978.⁸² In August of 1979 the Organization made a submission to the UNCHR's Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities concerning those who had disappeared in Argentina.

Other International Actions

While Amnesty International was increasing its activities in regard to Argentina after the military coup several concurrent developments were taking place. The United States Government became involved in 1976 after an American priest was arrested in Argentina; the State Department made an official protest to the Argentine Government. The priest, James M. Weeks, was shortly thereafter released and returned to the United States.⁸³ He later testified before a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee about the mistreatment of prisoners in Argentina.

Other actions within the U.S. Congress focused attention on Argentina in 1976. The Subcommittee on International Organizations of the House Committee on International Relations held hearings on the subject of human rights in Argentina.⁸⁴ In the Senate, Hubert Humphrey, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance asked the State Department for information on the observance of human rights in Argentina and several other countries.⁸⁵ The subsequent report on Argentina was published in March, 1977 and relied to a significant degree on data published by Amnesty International.⁸⁶

During the General Assembly meeting of the Organization of American States in 1977 the United States Secretary of State made one of his strongest statements on human rights in Latin America. He said, "If terrorism and violence to justify dissent are not permissible, neither can government violence be admissible."⁸⁷

However, criticism from the United States was not all negative. While the United States Administration was condemning human rights violations in Latin America, other officials within the Administration

and the congress were making favorable statements. In August of 1977 two officials of the Carter Administration visited Argentina. One of these officials, Terrance Todman, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, said that there had been an improvement in all areas in Argentina, including human rights.

Several United States Congressmen also reacted favorably to the human rights situation after visiting Argentina. Senator Ernest Hollings said that Argentina had a free government and that the Carter Administration had done "too much moralizing" about human rights. Perhaps in response to these favorable statements the Government of Argentina said it would investigate fully the disappearances of several thousand persons.⁸⁸

Early in 1980 the United States State Department issued its annual report on human rights conditions around the world; it was highly critical of Argentina. It said there were widespread human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrest, torture, and summary executions by the Government.

Protests against the violations of human rights in Argentina also came from Europe. Western European socialists and social democrats actively intervened. On August 26, 1976 an advertisement was placed in several newspapers including The New York Times and Le Monde, protesting the violence in Argentina. The statement said the "measures adopted... by the military junta...place new obstacles in the way of a peaceful and democratic solution to the problems of the country, and they promote new acts of violence." The statement was signed by the Swedish Premier Olof Palme, Austria Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, Denmark Premier Anker Jorgensen, the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party, Mario Soares,

and Francois Mitterand, the French Socialist leader, among others.⁸⁹ In response to this statment, an advertisement placed in La Prensa (Buenos Aires) by the Argentine Patriotic Front noted that the European socialists "did not have, before March 24th, a condemnatory word to say about the subversion which was protected by the populist government."⁹⁰

Other European action came from West Germany's Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, who wrote a personal letter to Argentina's President Jorge Videla, expressing concern over two Germans who had disappeared in Argentina.⁹¹ Amnesty International said one of the Germans was being detained by the Argentine security forces.⁹² In August, 1976 the Argentine President responded saying the missing Germans couldn't be found and that there was no information concerning them.⁹³ By 1979 14 Germans had disappeared in Argentina. Reacting to this situation the West German Federal Economy Minister, Otto Graf Lambsdorff, asked the Argentine Government about the 14 saying that it was a stumbling block that had to be removed.⁹⁴

The West German Government also cooperated with Amnesty International's efforts by agreeing to the Organization's request to grant political asylum to 500 Argentine political prisoners.⁹⁵

Several other countries as well as the Vatican expressed concern over the human rights situation in Argentina. Some protests were directed at the general situation in Argentina while others dealt with specific cases involving nationals of the protesting countries. In February, 1977 Argentina protested to the governments of the Netherlands and Austria after these countries had appealed to the United Nations Secretary General to study the human rights situation in Argentina.⁹⁶ Both the Swedish⁹⁷ and French Governments protested the disappearances

of their citizens in Argentina. In 1978 the French Foreign Minister, Louis de Guiringaud, discussed the question of missing French nationals with Argentina's Admiral Emilio Massera.⁹⁸ In 1979 the French became increasingly concerned over its missing citizens. A new law was promulgated in Argentina which presumed that persons who had disappeared were dead. To express this concern the French Foreign Minister called on the Argentine Foreign Minister, Bernard Destremau.⁹⁹

The Belgian Government, in 1978, was reported to have sent a diplomatic mission to Argentina in an attempt to effect the release of 125 detainees; if released, the political detainees were to be granted political asylum in Belgium.¹⁰⁰

The Vatican also became involved in the Argentine human rights situation. In September, 1979 Pope Paul VI demanded that the Argentine Government provide an explanation of the killing of several priests.¹⁰¹ The following month the Vatican expanded its concerns to include all political prisoners and those who had disappeared.¹⁰²

While the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries were highly critical of Chile and the human rights situation in that country, they did not criticize Argentina. This fact drew some oblique criticism from Chile's domestic broadcasting service. It noted that:

...something that has drawn the attention of experts despite the fact that it has been taking place for several years is the curious situation taking place in international forums...neither the Soviet Union nor any other socialist country, however, has ever condemned Argentina for any human rights violation.¹⁰³

The irony in this situation was analyzed by the Herald (Buenos Aires). The paper said in an editorial:

The government is, quite rightfully, strongly opposed to Marxism and would very much like to eliminate it as a political force in Argentina. But it cannot bring itself to be opposed to the Soviet Union or its Caribbean client state Cuba. Thus, while it fulminates

against Marxism in the abstract and as it manifests itself in Argentina, it behaves in an ostentatiously friendly fashion towards the principal Marxist power. This, naturally enough, makes for some difficulties. When references are made to the foreign powers that aided the subversive gangs that caused so much misery and bloodshed the names of these powers are carefully omitted, thus greatly reducing the impact of the charges that are made, and when the United States, unfortunately the only Western power currently in a position to make a stand against Soviet imperialism, tries to organize boycotts of grain shipments to the Soviet Union and the Moscow Olympics, the government leaves nobody in doubt that it has not the slightest interest in joining.

...The Soviet Union, of course, has been playing a double game, surreptitiously backing the terrorist killers on the one hand while refraining from public criticism of the Argentine Government, thus conveying the impression that all the attacks come from the West. Although the government must know this perfectly well, it seems to prefer to accept the phony friendship of Russia and Cuba and has reserved its most virulent counterattack for the United States.¹⁰⁴

The Actions of Nongovernmental Organizations

The problem of violations of human rights was not only of concern to organizations outside of Argentina. Within the country several nongovernmental organizations were active in working for the protection of human rights. In August, 1976 the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights delivered a note to the Argentine President asking for an explanation of several violent incidents.¹⁰⁵ The organization said that the violent events contradicted the President's exhortations for full respect for human rights.¹⁰⁶

During 1977 the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights continued its activities. In August it requested the President to establish special machinery to investigate disappearances.¹⁰⁷ The request coincided with the visit to Argentina of United States State Department officials. In December this organization issued a statement indicating that 12,000 persons had disappeared or were being detained in Argentina. It presented the Government with a list of 228 persons who were missing; a list of 700 persons had previously been presented to the Government.¹⁰⁸

The activities of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights and other human rights organizations were not, however, without risk for its members. Although the organization was recognized by the Argentine Government, the joint president of the organization, Professor Alfredo Bravo, was arrested--as were members of other human rights organizations.

Despite the arrest of its joint president the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights appeared to step up its activities. In January of 1978 it published an open letter on the human rights situation in Argentina.¹⁰⁹ Later it published a list of 2,500 missing persons whose cases had been presented to the Supreme Court.¹¹⁰ (Other reports said the document contained the names of 5,581 persons.) In response, the Argentine Government banned the publication, sale, and distribution of the document. This, in turn, prompted an additional protest by the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights and three other human rights organizations. Again, the Government retaliated. On August 10th and 14th, 1979, armed with a search warrant, Argentine authorities broke into the offices of the four organizations and confiscated files containing information on more than 14,000 persons who had disappeared.¹¹¹

The protests, however, continued. In October, 1979, in a letter to the Minister of Justice, the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights objected to the treatment of prisoners.¹¹² It also called for the release of 1,000 women and asked the Government for information on 1,000 others who were missing.¹¹³ This appeal, addressed to the President, was published in the newspaper, Clarín. Later in December the organization presented to the President a petition signed by 37,000 persons asking for information on the missing and detained.¹¹⁴

In addition to these actions by the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, in November, 1978, 1,221 relatives of 1,542 missing persons filed a petition with the Supreme Court. In May another organization called Relatives of Persons Arrested or Missing for Political Reasons sent a petition signed by 17,000 persons to the Argentine President.¹¹⁵ And each Thursday the "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo" gathered outside Government House seeking information on missing relatives. Frequently, these women were harassed or arrested by the police.

Another organization, ADEPA the Argentine Press Association, in December of 1976, asked the Government to investigate the cases of journalists who had been arrested or disappeared.¹¹⁶

These organizations often sought assistance from outside the country. According to Amnesty International, a 100-page dossier on torture and prison conditions compiled by an "Argentine Commission on Human Rights" was smuggled out of Argentina.¹¹⁷

In addition to these actions taken by national NGO's the Argentine Catholic Church was critical of the human rights violations taking place. In May, 1977 the Argentine Bishops issued a declaration entitled, "Christian Reflection for the Fatherland's People." The declaration read in part:

...no theory about collective security, despite its importance, can cause destruction of the human being's rights, because social order and its progress and the order of things must be subordinated to the order of the human being and not the contrary.

Alteration of this order and mistaken ideas of personal and social security have caused many people to tolerate and even accept the violation of the elemental rights of man, who was created in the image of God and redeemed by Christ. It has also permitted the legality of killing the enemy morally and physically, the illegal loss of freedom or the elimination of all those who are presumably the aggressors against personal or collective security, which is contrary to the principle of Paul VI: "If you desire peace, defend life."

...When exceptional circumstances of an extraordinary danger for national existence are being experienced, these laws may also be exceptional and extraordinary, sacrificing--if necessary--individual rights to benefit the common good. But this must be implemented always within the framework of the law and under its protection, for a legitimate repression, which is nothing more than a form of exercising justice when thus practiced.¹¹⁸

Outside of Argentina, in Europe, several other groups took various actions. In 1978 the International Human Rights League and Pax Romana sent a delegate to Argentina to investigate the problem of missing persons.¹¹⁹ The Secretariat of the French Communist Party (PCF) urged the French Foreign Minister to express the Government's indignation over the "mass repression and arbitrary action in Argentina."¹²⁰ And the Political Committee of the European Community planned public hearings on human rights violations in Argentina. On commenting on this last development the Argentine Government press agency said the hearing would be attended by legislators of the European Community, former Argentine legislators, and by Amnesty International, "an organization which has a sad reputation here because of its distorted and partial reports on the Argentine situation."¹²¹

Actions Taken by the OAS and its Commission on Human Rights

The subject of human rights was a major topic of discussion at several meetings of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS). At its meeting in June, 1977 a resolution stated that "there are no circumstances which justify torture, summary executions, or prolonged detention without trial contrary to law" and commended the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for its work. The resolution was passed by a vote of 14-0. However, eight countries abstained including Argentina, and three were absent.¹²²

Despite the strongly worded resolution on human rights by the OAS

General Assembly, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights came under fire by Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. These countries accused the IACHR of playing politics and of being partial.¹²³ The Argentine Foreign Minister stated that the IACHR should consider the violations of human rights by subversives.¹²⁴

Even though Argentina generally disapproved of the work of the IACHR, it did permit a mission to visit that country in 1979 to look into the human rights situation. The result of that mission was a report which outlined the commission's findings. The report, published in April of 1980, accused Argentine security agents of having "killed numerous men and women after detaining them" and having engaged in "systematic torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading practices."¹²⁵ The Argentine Government rejected the report.

The Argentine Response

When the Argentine military coup took place in 1976 it was not entirely unwelcome in some circles in Argentina. The English-language newspaper, the Herald (Buenos Aires) approved of the coup saying that economic conditions and the possibility of defaulting on foreign payments were among the major reasons for military intervention.¹²⁶ The coup was also supported by the newspaper, La Opinion, published by Jacobo Timerman.

The Herald anticipated Amnesty International's increased involvement with the human rights situation in Argentina saying that the country would get the same treatment as Chile. A Herald columnist said that "Amnesty International...will soon be looking into the state of human rights in Argentina; that organization is often factually incorrect, perhaps politically suspect, but it serves a useful purpose

in throwing a searchlight on dark areas (including, if less convincingly, communist dictatorships) of the world. Even taking the dimmest views of Amnesty International's intentions (accepting, in fact, the widely-held view that it is communist infiltrated) it can still have a salutary effect..."¹²⁷

During Amnesty International's mission to Argentina it came in for more criticism. A report distributed by TELAM, the Government press agency, said that the domestic terrorism was coordinated at the international level by a defamation campaign. It said further:

In this regard a private organization called Amnesty International has a primary role, a curious role, for the original purpose of this organization was to defend human rights throughout the world... their eyes shed tears only for the human rights which are allegedly violated in Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Uruguay, or our country. This was stated by a government official when he was asked about the presence of three leaders of Amnesty International in Buenos Aires...It seems strange that Amnesty International is not operating in the communist zone.¹²⁸

An editorial in La Prensa (Buenos Aires) noted that the Amnesty International representatives were not interested in those killed by subversives and that they met with "eight terrorists." The editorial went on to say:

...the delegation is only interested in defending human rights, but whose? Only the rights of those under arrest. Apparently the rest of society can do without it while Amnesty International has no concern for the merciless brutal murder of innocent victims. It cannot be expected that after these eccentric acts and remarks are known that Amnesty International will gain any sympathy and inspire confidence in our country. In addition, it is significant that the organization does not enjoy any sympathy from the rest of the Western World either.¹²⁹

Another TELAM report noted that the youth members of the National Patriotic Movement protested the Amnesty International visit saying that the Organization was only concerned with "defending the mercenaries of Marxist subversion who are murdering our people. This organization

reveals with total insolence their impertinent and cynical nature..."¹³⁰

When Amnesty International published its mission report, it was not well received by the Argentine Government. A story by the London Press Association said, "The Argentine Government tonight totally rejected the Amnesty International report as 'lacking all foundation' and that the country had a long history of peace, order, and respect for human rights." The Argentine Embassy in London elaborated on its rejection of the report:

...the Argentine Government rejects the report on account of the rash statements it contains and deplores that it facilitates coordinated demonstrations by activist groups and minorities that try to mold public opinion for ideological reasons. The events which give rise to these demonstrations are caused by the action of extremist groups originating both inside and outside the country, attacking public order and the lives, freedom, and prosperity of the inhabitants and making use of illegal force and terrorism.

The statement went on to say that the armed forces were making use of the right of legitimate defense and the preservation of society.¹³¹

While the Argentine Government rejected the Amnesty International report, a measure of support came from the newspaper, the Herald (Buenos Aires). An editorial said that newspapers and legitimate human rights organizations like Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists were prevented from presenting a balanced picture of the situation in Argentina because the Government made so little information available.¹³²

As the Carter Administration's human rights policy got under way in 1977 some of the criticism that might have been directed at Amnesty International began to be directed at the United States. On February 24, 1977, in one of the early actions of the Carter Administration,

planned to reduce aid to Argentina, Uruguay, and Ethiopia. Both Argentina and Uruguay announced they would refuse aid linked to the observance of human rights. The Argentine Foreign Minister said that "no state, regardless of its ideology or power, can take it upon itself the role of an international court of justice and interfere in the internal affairs of other countries."¹³³

The Argentine press was also critical of the United States' move to cut aid. Although the press in Argentina exercised a form of self-censorship, on occasion it displayed a degree of independence by criticizing the human rights situation in the country. The Herald (Buenos Aires), in particular, tried to bring about a moderating course. In this instance, concerning the cut in United States aid, the Herald said it was "scarcely cooperative and irrational." The newspaper, La Opinion, whose publisher Jacobo Timerman was later arrested, tortured, and deported said the aid cut was "a hostile gesture."¹³⁴

There is evidence that in 1977 the Argentine authorities decided to mount a counteroffensive against the charges being made concerning human rights violations. On the anniversary of the coup it was broadcast that "writers, Nobel-Prize winning scientists, sociologists, lawyers, farmers, and cattlemen...expressed their solidarity with the armed forces..."¹³⁵

On the 30th of March the President of Argentina said that to counter the campaign on human rights which was unleashed abroad Argentina should "go out and tell the truth far beyond Argentina's borders."¹³⁶ The Argentine Navy paper, La Gaceta Marinera, stated that the defense of human rights "often requires the courage to employ the methods of the enemy in order to triumph over his evil."¹³⁷ In a

later edition this paper complained that campaigns against Argentina were launched under the management of presumed defenders of human rights who remain unimpressed by the crimes committed by criminal groups. World newspapers, it said, never reported the sorrow and pain caused by subversive organizations in Argentina.¹³⁸

The Argentine Government carried its counteroffensive into the United Nations. In the Spring of 1977 Argentina, joined by the Soviet Union and Chile, led an attack on nongovernmental organizations with consultative status with the United Nations in an attempt to limit their influence.¹³⁹

Another facet of the Argentine counteroffensive was the establishment in Paris of an information center which would work to improve the country's image.¹⁴⁰

From time to time, in order to meet some of the criticism leveled at it, the Argentine Government issued statements concerning the number of persons released from prison or expelled from the country. For example, at the end of December, 1976 it announced that 123 persons were released from detention making a total of 1,546 who had been released.¹⁴¹ However, at other times the announcements of releases and expulsions were coupled with announcements of new arrests. On the 14th of January, 1977, for example, the Government announced that two Chilean citizens had been expelled, 25 persons had been released, and 37 persons had been arrested.¹⁴² On the 19th of March, 1977 it was announced that 52 persons had been released and 58 had been arrested.¹⁴³

Argentina's stock answer to charges that human rights were being violated was that they were not being infringed by the authorities. The Argentine President, Videla, said "Human rights have not been violated

here. We were the victims of terrorist aggression, orchestrated and directed from abroad and we defended ourselves as any worthy and free country would have done. If there was any excess--which was never tolerated--it has now been corrected." Once, when asked about the number of political prisoners in Argentina, the President responded, "There are no political prisoners in Argentina. Nobody is persecuted or handicapped because of his political ideas."¹⁴⁴

During an interview in Rome the President was asked about Amnesty International's report on Argentina. He replied, "Yes, I know about it. But I do not attribute any importance to it and 'Amnesty' will have to take responsibility for the report...we do not give weight to the opinion of those who attack us indiscriminately."¹⁴⁵

Another report indicated that the President "mentioned the anti-Argentine campaign being waged in Europe, and with special virulence in Italy, and emphasized that Argentina destroys lies with the truth. This campaign, these demonstrations by extreme left-wing organizations such as Amnesty International and others which have arisen with the support of money which Marxist-Leninism acquired through robbery, kidnappings, or simple extortion of large economic interests."¹⁴⁶ The President went on to say that Argentina would not accept any kind of external judgment.

Part of Argentina's plan for "destroying lies with truth" included hiring an American public relations firm, Burston-Marsteller, to improve the country's image. The campaign projected by the public relations firm was "to influence people who in turn can influence the way Argentina is regarded abroad--above all, the foreign press."¹⁴⁷ In a 150-page brochure that Burston-Marsteller sent to the Argentine Government

it proposed free trips to Argentina for political commentators of "moderate" or "conservative" views.

Argentina's strategy to improve its image also involved making a concession to those, including the United States Government, who were pressuring the Argentines to allow an investigation by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). The Argentine Government finally consented to such an investigation in 1979.¹⁴⁸ It was speculated that the Government approved the visit in order to improve relations with the Carter Administration.¹⁴⁹ However, it would also appear that the Argentine Government expected the commission to produce a favorable report, or at least one which would indicate that the human rights situation had improved. The New York Times later reported that:

...when Argentina invited the commission to gather material for its report, there were sectors of the military, led by President Jorge Rafael Videla, who believed that this would help improve the country's international image and reduce strong international campaigns against rights violations in Argentina.

The decision grew out of a 1977 meeting between President Videla, then the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, with Vice-President Mondale during funeral ceremonies for Pope Paul VI in Rome.¹⁵⁰

In regard to the IACHR's visit, Argentina's Foreign Minister said it would benefit the country and confirm Argentina as one of the free nations of the world.¹⁵¹ At least one newspaper did not see the visit that way. La Prensa (Buenos Aires) said it was inadmissible foreign interference.¹⁵² In a later editorial La Prensa said:

Argentina's acceptance of the interference by a third party in the free play of its institutions and national decision making implies a loss of sovereignty before an international heterogenic organization which has taken it upon itself to act as international police and whose objectivity and fairness of conclusion are not sufficiently proven.¹⁵³

During the visit of the IACHR the director of La Prensa declined an invitation to meet with the commission to discuss freedom of the

press in Argentina saying that the newspaper had never tolerated any restrictions on the exercise of its duty to inform and guide public opinion.¹⁵⁴

Upon conclusion of the IACHR visit, a nationwide broadcast by Major General Albano Eduardo Harguindeguy, Argentina's Interior Minister, discussed the reasons for allowing the visit and the background of terrorism in Argentina. He also summarized a Government publication entitled, Terrorism in Argentina; he indicated that the members of the IACHR had been given copies. The Argentine Government, Harguindeguy said, had not "confessed to the IHRC."

"The vile lies," Harguindeguy continued, "such as those about the concentration camps have definitely been buried by the unshakeable and proven truth."¹⁵⁵

The Argentine Government's official response to the IACHR's report--which was published in April, 1980--was a 170-page document in which terrorist actions were documented and the arguments of the IACHR refuted.

In July of 1979, in another attempt to temper criticism, the Government of Argentina released figures on arrests and releases since 1974. The Interior Minister said the figures were being released to counter the campaign carried out abroad.¹⁵⁶ The figures were as follows:

Arrests

November, 1974 to March 23, 1976	3,546
March, 1976 to December, 1976	3,464
1977	1,275
1978	386
1979 (to June 28th)	42

Releases

1974 to 1976	830
March to December, 1976	1,505
1977	1,879
1978	1,069
1979 (to June 28th)	630

The total arrests listed were 8,713. The total releases listed were 5,913. This would have left 2,800 still in prison in 1979. In its 1979 annual report Amnesty International said it had learned of "comparatively few releases of political prisoners. Of the 380 releases reported, only 50 concerned prisoners of conscience who had been adopted, though further releases are expected."¹⁵⁷

Amnesty International came in for still more criticism by the Argentine Government after it published a report on the Soviet Union in 1979. The Government press agency called it a "timid attack against the Soviet Union." It said the charges against the Soviet Union were kept "within relatively mild terms and are more like a piece of advice over alleged breaches of human rights than a strong protest of proven crimes which the Soviet Union is constantly committing in this field."¹⁵⁸

The United States State Department didn't fare any better after it published its annual report on human rights. The Argentine response was highly critical. The Government's press agency issued the following dispatch:

The Argentine Government, through its Foreign Ministry, yesterday conveyed to the U.S. Government its displeasure over the dissemination of a report on human rights in our country submitted by the State Department to the U.S. Congress and regard it as a clear case of interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state.

The Argentine Government also informs the public that in view of the above it will refrain from analyzing the State Department document and deems it necessary to reiterate its unwavering position on the subject based on the state of necessity brought about by the war

unleashed by terrorist organizations over many years of unending, mounting aggression which ultimately forced the armed forces to intervene.

...the unwanted, undesired, painful consequences were the price we had to pay. It is our people who have the exclusive, unrenounceable right to judge the situation in light of the present peace and security, which one can only truly appreciate after having lost them.¹⁵⁹

Summary

As we have seen, Amnesty International maintained continuous pressure on Argentina throughout the period under review and occasionally punctuated it with intensive international campaigns. Additional pressure came from the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Within Argentina, several human rights organizations, despite the possibility of risk to its members, prodded the Government to release information about the detained and missing. The position of the Government throughout was that if human rights were violated, they were violated by the terrorists and not by the Government. If "excesses" were committed by the authorities, they were unintentional or were committed as part of the legitimate defense of the country.

In the following chapter Amnesty International's activities are analyzed in relation to the other various actions that took place in the defense of human rights in Argentina.

Chile

Background

In the period under consideration in this study Chile was ruled and continues to be ruled by a military junta that seized power on September 11, 1973. The new Government "dissolved the legislature, suspended constitutional guarantees, censored newspapers, limited trade

union activity and allocated military courts to try civilians."¹⁶⁰ It was in this environment that Amnesty International sought to carry out its work for political prisoners. In 1973 Amnesty International representatives testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements about summary executions, torture, and preventive detention in Chile.¹⁶¹ The Organization sent a mission to Chile in late 1973 and a report was sent to the President of Chile on December 31, 1973.

During the period 1975-1979 Chile was in the rare position of being one of only three countries condemned by the United Nations for human rights violations, the other two being Israel and South Africa. In 1975 the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) established the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile. This group attempted to visit Chile in 1976 and 1977 to investigate the charges of human rights violations, but was denied permission by the Chilean Government. In July of 1978 the group was finally permitted to visit Chile and carry out an investigation.¹⁶²

In the United States, before the advent of the Carter Administration, there was a reaction against the role that the United States had played in the ouster of the Allende Government in Chile¹⁶³ which led in part to human rights legislation being passed by the U.S. Congress. It was Congressional pressure that forced Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to make a relatively strong statement concerning the human rights situation in Chile at the 1976 meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Santiago.¹⁶⁴ With the activation of the Carter Administration's human rights policy, relations between the United States and Chile deteriorated and remained strained throughout the

period. As an example of this policy the Administration established an Interagency Group on Human Rights and Foreign Assistance. This group took steps such as recommending to the Export-Import Bank that loans or guarantees to Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay be denied.¹⁶⁵ The United States also cosponsored resolutions against Chile in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR).

Western European countries were particularly active in regard to the human rights situation in Chile at the United Nations, in applying pressure to deny credits to Chile, and in providing asylum for refugees and political prisoners.

The Soviet Union's activities appeared to center on propaganda which frequently referred to the "Chilean fascist junta." In a Radio Moscow broadcast directed to Chile the commentator said, "The junta headed by Pinochet is soiled by a loathsome case of leprosy, that of his own crimes, and nobody wants to be infected by it."¹⁶⁶

In addition, Chile was charged with violating human rights by refugee groups, Catholic and Protestant Churches, and other private groups.¹⁶⁷ The Catholic Church in Chile was particularly active.

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1979

It was in the context of the initiatives outlined above that Amnesty International's activities with respect to the human rights situation in Chile were carried out. As with its activities with respect to other countries, the Organization's approach was multifaceted. As was noted in an earlier section, Amnesty International's activities in Latin America were directed primarily at the "southern cone" of South America. As part of this activity, when the 31st session of the UNCHR met in February and March of 1975, Amnesty International

submitted several documents "about the continuing repression in Chile and Brazil" to the commission.¹⁶⁸ Also in February the Organization submitted a message to the International Commission of Inquiry into the Crimes of the Military Junta in Chile which was held in Mexico city.¹⁶⁹ The International Commission of Inquiry, which was opened by a speech by Mexico's President Echeverria, was given publicity by the Soviet news agency, TASS.¹⁷⁰ The commission denounced the human rights violations in Chile as well as the intervention by the United States against the Allende regime.¹⁷¹

During 1975 Amnesty International activated its groups on several occasions to intervene on behalf of political prisoners in Chile. In April and September a Chilean was selected for the Organization's "prisoner of the month" campaign. "Urgent actions" were initiated in February and in May Amnesty International groups joined in an appeal on behalf of two women journalists. During the 1974-1975 period Amnesty International concentrated its "urgent actions" on three countries -- Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil.¹⁷²

Considerable publicity was given to the human rights situation in Chile by Amnesty International through its Newsletter in 1975. Articles focused on Chile in the January, February, March, April, May, July, October, November, and December issues.

In October, 1975, when the UN's Ad Hoc Working group published a report on the human rights violations in Chile, Amnesty International gave additional publicity to the report, praising it, and noting that two oral and written statements were presented to the group by the Organization. It also noted that the report confirmed the previous findings of Amnesty International and other organizations.¹⁷³

During the early period of 1976 Amnesty International was relatively quiescent in regard to Chile. It issued press releases in April and May concerning parliamentarians and journalists who were imprisoned in a number of countries, Chile being one of them. The Organization's adoption groups continued to work for Chilean political prisoners assigned to them. Additional publicity was given to the UN's Working Group in the March and April issues of the Organization's Newsletter. A report by the International Commission of Jurists which stated that a new anti-torture law in Chile provided no real protection was also publicized by Amnesty International through its Newsletter. This finding of the International Commission of Jurists was given additional weight by the UNCHR which had reaffirmed that the use of torture was institutionalized in Chile and that many persons were still missing.¹⁷⁴

Amnesty International also pressed its cause with the Organization of American States. Prior to the OAS General Assembly meeting, which was held in Santiago in June, 1976, Amnesty International had cabled the Secretary General of the OAS expressing its concern over the arrests of 385 persons and urged the OAS to "convey its concern at the human rights situation to the Chilean government." A press release to this effect was also issued.¹⁷⁵

Toward the end of 1976 Amnesty International issued two additional press releases welcoming the release of 300 prisoners in November and the release brought about by the Chilean-USSR prisoner exchange in December. In this exchange Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky was exchanged for the Chilean communist, Luis Corvalan.

In the following year Amnesty International's public activities with respect to Chile appeared to have eased and the focus shifted to

concern over those who had disappeared. At the request of the UN Secretariat the Organization gave the UNCHR's Working Group information on its work in Chile. In March it issued a press release and published a "dossier" in an attempt to gather support for 1,500 persons said to have disappeared since 1973. The Chilean government had still not provided information about those who had disappeared after having been arrested. The Organization asked the Chilean Government to acknowledge the disappearances.¹⁷⁶

Illustrating the ebb and flow of human rights violations in Chile, Amnesty International noted that there was an "apparent decline in repression in Chile during the first four months of 1977" but said that a new wave of arrests and disappearances had begun in May.¹⁷⁷ In pressing its concern over the disappearances the Organization issued a press release on the Government's denial that those who had disappeared were being detained. Later, in November, concern over reports that relatives of persons who had disappeared were being harrassed led the Organization to send a letter to the President of Chile to protest the situation.¹⁷⁸

During 1978 Amnesty International continued to work for those who had disappeared and to publicize its activities in this area. It issued a press release on January 6th indicating that torture and disappearances were continuing. In August, commenting on an amnesty which the Chilean Government said would benefit 2,071 persons, the Organization noted that the 1,500 prisoners who had disappeared would not be covered. The Organization also noted that various organizations condemned the amnesty since many prisoners actually in jail would not benefit.¹⁷⁹ To complicate the question of amnesty, General Rene

Vidal, Minister Secretary of Government, asked the Chilean media to "avoid all publicity concerning names, cases, situations, and any other circumstances which could lead to the identification of persons benefiting from the amnesty decree." Ostensibly, the reason for this "request" was to allow the former prisoners to incorporate themselves into society.¹⁸⁰ Undoubtedly, it would also make it difficult for independent organizations to verify the extent of the amnesty.

By the end of 1978 Amnesty International was focusing on what it called a new wave of arrests and torture. Short-term arrests were still said to be common. On one day, May 1st, 1978 more than 500 persons were arrested after participating in a Labor Day march.

For the 1977-1978 period Amnesty International initiated 15 "urgent actions" on behalf of 75 persons. Its groups in mid-1978 were working on 32 adoption and 62 investigation cases. They were activated in an appeal against torture in May and for a "prisoner of the month" campaign in October. In November the Organization presented to the Chilean Government a list of 600 names of persons who has disappeared and urged that an inquiry into their whereabouts take place. Also in November Amnesty International's Secretary General attended a symposium in Santiago entitled, "The Church and the Dignity of Man: His Rights and Obligations in Today's World."¹⁸¹ Attending were the director of the UN's Division of Human Rights, a member of the IACHR, and other NGOs. The symposium, which was organized by the Catholic Church's Vicariate of Solidarity, created the Chilean Commission of Human Rights.¹⁸²

An integral part of Amnesty International's strategy is to respond to specific events concerning the violation of human rights. At the end of 1978 and the beginning of 1979 Amnesty International drew attention

to the fact that a number of bodies had been found in an abandoned mine in Chile. It sent two cables to the Chilean government asking for an independent inquiry.¹⁸³ Some of the bodies were found to be those persons listed as disappeared by church officials. Perhaps spurred by the publicity surrounding this discovery the Chilean Courts appointed special judges to look into the cases of those who had disappeared.¹⁸⁴ Since 1976 the Chilean Catholic Church had been requesting special investigators to look into these matters and had been turned down 10 times by the courts.¹⁸⁵

For the balance of 1979 Amnesty International continued to work for its adopted prisoners, initiated several "urgent actions," and provided information on Chile to various IGOs and NGOs. Its concerns included arbitrary arrests--which were still occurring in great numbers--short-term disappearances, and torture. The operation of "death squads" in Chile was dealt with in its Newsletter.

Later in 1980 Amnesty International said that arrests and torture once again had increased dramatically since the assassination of a high-level army officer. The Organization said that as many as 1,000 and possibly 2,000 persons had been arrested by the secret police. In its 1980 annual report Amnesty International noted that there "was a marked deterioration in the human rights situation during the year."

Other International Actions

During the period under review the United Nations was one of the primary actors involved with the human rights situation in Chile. Various UN bodies--the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), the UNCHR's Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and the Ad Hoc Working Group on the

Situation of Human Rights in Chile--were actively involved in publicizing, investigating, and protesting the human rights violations in Chile. A report published by the UN's Ad Hoc Working Group was one of several actions that the United Nations would take over the next several years. The report by the UN body was rejected by Chile in a note to the UN's Secretary General. In attempting to justify its stance the Chilean Government pointed out that in the two previous years it had admitted the International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, the IACHR, the conciliation commission of the International Labor Organization, as well as other private groups and individuals.

In December of 1975 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution demanding that Chile restore human rights citing "institutionalized use of torture" and other violations. President Pinochet's response was that the resolution was "false, unjust, artificial, and calumnious."¹⁸⁶

In 1977 the UNCHR adopted a resolution condemning the human rights violations in Chile and stressed that the disappearances were continuing.¹⁸⁷ After this resolution was passed it was reported that Chile severed all ties with the UNCHR.¹⁸⁸ Later in the year the UN General Assembly passed a similar resolution.¹⁸⁹ This resolution called upon the Chilean authorities "to restore and safeguard without delay, basic human rights and fundamental freedoms and fully to respect provisions of the international instruments to which Chile is a party."¹⁹⁰

In 1978 the UNCHR continued its efforts with respect to Chile by adopting another resolution condemning Chile for human rights violations and requesting the Government to admit a delegation to hold an investigation. (At this session of the UNCHR Amnesty International submitted

a statement concerning Chile.) Responding to the UNCHR's request the Government of Chile reversed its previous decisions and agreed to allow the UNCHR to send a delegation to that country.¹⁹¹

During 1979 the UNCHR continued its work on the human rights problems in Chile and produced a report. Even before it was published the Chilean government indicated that it would not recognize any procedure approved by the commission since it would be regarded as an "illegal, discriminatory and clearly politically interventionist action." The Chilean Jurist, Mario Calderon, the Foreign Ministry's human rights expert, said the report was more negative and biased than other previous reports submitted to the United Nations.¹⁹²

Governmental actions, independent of the actions taken by the United Nations, were numerous and widespread. The United States, Latin American, and European Governments actively intervened in attempts to influence the direction of events connected with human rights in Chile. Both unilateral and multilateral actions were taken.

Latin American governments worked through the OAS and took unilateral actions, particularly in regard to providing asylum for political prisoners. In January of 1975 the Chilean Government gave a list of 200 persons to the Venezuelan and Mexican governments indicating that these prisoners would be released if these governments offered asylum.¹⁹³ Later, 24 former Chilean politicians were granted asylum by Venezuela;¹⁹⁴ a former Christian Democratic Party deputy was released and exiled to Uruguay.¹⁹⁵ Other political prisoners went to Mexico. Chile's Interior Minister, Cesar Benavides, said 95 were going to Mexico and this would reduce the number of detainees to 1,116.¹⁹⁶

For most of the period under review relations between the United

States and Chile were strained because of the human rights problems in Chile. Prior to the Carter Administration the U.S. Government tried to balance its criticism of the human rights violations in Chile with a generalized support for the military junta. This balancing was evident during the OAS meeting held in Santiago in 1976. Since the meeting was held in Santiago, international attention on the human rights situation in Chile increased. In an apparent effort to placate some critics the Chilean Foreign Ministry announced, one day before the visit of U.S. Treasury Secretary William Simon, the release of 49 political prisoners. The Foreign Ministry denied that Simon's trip had anything to do with the releases.¹⁹⁷ When Simon did arrive in Chile he had with him, according to a member of Amnesty International's Executive Committee, a list of political prisoners provided by the Organization.¹⁹⁸ A subsequent announcement by the Chilean Government said that 15 persons who had already received U.S. visas would soon be freed under a U.S. program to assist arrested Chileans "who are neither communists nor leftist extremists."¹⁹⁹

When Henry Kissinger, the U.S. Secretary of State, decided to attend the 1976 OAS meeting in Chile, this was interpreted by some as support for the military junta. He was severely criticized by the French newspaper, Le Monde. An editorial said:

Mr. Henry Kissinger, who has prided himself before U.S. journalists on several occasions since September, 1973 as having powerfully contributed to establishing General Pinochet in power, has again just provided the jackbooted vanquisher of Salvador Allende's... government with spectacular support.²⁰⁰

However, Kissinger did make a statement about human rights and Chile at the OAS meeting, as noted above, and proposed that the IACHR's mandate and financial support be strengthened.²⁰¹

Nevertheless, while the U.S. was critical of the human rights situation it tended to support the Chilean regime in other ways. In contrast to the actions of several European nations, the United States in 1976 provided \$276 million in economic and military aid to Chile, even though there was a Congressional ban on military aid and a \$25 million limit on economic aid. Representative Michael Harrington said that the \$25 million limit on economic assistance was circumvented by funneling aid through bilateral aid programs not under the control of Congress.²⁰²

Relations between the United States and Chile deteriorated after the Carter Administration came into power. Several incidents accelerated this deterioration. One of these concerned an official of the Chilean Government. In January, 1977 a member of Chile's Foreign Ministry had arrived in the United States as a guest of the State Department. He was subsequently asked to leave after Amnesty International, the National Council of Churches, and other human rights organizations charged that the official had tortured political prisoners.²⁰³

Another incident involved the killing of Orlando Letelier and his American aide; it was believed that Chilean intelligence agents had been responsible. This killing contributed to the widening rift between the two governments. As a symbol of its displeasure the U.S. Government withheld two loans to Chile while waiting to see if the observance of human rights in that country would improve. In another gesture, high-level U.S. officials met with Chilean opposition leaders.²⁰⁴

In 1978, at the OAS General Assembly meeting, the United States once again emphasized its concern over human rights. Warren Christopher, U.S. Under-Secretary of State said, "Terrorism is no excuse to abuse

human rights, and one cannot respond to terrorism with the anti-terrorism of the state."²⁰⁵

In addition to these actions, the United States State Department's annual reports on human rights added fuel to the fire. In its 1980 report the State Department said there were about 100 political prisoners in Chile.²⁰⁶

Other developments involving the United States revolved around efforts of various countries to link the release of political prisoners to the future granting of credits to Chile. An official Chilean spokesman said that several countries, including the United States, suggested this path, but it was rejected by the Chilean Government.²⁰⁷

The question of whether financial aid should be granted to Chile in the face of the human rights situation there was a factor in the postponement of talks that were to be held in Paris in 1975 on Chile's foreign debt. Several countries refused to participate in the talks. And since the governments of Great Britain, Italy, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland refused to attend, the talks were postponed. Chile's President Pinochet said that "this is nothing more than the result of the campaign of lies and slander being carried out by the Marxist-Leninist world against Chile."²⁰⁸

The Netherlands Government did not attend the Paris talks because it would have implied political and economic support for the Chilean military junta. The Dutch Government also noted that it was very concerned over the continued violations of human rights in Chile.²⁰⁹

During 1978 the Dutch and Belgian governments once again made known their displeasure over the events taking place in Chile. Reacting to the arrests of 12 leaders of the Christian Democratic Party the

Belgian Government recalled its ambassador.²¹⁰ Later in the year the Belgian Foreign Minister, Henri Simonet, said he "has been concerned for nearly a year about the serious situation known to exist in Chile with respect for human rights. At the beginning of this year, at my suggestion, the Belgian Government decided to reduce the status of our embassy in Santiago as a mark of our country's lack of confidence in the policy followed by the Chilean military junta."²¹¹

The Dutch Government's Foreign Minister told the Chilean ambassador that part of the Dutch people felt great indignation over the new wave of oppression in Chile. The Foreign Minister, Christian Van der Klauuw, asked the Chilean ambassador to lift measures banning political parties and those which resulted in the detention of the 12 leaders of the Christian Democratic Party.²¹²

Other actions by European Governments were coordinated through intergovernmental organizations such as the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM). For example, in 1977 the EEC said it would close its Santiago office by the end of that year in order to protest the human rights violations in Chile.²¹³ The ICEM was active in providing aid to refugees and political prisoners. In 1974 the ICEM had concluded an agreement with the Chilean Government to provide asylum for refugees. The Miami Herald had reported that the ICEM had successfully relocated more than 7,000 Chilean political refugees, prisoners, and their families since the 1973 coup two years before. In 1975, in another example, the ICEM announced that 16 refugees who had sought refuge in the Ecuadorean Embassy left Chile for asylum in Ecuador and Cost Rica.²¹⁴ Between 1973 and 1978 over 13,000 persons were exiled from Chile with many of

them being relocated by the ICEM.²¹⁵

In addition to the actions taken by Western European countries, the Soviet Union continued to apply pressure at various intervals. In just one example, TASS issued a report in 1975, citing an article in the Argentine paper, La Opinion, saying that 119 Chileans had been tortured to death and that more than 150,000 were imprisoned.²¹⁶ Throughout the period similar reports and criticisms were issued by the Soviet press.

International activity relating to human rights in Chile appeared to diminish in 1979. A large number of political prisoners who had been arrested since the 1973 coup had apparently been released, although there were continuous reports of new arrests.

The number of arrests and imprisonments that actually took place in Chile since the 1973 coup is difficult to pinpoint with any precision. Amnesty International said that in the first weeks after the coup no fewer than 45,000 persons were detained for political reasons. The Chilean magazine, Que Pasa, in 1978 published an account of persons who were released, exiled, or disappeared. The number of persons arrested has to be inferred from the number of releases. From 1973 through 1975 the magazine indicated that 34,727 persons were released from detention. Of these, 7,707 were exiled. Since the magazine distinguished between those that were exiled and those that left the country, it is assumed that the exiles were forced to leave while another 9,927 left the country voluntarily. The balance of those released apparently stayed in the country. A total of 493 persons were listed as disappeared for the period through 1975.²¹⁷

At the end of December, 1976, Chile's Interior Minister said that

only one political prisoner remained in Chile.²¹⁸ However, the Que Pasa survey indicated that during 1976 111 persons disappeared and 3,088 were exiled. Releases were said to have totaled 507. However a casual survey of press reports for 1976 showed that at least 711 were said to have been released. In any event, more arrests occurred periodically.

The Que Pasa article listed 2,504 persons exiled in 1977 and eight disappearances. Up to August of 1978 the article listed 675 persons as being exiled and relocated by the ICEM.²¹⁹ Since arrests were often coupled with releases and new arrests would follow upon the releases, it would be extremely difficult indeed to determine exactly how many political prisoners there were at any one time. In 1977 the Catholic church in Chile reported that there were 541 persons serving sentences for political offenses and 61 others awaiting courts martial. In contrast, a Red Cross official was reported to have said that there were 700-800 political prisoners, most of whom would have been released if other countries had agreed to accept them.²²⁰

Many of those who had been released were living in exile. The large number of these expatriates created additional human rights problems relating to their right to return to Chile. This problem was pointed out to a Chilean official by the French Foreign Minister in September, 1979. France had accepted some 6,000 Chilean refugees since 1973 and would now like to see them repatriated.²²¹

Actions Taken by the OAS and its Commission on Human Rights

As noted above, throughout the period under review human rights was a major topic at meetings of the General Assembly of the OAS. The Chilean Government appeared to be concerned over the discussions that took place at these meetings and at the various reports and resolutions

taken by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. This concern, on occasion, led the Government to take steps to forestall criticism. Prior to the 1976 General Assembly meeting in Santiago, for example, the Government announced that 60 political prisoners would be released. According to some diplomats the releases were seen as a victory for Venezuela whose Foreign Minister had asked President Pinochet to release Luis Corvalan and several other political prisoners.²²² Others attributed the releases to the arrival of Henry Kissinger in Santiago. However, regardless of who should be credited for bringing about the releases, it is obvious that the Chilean Government attempted to prevent or forestall criticism at the OAS meeting.

During the meeting the IACHR presented its Second Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile; this led to the adoption of a resolution by the OAS General Assembly appealing to the Government of Chile to continue adopting measures to protect human rights in that country.²²³ The resolution was adopted by a vote of 21 to zero, with Chile and Brazil abstaining. In response to the IACHR report Chile introduced two draft resolutions aimed at weakening the commission.²²⁴ The IACHR had presented its first report on Chile at the 1975 OAS meeting.

In addition to the above the IACHR produced a third report on Chile which once again prompted the OAS General Assembly to pass a resolution urging Chile to improve its human rights performance. This was followed by a Special Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile, also prepared by the commission. Again, at the 1978 meeting of the OAS General Assembly a resolution was passed which called upon "the Government of Chile to adopt and put into practice the measures

necessary to preserve and ensure the complete enjoyment of human rights in Chile..."²²⁵

At the OAS General Assembly meeting held in La Paz, Bolivia in 1979 the IACHR reported that "significant changes occurred in Chile with regard to the situation of the two most fundamental rights--the right to life and the right to humane treatment--as reports of cases of disappeared detainees have stopped and the practice of torture has dropped considerably, although it has not yet been completely eradicated in Chile."²²⁶ However, the commission pointed out that there were still restrictions on other rights.

The Actions of Nongovernmental Organizations

Throughout the period under review nongovernmental organizations both inside and outside of Chile prodded the Government to make information available about those who had disappeared and who were detained. Within Chile the Catholic Church was in the forefront of the human rights campaign. It constantly pressed the government and courts for information and action. In 1977 the Vicariate of Solidarity, an organization created by the church, pressed the Chilean Supreme Court to investigate the fate of 383 missing persons.²²⁷

In order to mobilize public opinion the Vicariate of Solidarity organized a major symposium on human rights in Santiago in 1978 which was attended by members of international NGOs and officials of inter-governmental organizations.

At one point, in 1978, the Government, prompted by a hunger strike of 60 women relatives of missing persons (which had gained international attention), made a slight concession to church authorities by announcing that it would reveal what happened to 618 persons the church

said had disappeared.²²⁸ Later, in August of 1978, when the pressure eased somewhat, President Pinochet appeared to take back the concession when he said, "The cases of people assumed to be missing are being investigated one by one personally by the Minister of the Interior and the investigations department."²²⁹ However, by that time the Chilean Catholic Church had come to the conclusion that many, if not all of the missing persons had died outside the law and that the Government was not going to make a thorough investigation.²³⁰ The Government's Interior Minister, still sensitive to criticism, issued an immediate reply to the church statment saying the investigations would continue.²³¹ Earlier, however, the Government had said that it had no record of those who were missing.²³²

In addition to the various actions taken by the Catholic church in Chile other organizations outside the country such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Socialist International were actively involved in creating additional pressure on the Chilean regime. The IPU said that the state of law did not exist in Chile and the Government continued to suppress basic rights and liberties. The Vice-President of the Socialist International said a visit to Chile left him with a "feeling of horror" and he compared Chile's secret police with the Gestapo of Nazi Germany. The Socialist International recommended that all socialist governments impose economic sanctions on Chile.²³³

Additional pressure and publicity was directed toward the human rights situation in Chile by a "Conference of United States-Chile Relations," held in July, 1978 in Washington. The conference was sponsored by over 50 members of Congress, labor leaders, and more than 20 organizations. The focus of the conference was human rights in Chile.²³⁴

The Chilean Response

Some of the responses to the international campaign against Chile and to some specific actions have been noted above. The overall response ranged from intermittent cooperation to staunch defiance. As with Uruguay and Argentina, the Chilean regime viewed the international campaign as Marxist inspired. Generally, resolutions and actions by the OAS, the IACHR, and the United Nations were rejected by the Chilean Government. These rejections were tempered somewhat when the Government did finally agree in 1978 to allow a delegation from the UNCHR to visit the country.

One of the major responses to the international campaign to protect human rights in Chile came in 1977 via a nationwide broadcast by Chile's President Pinochet. He said, in part:

The international campaign orchestrated by the Soviet Union against us has become more violent and virulent, and incomprehensibly has found tolerance and support among nations whose values have been the same as our own values... An important landmark in our normalization process was the release of all those arrested under the state of siege. This release began in September, 1974 and was virtually completed in November, 1976. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union maintains complete silence in face of our demands made from this very rostrum exactly three years ago, to set free at least a small number of the thousands of political prisoners kept in prisons, psychiatric hospitals and concentration camps...

The world was shocked by the release of Soviet intellectual Vladimir Bukovsky who, without our action, would perhaps be spending the rest of his life stripped of his freedom... This even is too recent to evaluate its importance, but I am sure that there is a place reserved in the history of this century for that day when, for the first time, the USSR was forced to admit that its regime holds political prisoners, and for the first time was forced to bow to a nation to free one of them.

When a government such as the Chilean Government deliberately restricts and suspends certain rights because such action is necessary to neutralize and defeat the ideological or terrorist action of Marxism-Leninism, or to lift the country from a state of moral and material prostration caused by demagogery, it is not only not violating human rights, but it is protecting them and strengthening whatever had been achieved previously.²³⁵

In another statement President Pinochet reinforced his earlier statement. He said:

The negative aspect--apparently only in the political sphere--is the lack of understanding and objectivity with which Chile has been judged abroad, influenced perhaps by a massive and deceitful propaganda which, through lack of resources, we have been unable to rebut..."

Now when there is not a single person under arrest for common crimes connected with politics, people talk about thousands of political prisoners...these people lie shamelessly in the sure knowledge that the vast campaign staged by our adversaries will prevent the truth from being known...

The manifestation of the concept of human rights by using the idea in an ambiguous and broad sense has been clearly demonstrated in current international politics. The cases of people assumed to be missing are being investigated one by one personally by the minister of the interior and the investigations department... We have emphatically repeated that the Government has no record of the 280 specific cases seriously submitted by the solidarity committee, the only relatively serious list submitted so far.²³⁶

Summary

During the period 1975-1979 Amnesty International worked for political prisoners in an environment of great international interest and activity in regard to the protection of human rights in Chile. In addition to using its own members to pressure the Chilean Government directly, the Organization worked indirectly through the United Nations and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Amnesty International's role and relationship to the numerous international and national actions that were taken in defense of human rights are analyzed in the following chapter.

Footnotes

¹The Status of Human Rights in Selected Countries and the U.S. Response, Subcommittee on International Organizations, U.S. House Committee on International Relations, 95th Congress, 1st Session (Washington: July 25, 1977) Noted below as The Status of Human Rights...

²Ibid., p. 63.

³Uruguay, Struggle Against Communist Aggression and Subversion. Uruguayan Government Publication, p. 2. Undated.

⁴Ibid., p. 3.

⁵Amnesty International Report 1978 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1979, p. 141.

⁶Ibid., p. 64.

⁷Annual Report 1974-75 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1975)

⁸Campaign for the Abolition of Torture Monthly Bulletin, August, 1975. (Amnesty International Publications).

⁹Loc. cit.

¹⁰Annual Report 1975-76 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1976).

¹¹Amnesty International Newsletter, February, 1976.

¹²Facts on File, March 20, 1976, p. 207.

¹³Amnesty International Newsletter, March, 1976.

¹⁴Amnesty International Newsletter, April 1976.

¹⁵Facts on File, June 19, 1976.

¹⁶Campaign for the Abolition of Torture Monthly Bulletin, July, 1976.

¹⁷Interview with Robert Maurer, September 25th and October 2nd, 1980.

¹⁸Amnesty International Report 1979 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1979).

¹⁹Amnesty International Newsletter, May, 1978.

²⁰Amnesty International Report 1978 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1978), p. 143.

²¹Amnesty International Report 1979 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1979), p. 75.

²²Letter from Annie McMorris, Documentation Assistant, Amnesty International Secretariat, Jan. 6, 1981.

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CHAPTER 4

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY, ARGENTINA, AND CHILE: AN ANALYSIS

Overall Strategy

In considering Amnesty International's activities in regard to Latin America, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile were selected for review because much of the Organization's work during the period was directed at these three countries. Other countries which could have been selected based on comparable levels of activity are Brazil, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Paraguay. However, activity relating to these countries was not generally constant throughout the five-year period. Amnesty International was active in regard to Brazil for the first two years, 1975 and 1976, but its activities slackened for the remaining three years. Its activity directed at Guatemala was relatively intense in 1975, diminished in 1976 and 1977, then began to increase at the end of the period, culminating in a major campaign which began in September, 1979. Amnesty International's work with respect to El Salvador began to intensify in late 1977 with a major campaign initiated in October, 1978. While Amnesty International focused on Paraguay during the entire five-year period, its activities increased considerably in 1977, with a major campaign launched in October.

In the countries where Amnesty International has National Sections--Venezuela, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, and Mexico--except for Mexico, its activities have been minimal. There were virtually no

public actions taken in regard to Ecuador during 1976 and 1977, except for a cable sent in December of 1977. A flurry of activity relating to Ecuador took place in early 1978. Peru received slightly more attention than did the other countries where Amnesty International has National Sections. While there does not seem to be any direct correlation between the presence of Amnesty International sections and activity by the Organization, it is conceivable that there might be a preference to deal with these countries with less publicity than with other countries. Other countries such as Colombia (until 1980), Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Haiti and Honduras received considerably less attention from the Organization during the period under review than did Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile.

It cannot be assumed, however, that Amnesty International's low level of activity reflected the state of human rights in those countries. For example, in regard to Peru, Amnesty International pointed out in its 1980 annual report that "massive political arrests of people involved in social protest took place in May 1975, in January and July, 1976, in May 1978 and in January and June 1979. On each occasion thousands were arrested..."¹ While Amnesty International did protest the arrests of lawyers and trade union leaders in 1976 through press releases issued on January 26 and March 25, the Organization did not initiate any major campaigns or publicity concerning Peru which might have been expected given that "thousands were arrested" on several occasions over a period of several years.

It has been said that for Amnesty International to adopt prisoners at all (and presumably to take other actions as well) two conditions must exist: one, the foreign government must be sensitive to outside

opinion; and two, some form of internal resistance must exist by which information about prisoners can be supplied to the Organization. It has been noted by a head of Amnesty International's research department that with certain governments Amnesty International would be wasting its time.²

Thus, the perceived sensitivity of a particular government to outside pressure is a factor in determining whether a campaign is to be initiated.

Another factor, as indicated by a member of Amnesty International's International Executive Committee, is whether a campaign will be useful and whether the Organization has the capacity to affect human rights practices within a particular country.³ Additionally, timing is a factor. For example, campaigns may be initiated when there is the potential for maximum public attention as was the effort toward Argentina. A major campaign directed at that country was timed to coincide with the 1978 World Cup Soccer championship games held in that country.

In addition to these factors, one AIUSA official noted that campaigns are conducted when a government is unresponsive to other techniques.⁴ Therefore, a campaign can be viewed as an escalation of pressure on a particular government.

Increased pressure, a government's sensitivity to that pressure, timing, and a perception of possible effectiveness by Amnesty International are not, however, the only factors that are probably considered when deciding on a campaign. A campaign can also be viewed as being for education and development purposes. That is, the publicity given to a campaign directed at a particular country is a method of informing world public opinion as well as the people in the country of

human rights violations and of Amnesty International's work. This may eventually result in increased information about political prisoners and increased adoption cases. It also serves as a means of imbuing segments of the population with the concepts of human rights that Amnesty International is attempting to protect.

Closely related to expectations of effectiveness is the consideration of whether support will be forthcoming from other countries that have economic, political, and cultural relations with the target country. In those Western countries where Amnesty International has a substantial membership, pressure from that membership upon the International Executive committee and the International Secretariat is an additional factor which might determine what countries are to be targeted. In turn, those members will then be expected to pressure their own governments to take action against the country charged with violating human rights. Other than pressure from its membership, given its mandate, there are certain instances where the human rights violations are so widespread and blatant that the Organization cannot ignore them.

One further stimulus to action might be the work of other bodies such as the United Nations or the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

With respect to Latin America, therefore, choices were made to focus on certain countries rather than others according to the factors outlined above. In regard to Amnesty International's decision not to undertake a major campaign against Peru, for example, despite the continued practice of mass arrests, several possible reasons may be found. One, the Government of Peru since 1975 appeared to be taking a more moderate approach to redirecting the country than did the more revolu-

tionary government that ruled from 1968 to 1975. Second, there was probably a perception that Amnesty International, by itself, could not be effective in Peru. Third, the influence of Western governments, from whom Amnesty International would seek support, would be minimal. This is because the Peruvian Government had "sharply reduced the power and wealth of Peru's historically powerful oligarchy, restrained the influence of foreign investors [and] brought much of the economy under Government control..."⁵

In 1980 Amnesty International published recommendations that it had made to the Government of Colombia concerning violations of human rights. Colombia has generally been regarded as one of the Latin American countries having a fairly good record of observing human rights. One observer has indicated that "Columbia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela will continue to set the highest standards among Latin American governments in observance of human rights."⁶ According to a member of Amnesty International's International Executive Committee, the Organization has recently become something of "a household word" in Colombia and much interest in its work has been shown by many people in the country.⁷ Despite this, the President of Columbia, in a nationwide radio and television address, rejected Amnesty International's recommendations. In this particular situation Amnesty International perceived that conditions would be favorable for making an effort to improve observance of human rights in that country. Although the Government rejected the Organization's recommendations, the publicity generated was said to have brought about a national debate on human rights in general and on Amnesty International's report in particular.⁸

In the cases of the three countries discussed in the previous

chapter, major campaigns were directed at Uruguay and Argentina. While no major campaign involved Chile, Amnesty International's activities were maintained at a fairly high level over the five-year period.

In all these countries, for most of the period, military governments ruled and had taken over control from civilian governments. The expectation that support might be forthcoming from Western governments--which might view the installation of military governments replacing democratically elected civilian governments as incompatible with their interests--appears to have been a factor in Amnesty International's decisions to focus on Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile.

At this point it might be helpful to the analysis to indicate that Amnesty International's decision not to undertake a major campaign with respect to Chile was probably due to the fact that Chile was already receiving great attention from the United Nations and the OAS. In many respects the mounting of a campaign directed toward Chile would have duplicated the efforts of these two intergovernmental organizations. Therefore, it appears that Amnesty International's activities regarding Chile were coordinated to supplement the work of the United Nations and OAS. It did not have to, in this case, gain the support of other nations in the effort to protect human rights in Chile; Chile was already being condemned (albeit for many other reasons) by a majority of the member states of the UN. Furthermore, if one of the long-term goals of Amnesty International is to bring about an effective international system to protect human rights, supporting efforts in that direction, rather than competing with them, would best serve that aspiration. If the present political situation within the world community allows the United Nations, for example, to take action only in regard to human

rights violations in Chile, South Africa, and Israel, Amnesty International's long-term goal is still being served; as actions involving the international protection of human rights are taken, precedents can be created which may eventually be applied to other countries. (However, there is also the possibility that other precedents may be created which would allow some nations to avoid international scrutiny.) And if the countries which now support the United Nations resolutions concerning Chile are later on the receiving end of new resolutions, their arguments of rejection based on the principle of noninterference in their internal affairs might sound less convincing. Amnesty International's role in this process, in addition to providing information, is to try to insure that resolutions condemning human rights violations are not based on spurious reasons.

Although Uruguay was repeatedly charged by the OAS's Inter-American Commission on Human Rights with violating human rights, no comparable action was taken by the United Nations. While the UNCHR did announce that it had taken decisions on several countries including Uruguay in 1978, these decisions were not made public (as was noted above). In August of 1979 the newly formed Human Rights Committee (which was established under the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) adopted a resolution indicating that Uruguay had not been in compliance with several articles of the Covenant.⁹ These actions, while significant in regard to the development of international practices concerning human rights, were, however, in relation to the overall need for action, inadequate.

Similarly, while Argentina was severely criticized by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, action by the United Nations was

effectively blocked by collaboration between the Soviet Union and Argentina. Therefore, while Amnesty International's strategy included making submissions to the United Nations regarding human rights in Argentina, this was not its first line of offense. In 1977, for example, while at least three submissions concerning Chile were made to the United Nations, only one was made dealing with Argentina. However, after the United Nations Commission on Human Rights set up a working group in 1980 to deal with the problem of disappearances, at least five submissions were made to the United Nations concerning Argentina.¹⁰

It appears therefore that Amnesty International's strategy includes coordinating its activities and working with international organizations to the extent that the mechanisms of these international organizations serve its purposes. To the extent that they do not, the Organization uses other techniques. In reference to South America's "southern cone," Amnesty International tended to defer to the United Nations concerning Chile, but did not do so in the cases of Argentina and Uruguay. However, in instances where certain situations merited immediate responses--such as those which would prompt Amnesty International to initiate an "urgent action" or to involve its groups in its campaign against torture--then Amnesty International could not afford to wait for the slow acting UN body to take action.

It might be argued that if Amnesty International deferred to IGOs, why didn't it defer to the OAS in regard to Argentina and Uruguay; its actions toward these two countries were by no means confined to working through the OAS. The answer lies in the fact that the OAS is a regional body. As such, the Western European countries, from which Amnesty International expected to receive support, are not members. Limiting its

activities to working through and with the OAS would also have limited the potential support that Amnesty International expected to generate from these countries.

In addition, the OAS includes several countries which have tended to be supportive of each other in countering accusations of human rights violations. Amnesty International has also noted that the security forces of the "southern cone" countries have frequently coordinated their efforts to quell opposition and to arrest and expel refugees. In July of 1980 Uruguay and Argentina signed an agreement to allow for the exchange of police records and other related information. Therefore, while the IACHR may gather enough votes at OAS General Assembly meetings to have its reports accepted and to have resolutions passed, there are enough important countries in Latin America from which accused countries can gather support.

The Role of Western Nations in the Protection of Human Rights in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile

It is impossible to determine to what extent private, diplomatic initiatives were taken by Western governments in attempts to gain protection for the political prisoners that were of concern to Amnesty International. But if we consider public accounts of the part these countries played, we find a varied picture.

Western European governments were particularly active in providing asylum for Chilean refugees. In 1974 the Chilean Government signed an agreement with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration to launch a program for the release of detainees who were held in Chile under the provisions of the state of seige. In addition, there were "an uncalculated number of 'government to government' agreements."¹¹ From

the end of 1973 to the middle of 1978 some 13,924 persons were exiled, many being relocated by the ICEM. Another 9,997 persons left the country on their own or with the help of other nations.¹² As noted in the previous chapter, France alone had accepted some 6,000 Chilean refugees. Thus, a substantial number of persons gained their freedom because asylum was made available to them. Since Amnesty International did not make any formal submissions to the ICEM between 1975 and 1980,¹³ there doesn't seem to have been any involvement by the Organization in this process undertaken by the ICEM. Presumably, Amnesty International elected to concentrate its resources on solving the problems relating to those who had disappeared in Chile, leaving the problems of asylum to organizations such as the ICEM.

Other governmental action by European countries, other than participating in UN actions, tended to be joint actions such as the refusal of a number of countries to attend talks on Chile's foreign debt or the EEC's symbolic protest of closing its offices in Santiago. Similarly, in 1980 the European Parliament recommended that all economic and military aid to Chile be suspended.

Individual governmental protests were delivered by the Netherlands and Belgium over the detention of 12 Chilean leaders of the Christian Democratic Party. The British government made frequent strong protests over the arrest and torture of a British doctor by Chilean authorities. High-level British officials were said to "have been unremitting in their efforts to secure her release." James Callaghan, Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs said, "No British Government can accept such uncivilized, brutal treatment of a British subject at the hands of a foreign government."¹⁴

With respect to Uruguay, there were also joint actions such as the note sent by the European Community countries indicating their concern over human rights, but there was less action taken by individual governments. The dilemma faced by some governments was pointedly illustrated in 1980 when it was revealed that a Belgian arms manufacturers consortium and Uruguay signed an agreement whereby Uruguay would be supplied with 22 tanks, spare parts, and small arms. The Belgian Foreign Minister said he deplored human rights violations in Uruguay, but that his government should also take into account the economic interests of Belgium.¹⁵

There were significantly more interventions by European governments in regard to human rights in Argentina. However, these interventions tended to be on behalf of nationals of the various Western European countries. West German, French, and Swedish authorities on several occasions brought to the attention of Argentine authorities their concern over nationals of these countries who had disappeared in Argentina. Other actions included that taken by the Netherlands and Austria in the United Nations proposing a study of the human rights situation in Argentina and the offer of asylum to political detainees made by West Germany. However, in contrast to the joint actions taken by West European countries in regard to Uruguay and Chile, apparently no such action was taken with respect to Argentina.

As noted in the previous chapter, the activities of the United States concerning human rights in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile was subdued during the Ford Administration and relatively intense during the Carter Administration. President Ford and his Secretary of State preferred to use "quiet diplomacy" while the Carter Administration

tended to be publicly critical of the three South American countries.

In its efforts to protect human rights in the three countries Amnesty International tried to avoid being too closely identified with the human rights policy of the United States while simultaneously working toward similar goals. While the efforts of the United States in the area of human rights were generally welcome by Amnesty International, identification with a superpower would not have served its interests. Latin American governments as well as the Latin American press were frequently highly critical of the United States human rights policy, considering it as interference in their internal affairs. Too close an identification with a superpower would not only lead to a possible loss of effectiveness in Latin America and elsewhere, but it could have jeopardized the image of Amnesty International as being impartial and independent.

The Role of the Media

The domestic media in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile were, with some exceptions, generally hostile to Amnesty International and to what was perceived as an international campaign to discredit these countries. Included as part of the domestic media are the government press agencies and broadcasting stations which also railed against the international campaign. Within Argentina and Uruguay, Amnesty International was often singled out as one of the prime movers behind the international campaign and was denounced accordingly. One newspaper in Argentina, the Herald, while generally supportive of the government, did report on human rights violations as well as the activities of Amnesty International and the national human rights organizations and tried to present a balanced picture of the human rights situation.

In attempting to obtain local coverage of its activities Amnesty International frequently encountered a nationalistic reaction by the press. There was a similar reaction to the human rights policy of the Carter Administration in many Latin American countries. Even individuals who were themselves critical of the human rights situation in their countries were occasionally also critical of the human rights policy of the United States.

The difficulty encountered by Amnesty International in obtaining favorable coverage by the domestic media in the three countries was compounded by the inability or reluctance of the press to criticize their governments. The editor of the Herald in Argentina, Robert Cox, who was arrested but later freed after the British Ambassador protested, pointed out the inertia of his own responses that had to be overcome before the fact that human rights violations were occurring in Argentina could be accepted. He said, "I myself went on believing the Government explanations for a long time because I so much wanted to believe them... I tried to tell myself that the whole problem was that the good guys in government who were appalled at what was happening were temporarily powerless to stop it. But the opportunities for moderates to clean this up have been so many that after a while an honest person has to stop making excuses for them."¹⁶

Given this type of response by an influential editor who was generally sensitive to charges of human rights violations, it is not difficult to understand the reactions of those not so inclined.

During the two-week visit of the IACHR to Argentina, according to the Christian Science Monitor, the local press gave wide coverage to its activities.¹⁷ However, this was consistent with the Government's

policy at the time which was attempting to use the IACHR visit in an attempt to improve its image. After the IACHR's report was issued, the Government's response, as well as that of the local press, was that the report was an intrusion into the internal affairs of the state and a violation of the nation's sovereignty.

The international media, on the other hand, tended to focus on human rights violations in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile. For example, some articles in The New York Times which dealt with Amnesty International's charges of human rights violations were accounts of information contained in the Organization's reports and coincided with their publication; other articles were reports filed by The New York Times' correspondents. (For example, considerable coverage was given to the problem of those who had disappeared and the work of the IACHR.) In addition, the Times' editorials and columnists often expressed criticism of human rights in Argentina as well as in Chile and Uruguay.

Within the United States, press coverage of Amnesty International's activities revealed an almost uncritical acceptance of the Organization and its work. Occasionally, there was disagreement over its conclusions such as the Houston Chronicle's editorial rejecting Amnesty International's claim that there were political prisoners in the United States¹⁸ or the Commentary article which was generally critical of the Organization.¹⁹ But these were the rare exceptions. In general, Amnesty International received extremely favorable press coverage.

How this coverage was perceived by the governments concerned is equally important. All three Latin-American governments made statements to the effect that an international defamation campaign that was

Marxist-Leninist inspired was taking place and that the international media, wittingly or unwittingly, fostered it.

The Uruguayan President indicated in 1975 that his country did not have the funds to counteract the "worldwide communist propaganda offensive."²⁰ He considered radio broadcasting as an "effective and powerful means of infiltration" and that by invoking unlimited freedom, Marxism had "found an effective means to attack this very same freedom it claims to defend..."²¹

On the other hand, Uruguay--when the Uruguayan Navy rejected an Amnesty International statement that a woman had died while under Naval custody--specifically asked all communication media, especially the foreign news agencies, to disseminate the official communique.²² In addition, when Uruguay set up a new office to handle queries concerning political prisoners, it said the office "will defend and improve the country's international prestige, counteracting propaganda against the national objectives."²³ Presumably, the government expected that its efforts would receive attention by the international media. Thus, while critical of the media, the Government also attempted to use it to its advantage.

Argentina began to respond to its perception of an international campaign about a year after the military coup when the President stated that Argentina had to go out and tell the truth beyond Argentina's borders. It regarded the international campaign over human rights as a public relations problem and it tended to deal with it that way. The substantive issues involved were generally swept aside with assertions that Argentina was fighting a war. To counter the campaign against Argentina the Government established an information office in Paris and

hired an American public relations firm to bolster its image. While Amnesty International regarded the 1978 World cup soccer games in Argentina as an opportunity to publicize human rights violations there, Admiral Massera, a member of the junta, saw the games as an opportunity for the outside world "to become acquainted with everyday life in Argentina."²⁴ In 1979, after the Pope made an address in which he dealt with the disappeared and political prisoners in Argentina, a former member of the junta said, "Argentina must try to improve its image to avoid being made a public example by his holiness."²⁵ The emphasis again seemed to be on image rather than on the need to make substantive improvements in the human rights situation.

Both Argentina and Uruguay perceived a diminution of the international campaigns against their countries toward the end of the period under review. In 1979 the Argentine Foreign Minister said, "Those engaged in a campaign to discredit our country seem to be tired."²⁶ Also in 1979 the Uruguayan newspaper, La Manana, said the campaign appeared to be waning and was "derailed by the firm Uruguayan position."²⁷

The Chilean government was equally sensitive to the role of the mass media. General Gustavo Leigh, a member of the junta, said the organizers of the campaign unleashed abroad against the military junta "make use of the scientific principles of mass propaganda to influence world opinion against Chile."²⁸ The international media, when reporting on human rights violations in Chile, was perceived by President Pinochet as being involved in a slanderous campaign. As with Argentina, the allegations were to be challenged rather than considered. President Pinochet talked about the "lack of understanding and objectivity with

which Chile has been judged abroad, influenced perhaps by a massive and deceitful propaganda..." And, as with Uruguay, Chile's problem was seen to be the result of not having the resources to rebut the charges.²⁹

Both the domestic and the international media played a vital role in providing information about human rights violations, arrests, and the work of indigenous NGOs that could be used by Amnesty International in its information gathering process as well as providing information to the populations of the countries concerned. Within the three countries, especially Argentina and Chile, broadcasts and the written press frequently reported on matters relating to human rights. In addition, there were cross-national transfers of information. For example, the Argentine press agency TELAM often reported on events in Chile and the Chilean Domestic Service often commented on Argentine happenings. In Uruguay the press was more controlled. The Uruguayan government in 1973 issued a decree which prohibited the press from commenting on those "who conspire against the Nation or [on] antirsubversive operations."³⁰ Other Latin American news agencies were also involved in reporting on human rights in their own and neighboring countries.

The international press agencies such as Agence France Presse (AFP) in Paris, Reuters in London, or EFE in Madrid, as well as the American media provided a steady flow of information that not only served as a basis for further investigation by Amnesty International, but was a source of additional pressure on the three countries.

It is possible to detect a circular pattern to this process. The news agencies report on those items they consider to be newsworthy. By its publications, press releases, and press conferences Amnesty International contributes to the establishment of criteria concerning what is

considered news. To the extent that Amnesty International's pronouncements are taken up by influential persons--within the government, the media, or other organizations--then a new demand for similar information is created. And the process continues. The one drawback to this process, from the point of view of Amnesty International, is that the repetitiveness of the information tends to make it less newsworthy. As stated above, a report that torture is continuing does not obtain much coverage.

The National NGOs and Amnesty International

Within Argentina and Chile some of the information concerning human rights violations was developed by organizations such as the Catholic Church's Vicariate of Solidarity in Chile or the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights in Argentina. These organizations and others frequently challenged the governments and demanded information about persons who were arrested or disappeared. Their activities were often reported by the international media.

There appears to be a close, if not formal, working relationship between these indigenous organizations and Amnesty International. Informal contacts are said to be numerous. In other Latin American countries, such as Venezuela, where Amnesty International has a National Section, there is close contact between the Organization and local human rights groups.³¹

By publicizing the activities of these local organizations Amnesty International accomplished several things. First, it disseminated their information concerning human rights violations widely beyond the countries borders. Second, the reports of these national NGOs tended to confirm the allegations made previously by Amnesty International. Third, by affording these organizations international publicity, it is presumed

that a measure of protection was conferred upon them which might not have been the case if they were unknown outside of their respective countries. Fourth, by publicizing the activities of the national NGOs, Amnesty International accentuated the indigenous origin of the charges made concerning human rights violations. In doing so, it countered the governments' charges that concern over human rights was an external conspiracy against the government. Fifth, support for these local human rights groups contributed to their legitimacy by being recognized by an organization that was named as the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. Sixth, it played a part in raising the consciousness of the population at large in regard to human rights issues.

However, the interactive process that existed between Amnesty International and these national NGOs could not have existed in a more closed society. For example, apparently no such organizations were formed in Uruguay. Former politicians attempted to play the role of intermediaries between Uruguay and the outside world and suffered for their efforts--witness the murder of exiled Uruguayan parliamentarians in Argentina, as noted in the previous chapter. In addition, the press in Uruguay was generally more circumspect and more controlled in reporting on human rights violations. When it did, it tended to support the government's position. This may have been one factor in forestalling the creation of human rights organizations in Uruguay. However, a more serious obstacle was that such a development would have fallen into the category of proscribed political activity.

Amnesty International and International Human Rights Instruments

In virtually all of Amnesty International's publications and communications to governments mention is made of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, or other international instruments. While the Organization's mandate does not include working toward the implementation of the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, it has urged governments to ratify this covenant as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which deals with Amnesty International's concerns.

When communicating with governments about human rights violations, Amnesty International takes note of whether the country has signed or ratified various international treaties, not restricting itself to the covenants. It also points out how the human rights violations or the laws of a particular country are inconsistent with the guarantees set forth in the international instruments.

As noted above, Amnesty International will attempt to work with and through an intergovernmental organization to the extent that doing so complements its own work. However, by making submissions to the various United Nations agencies or to the IACHR, Amnesty International contributes to the process of development of international human rights law. If information provided by Amnesty International to the IACHR, for example, prompts that intergovernmental agency to send a mission to Argentina, and the Argentine government permits such a visit, then a precedent is set which can later be built on. In addition, if its influence or information results in an intergovernmental agency acting in regard to an area of its concern, that agency's findings can then be used to confirm Amnesty International's own findings. In this way, Amnesty International's legitimacy and credibility is strengthened.

Even when an agency of an IGO acts on information provided by Amnesty International, however, the practical results of such action

must be considered. All three governments being considered here--Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile--rejected the findings and recommendations of the UNCHR and the IACHR. Chile denounced all of the resolutions concerning human rights which were voted on by the UNCHR and the UN General Assembly. Until 1978, it refused access to the UN Working Group which was looking into human rights in Chile. Uruguay did not allow the IACHR to visit the country from 1975 to 1980. In addition, in its Institutional Act No. 5 issued in 1976, the Uruguayan Government set forth its views on the way human rights were to be protected at the international level. Referring to international courts, the Act states that "under no circumstances shall those courts hear cases presented by individuals or by private or international organizations, whatever their nature."³² Argentina allowed the IACHR to visit, but then rejected the commission's findings.

It could be argued that the international protection of human rights is not advanced when it is known that countries will reject the reports of international organizations. However, there is always a tradeoff. In such cases a determination had to be made as to which method or procedure will bring the most protection to those persons seeking it. Obviously, with respect to the IACHR's reports, more was thought to be gained by releasing them than not. Despite the fact that the governments rejected the reports, the process itself is a form of pressure on these governments to act to bring about a cessation of human rights abuses.

Human Rights Concepts

In Chapter 2 it was pointed out that Amnesty International's view that human rights are universally applicable often comes into conflict

with a government's view concerning what actions it should take to preserve the security of the state. Within the three countries, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, the actions of terrorists and the opposition alike were considered to be threats to the security of the state. The governments of Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile were not likely to agree with the Argentine bishops when they said, "No theory about collective security, despite its importance, can cause destruction of the human being's rights." Not only would they disagree, the three governments generally regarded the observance of human rights and the security of the state to be mutually exclusive. At one point the Commander-in-Chief of the Uruguayan Army said, "In these crucial times, human rights cannot prevail over the security of the nation."³³ Similarly, the Argentine President said, "Argentina is much more than a human rights issue. Despite this being quite an important issue, it is not everything. There is much more to Argentina than just human rights."³⁴ Human rights and security were considered to be paired off in a zero-sum game; any advance in the protection of human rights was considered to be detrimental to national security.

In each country the authorities considered the nation to be at war, albeit there was no actual external enemy. Terrorists, sympathizers, or the opponents of the governments were generally regarded as the enemy and a threat to national security and internal order. Viewed as such, these persons were considered to be without rights and could be treated in whatever way was most expedient. The Argentine Navy's publication, La Gaceta Marínera, argued that the defense of human rights often "requires the courage to employ the methods of the enemy in order to triumph over his evil."³⁵

Those enemies of the state were not only considered to be without rights, but were considered to be noncitizens. President Videla of Argentina noted that the repression was aimed at a minority "which we do not regard as Argentine."³⁶ And as non-Argentine enemies, whether they were treated humanely or inhumanely was of little significance; what had significance was the security of the state, as defined by the authorities.

As in other wars in other times the "enemy" was regarded as being less than human; human rights did not apply to them. The Argentine Interior Minister, Major General Albano Eduardo Harguindeguy, made these comments concerning those considered to be the enemy:

Thus, the criminal goals, techniques, and fruits of this action can be appreciated; means and ends that hide from light, men who need cover, the darkness that hides the subhuman nature of their being and their doings.³⁷

Thus, the distinction was made between those who could claim to have human rights and those who were considered beyond even having such a claim. Stated another way, the "enemies" of the state were considered nonentities, devoid of any human traits. As such, the laws and norms concerning human rights were not applicable to them.

Evolving from this fundamental outlook, the three regimes undertook additional measures to prevent the dissemination of ideas considered to be antithetical to their theories pertaining to the security of the state. Freedom of opinion and expression, as stated in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), was generally considered to be subject to whatever limitations the authorities felt were necessary to prevent the spreading of proscribed ideas. The Argentine President has said:

...no one is deprived of his freedom for the mere fact of thinking differently in regard to our style of living. But we do indeed consider it a serious crime to fight against the Western, Christian lifestyle and to try to change it for another one alien to us...anyone is considered a subversive who, in the field of ideology, seeks to change our lifestyle through ideas which are clearly subversive, that is, which destroy, change, or distort values.³⁸

There is a difference between Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Covenant allows restrictions on the right to freedom of expression which may be necessary "for the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals." Amnesty International, while it campaigns for the ratification of the Covenants, focuses on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' version of Article 19 in its literature, which does not have the restrictive clauses. If the more restrictive version of the Covenant would be universally applied and interpreted in such a way to severely restrict freedom of expression in the name of national security, it would then become increasingly difficult for the Organization to legitimize its defense of prisoners of conscience by referring to international human rights instruments.

It is not necessary to detail here the press censorship, the restrictions on, and expulsions of, journalists, the prohibitions on literature and films, the limits on association, movement, contact, and on what one was allowed to say in public in the three countries reviewed. These limitations on freedom of expression and association have been thoroughly documented by the reports of the IACHR. The point to be made here is that these measures do not flow from a theory of human rights or from a conscious effort to balance the rights of the individual against the rights of society; they evolve from a theory that not only

places the security of the state in a paramount position, but tends to negate values relating to human rights.

Naturally, this is not a fortuitous development for those segments of the society that see themselves as the opposition; nor does it bode well for the reinstitution of democratic institutions. Little room is being made for political parties. In Chile, President Pinochet has said:

It is no secret that traditional democracy, which monopolized public opinion in partisan oligarchies, has outlived its usefulness to countries because the political party has sunk into party politics and ended up putting the particular interests of its group above the general interests of the nation...the role assigned to the traditional political forces is the role they should always have played as opinion groups, reflecting certain viewpoints. In other words, they will not be allowed to monopolize public opinion or the sovereign will, still less will they be allowed to have the power they enjoyed before to put their own group or personal interests before the interests of the country and public property.³⁹

In Chile, as well as in Uruguay and Argentina, there is an inherent mistrust of democracy and of political parties; in fact, there is a mistrust of free and open debate. If there were political parties, it is feared that they would be infiltrated by communists. Democracy itself is seen as an invitation to communist rule, being incapable of facing Marxism, according to the Chilean President.⁴⁰

Naturally, there are national differences. Argentina's military rulers have on occasion spoken of political parties being allowed once again to participate in managing the affairs of the nation, but have avoided setting a timetable for a return to civilian rule. In late 1980 Lieutenant General Omar Graffigna, Commander-in-Chief of the Argentine Air Force, said the armed forces will retain power as long as necessary and condemned the "pseudodemocratic clamoring" from those who, "brandishing false flags of human rights, seek the premature reestablishment of the forms of democracy which will open possibilities for Marxism

and subversion to gain power." In making these remarks he also spoke of the need for legislation to limit dissent.⁴¹

Given these ideas concerning freedom of expression as outlined by the military rulers of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay and compared to the human rights that Amnesty International seeks to protect, it is difficult to see where there is room for compromise. Several contrasting values separate Amnesty International from the military rulers. First, there is the divergence represented by Amnesty International's overall focus on human rights and the governments' focus on national security and terrorism. Second, there is Amnesty International's concern over civil and political rights versus the governments' actions to either disregard certain rights or to institute measures whereby these rights would be severely restricted. The often stated argument that economic and social rights have to take precedence over civil and political rights was not really a factor in the cases under consideration. The governments would argue that the rights of the society at large were given priority, but it is doubtful that a good argument could be made indicating that social and economic rights were enhanced during the period under review.

It has been argued elsewhere that it may be possible to reach an international consensus on what constitutes core rights; the right to life and the right not to be tortured or mistreated have been mentioned as such rights. But as the record shows, even this bare minimum of rights did not serve as a basis for agreement between Amnesty International and the three "southern cone" countries.

Effectiveness

In making an assessment of Amnesty International's effectiveness,

it should be made clear that it is an "assessment;" there are no clear, set patterns of cause and effect, no written or verbal agreements that can be pointed to to "prove" effectiveness. The assessment of effectiveness is made from the overall evidence available. With this in mind, it should be noted that effectiveness must be considered at several points.

1. The direct effect of Amnesty International's efforts on political prisoners.
2. The effect of Amnesty International's pressure on the target governments.
3. The effect of Amnesty International's influence on other governments.
4. The effectiveness of Amnesty International's influence with intergovernmental organizations and other nongovernmental organizations.
5. The promotion of human rights.

There is little evidence to suggest that many political prisoners "adopted" by Amnesty International were released as a result of direct pressure by the Organization. In some cases where the prisoner was a prominent person and was the focus of widespread international attention, a release was effected. Jacobo Timerman, editor of the Argentine newspaper, La Opinion, is a case in point. Hector Campora, a former President of Argentina, was another. However, in Campora's case, although he obtained asylum in the Mexican Embassy, he was not granted safe passage out of the country for three years, and then only because he was suffering from a serious illness.

Amnesty International does not have the resources to conduct investigations or to adopt all of the political prisoners in a particular

country. For example, in 1979 the Organization estimated that there were 1,900 political prisoners in Argentina; of these, Amnesty International had adopted or was investigating 300.⁴² In selecting prisoners for adoption--in addition to having reliable information--its strategy includes selecting those persons for whom it can generate the most support outside of the Organization. Parliamentarians, journalists, human rights activists, trade unionists, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals head the list. In this way Amnesty International can petition various professional groups to work for the release of members of their profession. This does not, however, mean that other political prisoners are ignored. The distinction has to be made between cases and cause. Focusing on individual, prominent prisoners is expected to help the entire cause of all prisoners. Certainly, it would not be more effective to reverse the priorities; that is, it is doubtful that focusing on unknown persons for whom no organized support could be generated would be more helpful to the cause.

However, even this adoption strategy did not appear to bring about many releases, if any. Given the hostility of the Argentine and Uruguayan authorities to Amnesty International's campaigns, it is hardly conceivable that protestations by the Organization brought about the releases sought. This does not mean that releases did not take place in the three countries. Some prisoners were released after serving their sentences. Some were placed in restricted liberty after being released. Some were rearrested after being released. Some who were detained may have been found not to be a threat to the government. Others, arbitrarily arrested, were released in the same manner. Some simply disappeared. And, as pointed out in the previous chapter, especially with

respect to Chile, many went into exile.

The reasons why governments release prisoners or grant amnesties are many and complex and deserve further study. The most that can be said here is that governments will generally release a political prisoner or grant an amnesty when it is in their interests to do so. When the Soviet Union and Chile effected a prisoner exchange, both considered it a victory and used the event for propaganda purposes. The Chilean government considered it as a humanitarian gesture on their part and a blow to the Soviet Union.

It is likely that given the Chilean government's preoccupation with the charges of human rights violations coming out of the United Nations, little attention was paid to Amnesty International's efforts to secure the release of adopted prisoners.

While the efforts of Amnesty International probably did not directly bring about the release of political prisoners, there is substantial evidence that the Organization did have an impact on the three governments. However, the result may have been the opposite of what had been intended. The Uruguayan and Argentine Governments frequently singled out Amnesty International in its counterattack on the international campaigns in general, reserving strongest protests for the UNCHR. In the case of Uruguay, perhaps the most vulnerable of the three countries, the result was a violent counterattack and possibly a hardening of attitudes. All three countries attempted to develop their own publicity campaigns to offset the negative images that were prevalent abroad.

The negative image of the human rights situation in the three countries that was projected abroad was due in part to Amnesty

International, in part to the media, and partly to the reports of the UNCHR and the IACHR. Other NGOs also played a role. Naturally, the press was the medium through which the negative images were carried. In assessing Amnesty International's role, however, it might be best to consider what it was the Organization contributed.

By its publications and reports Amnesty International provided information that the press, by itself, would not normally provide. The press might have reported on arrests, killings, disturbances, coups, and possibly an isolated case of torture. Amnesty International on the other hand, generally made information available that revealed trends, that compiled statistics, and put the information into perspective. It had the resources to be able to determine, for example, whether an incident involving torture was an isolated event or whether it represented a systematic practice. In addition, the press may report on certain events and not others, providing no follow-up whereas Amnesty International continued to monitor events, providing consistent coverage. It is this qualitative difference that makes Amnesty International's reports both a source of information for the media as well as for government officials.

How government officials (other than those in the target countries) react to this information is determined by a complex set of factors which are discussed in the final chapter of this dissertation. But it is clear that in certain instances Western Governments did take actions that were supportive of the efforts of Amnesty International. The actions taken by the United States Congress prior to the Carter Administration to limit economic and military aid showed significant instances of the influence of Amnesty International. Its reports were

cited on the floor of Congress and its representatives were frequently invited to testify before Congressional committees. The reports on human rights prepared by the State Department often were based to a large extent on information published by Amnesty International. In Western Europe the strongest governmental action involved protests over the detention, mistreatment, or disappearance of European nationals in Latin America. In some of these cases Amnesty International provided continued publicity of the plight of these persons in order to generate pressure within a particular European country for that country to take action.

In regard to citizens of the Latin American countries, the Western European countries showed a preference for joint action which would present a united front.

There is some evidence that because of the publicity given to human rights violations in Argentina, its government had difficulty in buying arms, securing credits, and in obtaining credit from the Common Market countries, and particularly from Scandinavia.⁴³

As discussed in the previous chapter, the IACHR's activity in regard to the three Latin American countries and the UNCHR's activity in regard to Chile served as additional sources of pressure. At the United Nations, Amnesty International's influence is limited by several factors. First, the confidential procedures involved in reporting human rights violations deprive the Organization of its main weapon, publicity. Second, the slowness with which the UN body works is another limiting factor. Third, the political realities at the United Nations generally thwart initiatives by Amnesty International except in cases involving Chile, South Africa, and Israel. However,

this situation may be changing. As noted in Chapter 1, the UNCHR did take some undisclosed decisions on nine countries in 1978. It also set up a working group to deal with disappearances, and was not adverse to considering the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as violating human rights.

In regard to the IACHR, the situation is significantly different. The members of the commission hold their positions as independent experts and there is an evident mutuality of interests and values between the IACHR and Amnesty International. While neither is a stalking horse for the other, information is apparently exchanged and submissions made by Amnesty International are acted upon by the IACHR. While the IACHR didn't generally reveal in its reports where the original complaints came from, names of victims of human rights abuses mentioned in Amnesty International's reports were often mentioned in IACHR reports. As was noted in the previous chapter, at least one country, Uruguay, rejected an IACHR report partly on the basis that the commission had used information supplied by Amnesty International.

At present, the political situation in the OAS allows the IACHR to continue its work and therefore allows Amnesty International to continue to supply information to the commission. It is not expected that the Reagan Administration, despite its swing away from an activist human rights policy, will back any attempts to lessen the authority of the IACHR.

There are of course other nongovernmental organizations that were involved in the protection of human rights in Latin America. Amnesty International has had close if not formal relationships with some of them, including the International Commission of Jurists, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Amnesty International has taken joint missions with the International Commission of Jurists and presumably a certain amount of coordination takes place between the two organizations. The Inter-Parliamentary Union has taken up the cases of a number of imprisoned parliamentarians who were "adopted" by Amnesty International. In addition, there are numerous organizations, from scientific associations to trade unions, that have utilized information supplied by Amnesty International to assist imprisoned colleagues. There are also numerous "solidarity" organizations that use the data developed by Amnesty International. However, the Organization tends to keep such partisan groups at a distance to safeguard its reputation for impartiality.

Amnesty International also has a close working relationship with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The ICRC, originally limiting its work to situations of armed conflict, has recently become increasingly involved with political detainees and their conditions of imprisonment. The ICRC generally does not publicize its work and the role it played in the three Latin American countries is unclear. It is known, however, that the ICRC has been active in Chile since the 1973 coup.⁴⁴

It is probable that the work of the ICRC is a variable that influences Amnesty International's strategy. In situations where a particular country may not respond to Amnesty International's method of using publicity and campaigns, it may respond to the more discreet methods of the ICRC. In such situations information developed by Amnesty International concerning political prisoners may be passed on to the ICRC. In this way the human rights of political prisoners may be protected from two directions--from the public activity of

Amnesty International and from the private activity of the ICRC. Coordination of these activities increases their chances of being effective.

While the promotion of human rights is not a major focus of this study, it inevitably is a part of the work of Amnesty International--not so much in a formal sense, but rather as a by-product of its activities. If spreading ideas about the international protection of human rights is equated with the promotion of human rights, then Amnesty International must be credited with playing a major part. By its campaigns directed toward Uruguay and Argentina, the Organization became the object of controversy in those countries. As such, the content of its ideas were also discussed. As these ideas filter down to the population at large, there is the possibility that a degree of diffuse support for the international protection of human rights will develop. To the extent that this process of socialization causes segments of the population to internalize various concepts of human rights, the more difficult it will become for the government to ignore future charges of human rights violations coming from abroad or from within the country itself.

A final word should be said about effectiveness. There is a danger of overestimating improvements of the human rights situation in a particular country. After several years of authoritarian rule, it may be observed that arrests, torture, or disappearances have decreased, equating this with improvement. However, if those previously arrested are still in prison or have been forcibly exiled, if the government has not caused additional persons to "disappear," or if new detainees are not being tortured, this may simply mean that the system that allows the human rights abuses to occur has been institutionalized. There is no

room for maneuver for those who may speak out against the restrictions imposed on them. Specific instances of human rights violations may not occur as often as before, but this should hardly be considered an improvement. The opposition has merely been neutralized.

Footnotes

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- ⁴Interview with Robert Maurer, September 25th and October 2, 1980.
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CHAPTER 5

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Introduction

Amnesty International's work is based primarily on four articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights -- Articles 5, 9, 18, and 19. As outlined earlier, these articles deal with torture, arbitrary arrest, detention, and exile; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; and freedom of opinion and expression. In the second edition of its report, Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions, published in 1980 Amnesty International documents how Soviet law and practice do not conform to the above listed articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments. It details the limitations on freedom of expression, association, religion, movement, and the deficiencies surrounding arrests and trials, among other topics. The position of Amnesty International is that the rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "transcend the boundaries of nation, race, and belief;" that is, they are universal. This position is fundamentally antithetical to the position taken by the Soviet Union and other Eastern communist states.

Amnesty International's public activities regarding the international protection of human rights in Eastern Europe concentrated on two states during the period under review -- the Soviet Union and

Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union was apparently selected because it is the dominant state in Eastern Europe and the denial of human rights there makes it difficult for them to be observed elsewhere in the region. Improvements in the situation in the Soviet Union would favor progress in other countries. For example, Moscow's imprimatur on the development of an independent trade union in Poland would have had a significant effect on the rest of Eastern Europe.

Czechoslovakia was probably singled out by Amnesty International for several reasons. Czechoslovakia was regarded by some Western observers as having one of the more repressive regimes in the region, although, as The New York Times put it, all of Eastern Europe "measures its freedoms inch by inch."¹ Czechoslovakia is also the one Eastern European country that is most consistent and vocal in echoing the Soviet line. However, the country had an active dissident movement which led to the Charter 77 demands for reforms. These dissidents, perhaps recalling the country's short-lived democracy after World War II and the hopes of the Prague Spring in 1968, sought to have the Government abide by the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Agreement. Amnesty International attempted to provide support for these dissidents.

The major human rights issues in Eastern Europe, as seen by Western observers, revolved around the question of dissent. Torture, prevalent in other areas of the world, was not seen as the overriding problem in the Soviet Union or the other Eastern European countries. However, the treatment of the dissidents in psychiatric hospitals is said to be a form of psychological torture.² Other observers go further indicating that patients in Soviet psychiatric hospitals are often mistreated and

dissenters are often singled out for extra punishment.³

Eastern European states are generally rated on human rights issues by Western observers according to the degree that dissent is tolerated. For example, Poland and Hungary were regarded as the most liberal states. (However, martial law has changed the situation in Poland.) The other Eastern European states are considered to be stricter. In Bulgaria control over dissidents is said to be fairly tight. Romania, despite its somewhat independent foreign policy, does not tolerate any dissent. Similarly, the German Democratic Republic and Yugoslavia also keep a close watch on dissidents.⁴ In the latter country "hostile propaganda," which can include any comment critical of the state -- even if uttered in a private conversation -- is considered a punishable offense.

During the period 1975-1979 Amnesty International paid the least attention to Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria. The German Democratic Republic and Romania received slightly more public attention with a major campaign directed at the latter during 1978. Yugoslavia received more attention than the above countries, but less than that directed at the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. Amnesty International's activities with respect to Albania have been virtually nonexistent. Information coming out of Albania is sparse and the possibility of Amnesty International being able to influence that country is remote.

Thus, to some extent, Amnesty International's activities tend to reflect the state of human rights in Eastern Europe as seen by Western observers, but appears to be skewed toward the Soviet Union. One caveat, however, should be mentioned. Amnesty International usually had its members work for over 200 adopted political prisoners in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) during the period under review. It is

postulated that Amnesty International maintained a low public profile with respect to East Germany in order not to jeopardize the relationship between the two Germanies which allows GDR prisoners to go to the West.

The Soviet Union: Background to 1975

Amnesty International's efforts concerning the protection of human rights in the Soviet Union have tended to coincide and are coordinated with the human rights movement in that country. The Organization became involved in what was considered to be the start of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union, a demonstration held in Moscow on December 5, 1965.⁵ The demonstration was held to protest the arrest and trial of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuri Daniel, who were accused of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. Amnesty International took up their cases and attempted to prevent the trials from taking place, but was unsuccessful.⁶

Since 1968 the Soviet human rights movement has published a bulletin entitled, A Chronicle of Current Events.⁷ This publication provides information by and about human rights activists in the Soviet Union. Amnesty International has translated and published the Chronicle (as it is referred to) since 1971. The Chronicle, which is the best known journal published in samizdat -- typewritten copies which are circulated hand-to-hand -- reports on "arrests, trials, and extra-judicial persecution of dissenters, on the conditions prevailing in prisons and labor camps, on the campaigns of national and religious groups, and on other samizdat publications."⁸ It is issued irregularly and from 1972 to 1974 ceased publication when the authorities increased their pressure to suppress it.⁹ In the second edition of its report on political

prisoners in the Soviet Union published in 1980, Amnesty International noted that it relied primarily on two types of sources -- officially published materials and samizdat writings.¹⁰

In 1970 Andrei Sakharov, Valery Chalidze, and Andrei Tverdoklebov formed the Committee for Human Rights in Moscow. This group became an affiliate of the International League for Human Rights, based in New York, and of the Institute for the Rights of Man, based in Strasbourg.¹¹ Later, in 1974, representatives of Amnesty International went to Moscow to talk with members of the Committee for Human Rights. The outcome of the meeting was the formation of an Amnesty International adoption group in Moscow with Valentin Turchin as chairman. However, the group was never allowed to function. Members were either arrested or exiled.¹²

The dissidents in the Soviet Union form a very small minority of the population. They range from Jews wanting to emigrate to religious believers, nationalists, and intellectuals. Although not actually constituting an organized movement, these diverse groups did draw closer together after the signing by 35 countries of the 1975 Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.¹³

Most of the dissident groups in the Soviet Union consist of only a few persons each. For example, after 1975, the organizations set up to monitor the implementation of the Helsinki Accord had few members: the Moscow group consisted of 10 persons; five were in the Lithuanian group; nine were in the Ukrainian group; six in Georgia; and three in Armenia.¹⁴ Popular support for the dissidents is lacking; in 1975 Andrei Sakharov noted that the Soviet human rights movement was insulated from the masses as well as from the intelligentsia.¹⁵

Prior to the signing of the Helsinki Agreement, Jews in the Soviet Union tended to disassociate themselves from those who were considered

human rights activists. After the Helsinki Agreement was signed Soviet Jews tended to become more involved with the overall human rights movement.¹⁶ Since the human rights activists began to form "Helsinki Watch" groups to monitor the implementation of the Helsinki Agreement -- part of which deals with the reunification of families -- it was natural for the Jewish groups to gravitate toward the activists.

It has been estimated that there are about 10,000 political prisoners in the Soviet Union.¹⁷ In any given year Amnesty International's adoption groups work for the release of some 300-350 of these prisoners. Since much of Amnesty International's information is derived from the human rights activists in the Soviet Union, it is natural that the Organization tends to focus on them and the reaction of the Soviet authorities to their activities.

Since the Helsinki Agreement has been used by activists in Eastern Europe to legitimize dissent, Amnesty International's activities in support of these dissidents inevitably draws the Organization into the midst of East-West politics. And since Amnesty International's efforts frequently parallel other international efforts dealing with human rights in the Soviet Union (especially those of the United States during the Carter Administration), it has had to avoid the appearance of being too closely identified with these other efforts and still be able to continue its work.

Some of these other efforts originated in the United States. Prior to 1975 American concern over human rights in the Soviet Union focused primarily on the question of the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate. In one example of a U.S. initiative, the Secretary of State, in 1970, appealed to his Soviet counterpart to reduce the sentences of 12 Jews

who were convicted for an attempted hijacking. Other actions were taken in the intervening years. Perhaps most notable was the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974 which prohibited the most-favored nation status to any "non-market economy country" which denied its citizens the right to emigrate.¹⁸ After this amendment was passed the Soviet Union rejected the trade agreement with the United States and the emigration of Soviet Jews decreased.¹⁹

With the advent of the Carter Administration's activist human rights policy in 1977, United States' actions tended to overshadow whatever efforts were made by Amnesty International. For example, a letter from the President of the United States¹ to a Soviet dissident has considerably more import and receives more attention than an Amnesty International press release.

The primary East-West issue affected by the human rights debate is the question of detente. Some Western critics say that pressure by the West on human rights will weaken or destroy detente. During the Carter Administration some Western European leaders were critical of United States human rights policy. French President, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, said President Carter had violated the detente code by interfering in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union through his human rights policy.²⁰ West Germany's Helmut Schmidt was also critical of Carter's support for the Soviet dissidents fearing it might provoke Soviet authorities to adopt even more repressive measures.²¹

It was, therefore, in this larger context of international and domestic initiatives that Amnesty International pursued its objectives concerning the protection of human rights in the Soviet Union.

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1979

The period under review, 1975-1979, is bracketed by the publication of two editions of Amnesty International's report, Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions. The first edition was published in 1975, the second in 1980. Since Amnesty International's activities with respect to human rights in the Soviet Union were particularly extensive -- as were other international actions -- this section deals with these activities on a year-by-year basis.

Amnesty International's Actions - 1975

In 1975 Amnesty International began to increase its activities with respect to the Soviet Union. A rough indication of this increased attention can be gauged by the number of press releases issued in 1975 compared to 1974. In 1974 the Organization issued three press releases dealing with human rights in the Soviet Union. In 1975 it issued at least 10, in addition to publishing the above named report. In comparison, no press releases concerning human rights in Poland were issued for the entire five-year period, 1975-1979. Similarly, none were issued regarding Bulgaria.

This increased activity was apparently influenced by a number of events. First, there was the harassment and arrests of members of Amnesty International's adoption group in Moscow.²² Second, the signing of the Helsinki Agreement took place in August. And third, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Soviet dissident, Andrei Sakharov.

In connection with the arrests of the members of Amnesty International's adoption group in Moscow, the Organization took several steps. On April 19th it cabled Leonid Brezhnev to protest the arrests.²³ It simultaneously

issued a press release which resulted in considerable press coverage.

The New York Times published accounts of the arrests on April 19th and 20th. On the 21st of April the Times published a story dealing with Andrei Sakharov's views on Amnesty International. Later, in September and December, the Times again reported on Amnesty International's Moscow group and its problems.²⁴

In its attempts to gather support for its Moscow group, Amnesty International published accounts of the arrests in several issues of its Newsletter and prompted a worldwide protest by its members who urged the Soviet Government to release those arrested.

One technique more frequently used with respect to the Soviet Union than to other countries was the mobilization of Amnesty International's members in campaigns dedicated to "prisoners of the month" and against torture. The Organization's members were activated in "prisoner of the month" campaigns in July and September. They were similarly activated in campaigns against torture in May, September, and November. Through these actions and others Amnesty International succeeded in directing a steady flow of protests to the Soviet leaders for most of the year. In addition, various National Sections of Amnesty International issued their own press releases and initiated subsidiary actions.

Late in 1975, Amnesty International attempted to send a representative to Moscow to observe the trial of two members of its Moscow group, but was denied permission to do so by the Soviet Government.²⁵ One member, Sergei Kovalyev, was sentenced to seven years in a strict regime corrective labor colony to be followed by three years internal exile. He was found guilty of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.²⁶ The other member, Andrei Tverdokholebov, was sentenced to five years internal exile.²⁷

Toward the end of 1975, when the Western media focused on human rights in the Soviet Union as a result of the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to Andrei Sakharov, Amnesty International decided to publish a major report, Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions. This report and its updated version published in 1980 dealt with Soviet law and practices, penal conditions, and the confinement of dissidents to psychiatric hospitals. The report was submitted to the Association of Soviet Jurists for comments on April 15th. A reply was received from L. Smirnov, the President of the Soviet Lawyers Association, who said the report was a "vulgar falsification and defamation on Soviet reality and socialist legitimacy (sic)."²⁸ Since the report was sent in August, the report could have been released, following Amnesty International's practice, any time after that. However, the release was delayed until later in the year when greater media attention was focused on the Soviet Union. As a result, according to Amnesty International's annual report for 1975-76, "unparalleled press attention was given to the report."

Other International Actions

Much of the international attention on human rights in the Soviet Union in 1975 centered on the Helsinki Agreement and the activities of Andrei Sakharov.

The Soviet Government's reaction to the signing of the Helsinki Agreement appeared to be one of increased pressure on all dissidents.²⁹ Vladimir Bukovsky, one of the dissidents who was later exchanged for the Chilean communist Luis Corvalan in 1976, said that conditions in prison worsened as soon as the Agreement was signed.³⁰

The Helsinki Agreement, which was later to be used by dissidents to justify their actions, was not received favorably by human rights activists in the West or the East. For example, after his release Bukovsky denounced the pact.³¹ In the United States critics of the Ford Administration accused the President of selling out to the Russians and denounced Henry Kissinger for ignoring the dissidents.³² The Soviet Union, on the other hand, gave considerable publicity to the Helsinki Agreement and frequently chided the Western media for not publishing the text of the Agreement in full.³³

Some Western European leaders, chafing under the criticism that the Helsinki Agreement prevented the West from being involved in the problems in the East, were led to rebut the charge. Denmark's Foreign Minister, K.B. Anderson, said, "It is being said in debate that at Helsinki we subscribed to the view that one should not interfere in other countries' affairs, but this is not true. We greatly stressed human rights, precisely because communist countries and Spain were present, and we insured that to obtain human rights for citizens in other countries is not interference."³⁴

The Swedish Foreign Minister, Sven Anderson, said, "Of course we respect each people's right to find their own way to a better society. But an increase in political oppression in a country threatens detente. Protesting against oppression may be one way of protecting detente...Many regimes of oppression consider that it is entirely their own affair how they treat their citizens. We do not support this view. Nor does the CSCE act adopted at the security conference."³⁵

Later, it was noted by Dante Fascell, chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, that the Helsinki Agreement was "eliciting an unexpected response inside Eastern Europe and the Soviet

Union and that response and not the action of Western governments has made Helsinki a catchword for concepts of civil liberty, religious freedom, and human rights in general."³⁶

However, there is little evidence that the Helsinki Agreement stimulated any immediate response from the dissidents or stirred them to form the so-called Helsinki monitoring groups. The first of these groups, which were to monitor the compliance of the Soviet Union in regard to the provisions of the Agreement, was not set up until May of 1976.³⁷ Therefore, the initial crackdown on dissidents in the Soviet Union was probably not a response to these efforts, but to other activities and events.

One of these events was the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Andrei Sakharov. News of the award was widely reported in the West with most comments being generally favorable. Complaining of the coverage Sakharov was receiving in the West and implying a conspiracy, Moscow's Literary Gazette said, "As though by arrangement Western commentators are glorifying Sakharov's humanism."³⁸ And perhaps it did look like a conspiracy. Sakharov was interviewed by the Observer in London,³⁹ by West German television,⁴⁰ by West German newspapers,⁴¹ by the Swedish broadcasting service,⁴² and by Italian newspapers.⁴³ In the United States The New York Times published articles on Sakharov.

Included in the campaign which supported the dissidents in the Soviet Union were the various communist parties of Western Europe. Both the French and Italian communist parties took stands reproaching the Soviet Union for its repression of dissidents. The head of the French Communist Party (PCF) publicly supported Leonid Plyusch, the Ukrainian

mathematician who was being held in a psychiatric hospital.⁴⁴ (Amnesty International had activated its members in its campaign against torture on behalf of Plyusch in November.)⁴⁵

The Soviet Response

The overall response of the Soviet Union to the increasing attention given to the dissidents was, as noted above, a crackdown on all dissidents. Other responses included a media campaign against the dissidents in general, against Andrei Sakharov in particular, and against the Western media.

When Sergei Kovalyev, one of the members of the Amnesty International adoption group in Moscow was tried, the USSR's First Deputy Minister of Justice, Aleksandr Sukharov, was prompted to make a statement. He said, Kovalyov "was not tried for his views, not for his convictions, not for being a dissident, as was alleged in Oslo by Mrs. Sakharov and later echoed in some other countries, but for quite definite overt hostile acts ...he produced and circulated viciously anti-Soviet printed matter and sent it to anti-Soviet centers abroad."⁴⁶

Among the activities of all the dissidents, those of Andrei Sakharov -- physicist and Academician -- apparently caused great concern among Soviet authorities. When Sakharov was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the Soviet Union began a media blitz to counter whatever effect the award might have had on the thinking of Soviet citizens and others. After the International Sakharov Hearings met in Copenhagen for three days to discuss human rights in the Soviet Union, the Soviet press said the Danish Government was condoning anti-Soviet propaganda.⁴⁷ TASS said that Sakharov had supported Chile's Pinochet, is an anti-patriot, and opposed peaceful coexistence.⁴⁸ The Literary Gazette said Sakharov

received his Nobel Prize for his perennial anti-Soviet propaganda. ¹⁶⁹ "One thing is certain," it said, "by presenting Sakharov with the Nobel Prize, imperialist reaction has made a political gesture testifying to a desire to kindle anti-Sovietism and sabotage the process of consolidating international peace."⁴⁹ Pravda called the award "a prize for anti-Sovietism" and noted that the award was criticized by the "world press," citing publications in Colombia, India, Belgium, West Berlin, and Cyprus.⁵⁰

In addition to the Soviet press campaign, the Nobel award was criticized by the Bulgarian, Czechoslovakian, and Polish media.

The Soviet press, in addition to its efforts to discredit Andrei Sakharov, attempted to portray the Western media as a vast "propaganda machine."⁵¹ It was said that the Western press, radio, and cinema "have been mobilized to mislead people...the air is literally saturated with all kinds of fabrications about the life of our country and of the fraternal countries of socialism."⁵² Singled out for criticism were the Voice of America (VOA) and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The VOA was criticized because it "frequently affords its microphones to reactionary emigre circles and to people originally from various republics and oblasts in the Soviet Union." The BBC was said to be coordinating "an offensive against the foundation of the Soviet system."⁵³

1976

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions

In 1976 Amnesty International cut back somewhat on the publicity aspect of its campaign with respect to the Soviet Union. Only two press releases were issued from its Secretariat during the year. However, the Organization maintained constant pressure on the Soviet Union through its membership. Each month its Newsletter dealt with some aspect of human rights in the Soviet Union. This compares to one Newsletter

article about Romania, none about Hungary, and five about Yugoslavia, for example. Its members were activated in five separate actions related to its "prisoner of the month" campaign and three times in its campaign against torture. In addition, a number of "urgent actions" were initiated. So, as in the previous year, Amnesty International maintained a year-round barrage of protests from its members directed at Soviet authorities. Its adoption groups, of course, continued to work for their individual prisoners.

During 1976 two dissidents were released from Soviet prisons. Leonid Plyusch arrived in Paris on January 12th after having been interned in a Soviet psychiatric hospital since 1973.⁵⁴ Plyusch was arrested in January of 1972 and spent some 18 months in detention before being transferred to the hospital. It had been speculated that Plyusch, because he was a member of a human rights group and had groups working on his behalf both within the Soviet Union and abroad, was singled out for particularly harsh treatment.⁵⁵

In working for Plyusch's release Amnesty International was not alone. In 1974 an organization called the International Committee of Mathematicians for the defense of Yury Shikhanovich and Leonid Plyusch (ICM) was formed. This group recruited members in 13 countries and initiated protests signed by mathematicians in several countries. Within the Soviet Union Andrei Sakharov and five others appealed to international humanitarian organizations to save Plyusch's life.⁵⁶ The ICM designated April 23, 1975 as International-Plyusch Day and held a joint press conference with Amnesty International in Paris. Amnesty International also held an international symposium on the use of psychiatry for political purposes in Geneva to focus additional publicity on the subject.⁵⁷

There doesn't seem to be much doubt that the international campaign on behalf of Plyusch in which Amnesty International participated was a vital factor in the decision reached by Soviet authorities to release him. But the campaign produced a reaction in the Soviet Union. According to the authors of Psychiatric Terror: How Soviet Psychiatry is Used to Suppress Dissent, Plyusch's release was part of a plan to release all the dissidents in psychiatric hospitals who were well known in the West. "In mid-1976," these authors wrote, "there were no dissenters interned who were well known in the West, and relatively few...who were moderately known."⁵⁸

The other dissident released from Soviet prisons in 1976 was Vladimir Bukovsky, who was exchanged for the Chilean communist, Luis Corvalan. It was at a press conference sponsored by Amnesty International that Bukovsky denounced the Helsinki Agreement.⁵⁹ On the 21st of December Amnesty International issued a press release welcoming the release of both Bukovsky and Corvalan.⁶⁰

The Soviet Response

The dissatisfaction of the Soviet Union with the Western human rights campaign and the attention paid to dissidents led the Soviet Government to counter the arguments made in the West. The main focus of this countercampaign centered on the dissidents, their supporters, and the Western Media.

As part of the strategy to discredit the dissidents the Soviet Union's First Deputy Minister of Justice, Aleksandr Sukharov, gave the Soviet point of view in an interview with the publication, New Times. The interview was also distributed by TASS. As Sukharov saw it,

the Western press was involved in an organized offensive which began immediately after Helsinki. He indicated that there are no political prisoners in the Soviet Union and defended Soviet law. He said further:

First, for many years now I have been directly involved in the administration of justice, but I had never seen or heard and still do not know of a single Soviet law under which citizens could be prosecuted because of their political views. We are Marxists and any such law would run counter to the basic principles of our philosophy...the very concept "political prisoner" is nonexistent in our country. Our code of laws contains a section dealing with crimes against the state, that is, crimes aimed at undermining or weakening the Soviet state and social system. These crimes are treason, espionage, terrorist acts, and sabotage, slanderous propaganda. In 1963 propaganda of war was added to the list.

...the actions of the individuals who are prosecuted now for their criminal activity, in particular for agitation and propaganda aimed at undermining the existing system, also have a political tinge. But these people are being penalized not for being dissidents, they are liable for prosecution...for definite anti-Soviet actions, for voluntarily aiding subversive centers abroad. 61

Sukharov denied that there are secret camps for political prisoners calling the allegations fabrications. And, in a pattern that was repeated by other Soviet commentators, Sukharov pointed to the contradictions between the East and West over economic and social rights.

He said:

You can talk as much as you want about human rights, but if a person lacks work and means of livelihood, if he cannot find shelter, if society does not give his children an education and provide his family with the most urgent needed medical aid, then society can hardly expect him to be endowed with civic virtues. 62

The Soviet media, to counter the charges that dissidents were placed in psychiatric hospitals to be punished portrayed them as actually being mentally ill. For example, a TASS statement concerning several dissidents said Victor Fainberg was found mentally ill by British psychiatrists; Aleksei Tumerman was treated by Israeli psychiatrists; Lev Konstantinov was in the hands of Austrian doctors and Valery

Tarsis was treated for schizophrenia in the United States and Europe "to no avail."⁶³

The strongest and most consistent comments by the Soviet media were directed at their Western counterparts. Virtually no segment of the Western press was untouched by Soviet criticism. A Pravda article dealt with the anti-Sovietism of the British press.⁶⁴ The Literary Gazette was critical of the Voice of America for broadcasting a story about Freedom House's annual Survey of Freedom.⁶⁵ A Radio Moscow broadcast to France said the French mass media were poisoning relations between the USSR and France because of its reporting on Leonid Plyusch.⁶⁶ Another Radio Moscow broadcast to Germany criticized West German television for a story on the KGB.⁶⁷ Canadian radio broadcasts were singled out in Trud which said, "The authors of the Canadian radio broadcasts show particularly touching concern about all sorts of renegades, who are called 'dissidents' in the West, and gloat over individual critical remarks in the Soviet press...they are interfering in our country's internal affairs."⁶⁸

After the emigre author, Solzhenitsyn, was interviewed by the BBC, Radio Moscow retorted that "the real credo of the BBC's foreign service ...is to sow enmity and mistrust between nations...that is why Solzhenitsyn himself has become such a frequent guest speaker on the BBC." It went on to say that the BBC's activities contradicted Britain's obligations to implement the Helsinki Agreement.⁶⁹

Deutsche Welle, the German broadcasting service, was also attacked. The Soviet publication, Sovetskaya Belorussiya, said:

Radio stations in a number of Western states which beam transmissions in the national language of socialist countries have today become one of the channels of ideological subversion and an instrument for lies and misinformation. 70

In response to the Western media's attention to Vladimir Bukovsky, the Soviet media reacted as it did to Andrei Sakharov the year before -- it began a campaign to discredit him. An account of an Izvestiya article was distributed by TASS:

Today's Izvestiya writes that Bukovsky has not enriched any sphere of human knowledge and spirit, has not written a single book, has not made any scientific discoveries for the simple reason that he graduated a secondary school with difficulties and was expelled from the first course of university for complete incapability for studies...Who is he? He is a semiliterate person who is morbidly vain and is trying to compensate for his intellectual inferiority and to establish himself with the use of extremism, provocative sorties, open hooliganism. 71

With such statements supporters of Bukovsky, such as Amnesty International, are by implication also discredited. Similarly, in another instance, Radio Moscow noted that Amnesty International had "taken up the cudgels in defense of a certain Svyatoslav Karavansky. A poor choice that, for the man is a convicted war criminal."72

The criticism of individual broadcasting facilities and the press was supplemented by Soviet attacks on the principles of freedom of information. It was noted that many countries had adopted special decrees "which reject the idea of absolute, abstract freedom in the dissemination of news."73 TASS called the activities of the Western media "information imperialism" which clings to cold war positions and interferes in the internal affairs of the socialist countries.74

This attack on the principle of freedom of information by the Soviet Union lent support for the New World Order for Information which is being demanded by a number of third world countries. At a UNESCO conference in 1976 the Soviet Union submitted a draft declaration dealing with the control of information. Rosemary Righter has said that the draft declara-

tion "justified governmental control of all media, domestic and foreign; exposed foreign correspondents to the possibility of reprisals for material published by their organizations, whether or not written by them; and made governments responsible, conversely, for the worldwide activities of news media based in their countries."⁷⁵

Implementation of such a declaration would significantly inhibit the work of Amnesty International which relies to a great extent on the media for information and for airing its findings in its attempt to influence world opinion. If the Soviet Union were to undertake such measures on a systematic basis on its own, it would undoubtedly be considered in the West as a blatant violation of the Helsinki Agreement.

Part of that Agreement deals with breaking down barriers to the freer movement of ideas, persons, and information. However, Western broadcasts dealing with human rights in the Soviet Union are generally considered by Soviet authorities to be interference in the country's internal affairs. One Western government's response to this charge is that the Helsinki Agreement speaks of non-intervention and not non-interference. "Intervention is more limited in scope and refers only to armed intervention, coercion, or violent subversion. Interference on the other hand does not necessarily involve violence or coercion, but can also take place through diplomatic channels or radio broadcasts, for example...the Final Act, after all, is a series of mutual pledges which would become meaningless if the parties were not permitted to remind one another of them."⁷⁶

The free flow of information which is vital to Amnesty International's work is also a central point of contention between the East and the West. The Soviet Union's attacks on Western radio broadcasts are not based on an abstract principle; the Soviet Government considers these broadcasts to be a key factor in the perpetuation of the dissident movement. It is

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estimated that between four and five million persons in the Soviet Union listen to Radio Liberty.⁷⁷ Vladimir Bukovsky has said that while in prison he listened to Radio Liberty on a makeshift radio built secretly by prisoners. Other dissidents have testified that various groups set up to monitor compliance with the Helsinki Agreement learned about each other through Radio Free Europe.⁷⁸

The problem of Western radio broadcasts is considered so serious by the Soviet Government that in June of 1976 Leonid Brezhnev personally attacked Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.⁷⁹ Brezhnev told the East Berlin Conference of European Communist Parties that "the very existence of such stations poisons the international atmosphere and is a direct challenge to the spirit and letter of the Helsinki Accords. The Soviet Union resolutely comes out for the termination of the operation of these instruments of psychological 'warfare'."⁸⁰

Interestingly, the Soviet Union was not averse to using its own brand of psychological warfare with respect to the situation in Chile. Throughout 1976 the Soviet media showered a steady stream of vilification toward the Chilean regime and publicized campaigns to free political prisoners, particularly communist political prisoners. In one TASS dispatch it was noted that a campaign conducted against Chile for three years needed to draw millions more people into it. "Some time ago," the dispatch said, "a mass campaign was launched in the GDR...Now a stream of solidarity postcards addressed to Luis Corvalan...is going from the Soviet Union to Chile."⁸¹ Ironically, when Bukovsky was exchanged for Corvalan, TASS proclaimed that Chilean authorities were "forced under the pressure of world opinion to release Corvalan and deport him from Chile."⁸²

To justify its actions with respect to human rights in other countries the Soviet Minister of Justice, Vladimir Teribilov, said that the Soviet Union

abides by everything in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that since it complies with the obligations under international pacts on human rights "the Soviet Union can righteously demand the same from all the states signatories of these pacts."⁸³ Presumably, according to the Soviet view, since Western states do not comply with their obligations under these human rights instruments, they therefore cannot demand compliance from the Soviet Union.

1977

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions

With the onset of the new year and the highly publicized initiatives taken by the Carter Administration, Amnesty International appeared to soft-pedal its own publicity regarding human rights in the Soviet Union and tended to concentrate on actions taken by its members. Only three press releases were issued during the year by the International Secretariat concerning the Soviet Union. One was issued in January expressing concern over the questioning of one of Amnesty International's Moscow adoption group members.

However, this lower level of publicity was still greater than that relating to other countries in Eastern Europe. During 1977 one press release was directed at Czechoslovakia, one at the GDR, and one at Romania.

The Organization also generated a certain amount of publicity about the Soviet Union through its Newsletter. Nine issues during the year included items about the Soviet Union.

Amnesty International's groups were activated in "prisoner of the month" campaigns in April, July, October, and December. Twice -- in February and October -- members sent protests to the Soviet Union as

part of Amnesty International's campaign against torture. In contrast, the only other "prisoner of the month" campaign directed toward Eastern Europe concerned prisoners in Yugoslavia (three times) and Bulgaria (once). One appeal against torture was directed toward Poland.

During the year a number of events relating to human rights in the Soviet Union and to Amnesty International's work took place. First, the Carter Administration began its outspoken criticism of the Soviet Union's treatment of dissidents. Second, a number of dissidents, well known in the West, were arrested. Third, the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) held its congress in Honolulu and discussed the question of psychiatric abuse. Fourth, the follow-up Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to review the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act was held in Belgrade.

With all of the publicity focused on the human rights situation in the Soviet Union as a result of the initiatives taken by the Carter Administration (as discussed below), it would seem reasonable to assume that Amnesty International should have taken advantage of the situation. However, there would have been certain disadvantages to doing so. First, it would have appeared that the Organization was simply following the lead of the United States. Presumably, to avoid the appearance of being a pawn of U.S. foreign policy, the Organization opted for a lower profile. Second, given the lack of enthusiasm for Carter's activist policy among the Western European states, any major campaign by the Organization at that time would not have received support from that quarter. In addition, the Organization apparently wanted to avoid becoming too entangled in superpower politics.

Amnesty International did, however, have its groups work on the cases of all those Helsinki monitors who were arrested and distributed

literature about them.⁸⁴ It also continued to adopt new prisoners of conscience, with Protestant religious believers comprising most of the new adoptees. Special attention was given to a special regime labor camp in Mordovia where conditions were said to have been particularly harsh.⁸⁵

Late in 1977 Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. At about the time of the award ceremony the Organization held an International Conference on the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Stockholm to which it had invited Andrei Sakharov to deliver a statement. Although Sakharov was not allowed to leave the Soviet Union, his statement was submitted to the conference and was widely publicized.⁸⁶ Since this was strictly an Amnesty International event, the invitation to Sakharov could not be interpreted as an action taken on behalf of United States policy.

Amnesty International also continued to work on matters relating to psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union. In January the Organization activated its members as part of its campaign against torture on behalf of Vladimir Borisov who was arrested in December, 1976 and confined to a psychiatric hospital. Borisov had previously been confined to psychiatric hospitals from 1965 to 1968 and from 1969 to 1974.⁸⁷ He was subsequently released in March.⁸⁸

During the World Psychiatric Congress held in Honolulu, Amnesty International provided material to the participants concerning the use of psychiatry for political purposes.⁸⁹ Prior to the Congress Amnesty International issued a press release announcing that a new samizdat publication reached the Organization.⁹⁰ The publication, a 265-page manuscript entitled, Punitive Medicine, was written by Alexander Podrabinek, a member of a group formed in Moscow called the Working Commission on the

Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes. Podrabinek was detained for 15 days in March for his activities with this group.⁹¹ He was subsequently rearrested in 1978 and sentenced to five years internal exile in connection with his book.⁹²

Other International Actions

International actions concerning human rights in the Soviet Union in 1977 tended to be connected to the moves made by the new Carter Administration in the United States.

Soon after his inauguration Jimmy Carter received a letter from the Soviet dissident, Andrei Sakharov. Since Carter had, during the election campaign, stressed human rights and had criticized President Ford for refusing to receive Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, it was not politically possible for him not to reply to Sakharov's letter.⁹³ Sakharov had asked Carter for help concerning several political prisoners.⁹⁴ When Carter responded to Sakharov's letter, the Soviet Union reacted vigorously. Georgi Arbatov, Director of the USA Institute in Moscow, called the Administration's human rights policy a calculated anti-Soviet campaign.⁹⁵ In March, in a speech to the 16th Congress of Trade Unions in Moscow, Leonid Brezhnev was highly critical of Carter's support for Soviet dissidents. The Communist Party newspaper, Pravda, warned that Carter's support of the dissidents could diminish the prospects for an arms limitation agreement.⁹⁶

Despite Carter's stand the Soviet Union continued its crackdown on the dissidents. Members of the Helsinki Watch groups in Moscow and the Ukraine were arrested in February.⁹⁷ In response to the arrests the United States State Department said it had informed the Soviet Embassy of its concern over the arrest of Yuri Orlov, the head of the Moscow Helsinki Watch group. In addition, the United States delegate to the

United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) proposed that that body investigate Orlov's case.⁹⁸ When the issue was raised at the UNCHR the Soviet representative to the commission said, "The Soviet delegation expressed surprise at the statement of the U.S. representative since the commission could not examine questions relating to the domestic competence of the Soviet state...the discussion of questions concerning USSR internal affairs would contradict point 7, Article 2 of the UN Charter and also the tasks of the commission itself."⁹⁹

The battle between the United States and the Soviet Union over the dissidents boiled over into other areas. The United States expelled a TASS correspondent after the Soviet Union expelled an Associated Press correspondent. The AP correspondent, George Krimsky, had made many contacts with Soviet dissidents and was the first to be expelled in seven years.¹⁰⁰

In Washington the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe held a series of hearings on the implementation of the Helsinki Accords. Witnesses included Vladimir Bukovsky, a former Soviet political prisoner, Lyudmila Alexeyeva, a former member of one of the Soviet Helsinki Watch groups, as well as other Soviet dissidents and emigres. The commission also received reports from the various Helsinki Watch groups (formally called the Public Groups to Promote Observance of the Helsinki Agreements in the USSR), published English translations, and distributed them to all of the members of Congress and to the embassies of the other 34 countries that signed the Helsinki Agreement.¹⁰¹

Western European governments were not eager to jump on the Carter bandwagon concerning human rights in the Soviet Union. The French Government, following the principle of noninterference in another nation's

internal affairs, generally refused to take public positions on specific cases of repression either in the East or the West.¹⁰² French Government officials on one occasion refused to see the exiled dissident, Andrei Amalrik, indicating that France would not reasonably jeopardize its good relations with Moscow, especially since Leonid Brezhnev was scheduled to visit France.¹⁰³

The British were also cautious about protesting human rights violations in the Soviet Union. David Owen, British Foreign Secretary, said the emphasis should be on measures that stood a chance of being effective, rather than provoking counterproductive reactions. He also pointed out that the Government could not be counted on to fully echo the views of the dissidents.¹⁰⁴

The Austrian Chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, tried to take a balanced view saying that human rights must be observed not only in the East bloc, but in Western countries as well. He cited Argentina as an example.¹⁰⁵

In Switzerland the Swiss military Department was said to be skeptical of Carter's human rights policy since it had conflicting effects and that the situation of the dissidents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had visibly worsened.¹⁰⁶

And, as was noted above, Germany's Helmut Schmidt was sharply critical of Carter's outspoken support of the Soviet dissidents.

This difference in approach concerning human rights in the Soviet Union carried over to the Belgrade Conference which was to review the implementation of the Helsinki Agreement. Although there was not any substantive agreement between the parties in attendance, the human rights of Soviet dissidents was an issue of contention at the conference. The United States delegates "explained to the Soviet authorities that the pattern of increased harassment, arrests, and trial inevitably will

affect the climate of our relations."¹⁰⁷ In addition, the American delegation and some of the smaller Western European countries brought up specific cases of individual prisoners at the Conference.¹⁰⁸ Whether Amnesty International provided the information on individual cases could not be determined. However, the process by which these names are known in the West is the same whether Amnesty International or some other organization is the conduit for information coming out of the Soviet Union. The information originates from Western correspondents, diplomats, travelers, or from one of the various dissident groups in the Soviet Union. It is then reported by the Western media and/or delivered to organizations such as Amnesty International or to governmental bodies such as the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Soviet Response

Throughout 1977 the Soviet Union continued to accuse the Western media of a slander campaign, criticized the human rights violations in the West, defended its own human rights record and stance, and attempted to discredit the dissidents and their supporters.

The Soviet reaction to the activities surrounding the World Psychiatric Association's meeting in Honolulu asserted that a slander campaign was being conducted. TASS commented:

From time to time the Western press conducts slander campaigns against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, alleging that...psychiatry is used to suppress dissidents...the new slander campaign is timed to coincide with the current world congress of psychiatrists which is being held in Honolulu. 109

The TASS commentary went on to say that the campaign was launched by Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.

Amnesty International also came in for some criticism. An article in the Literary Gazette entitled, "Human Rights and Washington Speculators," noted that:

The organization's official mission is to defend human rights, assist political prisoners and the victims of racist repressions and expose torture and lawless actions in prisons and concentration camps. But "Amnesty International's" highly noble facade camouflages a thoroughly clandestine underground of political saboteurs.

A certain Soviet Coordinating Group No. 11 operates on 8th Avenue in New York under the aegis of "Amnesty International." The conspirators from 8th Avenue manufacture slanderous publications about the Soviet Union and supply the local bourgeois press with them, and furthermore attempt to smuggle their "output" across Soviet borders...

It appears ...that you people in "Amnesty International" do not care about the sufferings of prisoners in American jails, the brutal treatment of people or the beatings and arrests of strikers and demonstrators for peace. So why are you cultivating demagoguery about human rights? 110

When Amnesty International was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, Radio Moscow saw this simply as "an episode" in the West's human rights campaign and implied that the Organization had connections with Western intelligence services. The text of the broadcast follows:

The Western news agencies were prompt to report that the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to Amnesty International. The scenario of these public shows has now become trite. There is no doubt that this is only an episode in the vast campaign being conducted by Western circles. The last thing this campaign garnished with slogans about the defense of human rights is concerned with is their actual defense.

It is worth recalling what has been said on the matter by Amnesty International itself, particularly by its founder-president, lawyer Peter Benenson. The London Observer once quoted him as saying that he was convinced that his body was actively used by the Western secret services for anti-democratic

purposes. And the New Statesman has published reports on the connection between various members of the organization and the CIA.

If the bourgeois propaganda machine now gives publicity to the supposedly non-political body, it therefore does so for well-defined political reasons. Reactionary circles pleased precisely with those aspects of Amnesty International's activities which even leading Western jurists themselves have described as notoriously wrong interpretations of the laws of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries -- in other words, as a distortion of the real situation in those countries. And it is precisely this that is at the root of the noisy campaign launched by the West on the human rights issue. 111

While Amnesty International was singled out in the article cited above, the Soviet media generally referred to "subversive centers" abroad or "anti-Soviet" elements without specifying to whom they were referring. In one TASS dispatch dealing with the American press it was said that:

Certain elements in the USA cannot give up their strange addiction to the so-called Soviet dissidents. The pages of the American bourgeois press are now full of the name of a certain Shcharansky, who is alleged to be persecuted in the USSR for his persuasions. 112

The Western campaign, while deplored by the Soviet authorities, did however, prompt the publication of articles dealing with human rights and the Soviet rationale for its practices. Writing in Izvestiya K. Gutsenko, listed as the Director of Juridical Sciences, reviewed what he called the "noisy cacophony of anti-Sovietism."¹¹³ He noted that the first campaign concentrated on emigration from the Soviet Union. Second, it focused on the persecution of dissidents and their confinement in psychiatric hospitals. And third, the Soviets were accused of repressing opposition in violation of the Helsinki Agreement and other international covenants. He defended Soviet practice by saying:

The criminal codes of punishments for composing and deliberately spreading distorted facts, for the dissemination of written works, recordings, images, and reproductions for defaming the nation, the republic, constitutional institutions and the armed forces, and so on and so forth can be found in the criminal codes of many different countries.

These states have also signed the international pact, Article 19 of which speaks of the right of each to freely express his opinion. They have signed it proceeding from the premise that there is not and cannot be absolutely unlimited freedom. It is no accident that point 3 of this article writes directly that enjoyment of this freedom "imposes special duties and special responsibility" and that "it...may consequently be linked to certain restrictions which, however, must be established by law and be necessary: a) to respect the rights of other persons; b) to preserve state security, social order, and the health or morality of the population. 114

To further illustrate the need for restrictions on freedom of expression, Gutsenko cited a paragraph from Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which says in part:

2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions, or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity, or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary. 115

It is true that articles of various international agreements dealing with freedom of expression state both the freedom involved and the restrictions associated with that freedom. However, whereas the Western states tend to accentuate the freedom, the Eastern states focus on the restrictions. As with most freedoms there is a balance between the rights of the individual and the rights of society. In

the Soviet Union, however, the rights of society are equated with the rights of the state which has priority. The idea of balance is not considered a pertinent concept.

As in other years, as part of its countercampaign, the Soviet media denigrated the actions and character of the dissidents. In regard to a Leningrad dissident poet, Yuliya Vosnesenskaya, TASS said she never engaged in any literary activity, had no job, was a heavy drinker and housed drug addicts, drunkards, hoodlums, and ex-convicts.¹¹⁶ In an attempt to connect the dissidents with foreign subversive activities TASS said that the dissidents were paid by Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty.¹¹⁷ Anatoly Shcharansky was depicted as a Zionist traitor. TASS reported:

Of late, Zionist organizations in the West have been going out of their way to blow up an anti-Soviet campaign over the case of the traitor Anatoly Shcharansky. Special gatherings have been staged in Washington, Paris, The Hague, Hamburg, and Oslo at which he is portrayed as an innocent victim of arbitrariness, a simple Jewish civil rights champion. ¹¹⁸

1978

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions

During 1978 Amnesty International's groups worked on over 300 adoption and investigation cases and participated in an international campaign on behalf of imprisoned Protestant religious believers. Other categories of prisoners for whom the Organization worked included those confined to psychiatric hospitals for political reasons, persons belonging to unofficial workers groups, conscientious objectors, and of course, imprisoned Helsinki monitors.¹¹⁹

Throughout 1978 the activities of Amnesty International tended to supplement the Western governmental actions and the role played by the media. In May, when trials of dissidents started, Amnesty International

denounced the outcome of the Orlov trial and shortly after published seven issues of the samizdat publication, A Chronicle of Current Events. In July the Organization issued a statement on the official repression of dissidents in the Soviet Union. It also publicized problems connected with human rights in the Soviet Union in nine monthly issues of its Newsletter. At least four times during the year the Organization activated its membership to participate in its campaign against torture on behalf of political prisoners in the Soviet Union. In September it designated a Soviet prisoner as "prisoner of the month." During the year it issued five press releases concerning the Soviet Union. In contrast, only two were directed at other Eastern European countries. One involved the detention of an Amnesty International representative in Czechoslovakia and the other announced the beginning of a worldwide campaign on behalf of political prisoners in Romania. Virtually no public actions were taken in regard to Hungary and little attention was paid to Bulgaria, the GDR, and Poland.

Other International Actions

The major events relating to human rights in the Soviet Union during 1978 were the trials of a number of well known dissidents. Perhaps the best known were: Alexander Ginzburg, who was arrested in February, 1977; Yuri Orlov, also arrested in February, 1977; and Anatoly Shcharansky, arrested in March, 1977.¹²⁰ Amnesty International had requested permission to send observers to the trials of these dissidents, but never received a reply from Soviet authorities.¹²¹

Orlov was convicted in May, 1978 for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda (Article 70 of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic

Criminal Code) and sentenced to seven years in a labor camp and five years in exile.¹²² Ginzburg was sentenced for the same offense to eight years in a labor camp.¹²³ Shcharansky was convicted of treason, espionage, and anti-Soviet agitation and sentenced to a total of 13 years in prison.¹²⁴

These trials and others produced an unprecedented massive reaction in the West. Private organizations, individuals, Western governments, and Western European communist parties all protested the trials.

In the United States the trials and sentences prompted numerous protests. Scientists canceled trips to the Soviet Union as did the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to protest the sentence of Yuri Orlov.¹²⁵ The United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Malcolm Toon, said that U.S.-Soviet relations would be affected by the treatment of Shcharansky.¹²⁶ During the trials the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation held hearings devoted specifically to the problems of the Helsinki monitors in the Soviet Union. After Shcharansky was convicted, President Carter strongly condemned the sentence.¹²⁷ In addition, a group of more than 200 law professors in the United States sent a petition to Leonid Brezhnev protesting the trial, conviction, and sentence of Yuri Orlov.¹²⁸ Several U.S. lawyers were involved in attempts to provide legal representation for the dissidents, but were denied the opportunity by Soviet authorities.¹²⁹

In Europe there were also numerous protests. In Sweden about 50 physicists appealed to Soviet President Brezhnev to release Yuri Orlov. The Swedish section of Amnesty International was said to have initiated a campaign for Orlov's release.¹³⁰

The British Foreign Secretary, David Owen, in contrast to his stance the year before, condemned the seven-year sentence imposed on Orlov. He said the sentence has "harsh and unjustified" and that "the Soviet

Government has acted in disregard of the provisions of the Helsinki Agreement...Public opinion in many countries will wonder about the meaning of detente, Western governments rightly have to take account of that public reaction in their dealings with the Soviet Union."¹³¹

Later the British Foreign Secretary said, "The British Government have repeatedly warned the Soviet Government of the consequences which their handling of such cases could have for the atmosphere of their relations with the United Kingdom and for their chances of making progress on vital issues in East-West relations generally."¹³²

The West German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, expressed his "deep concern" over the trials and said they must stop.¹³³ The West German Government also issued a statement expressing its concern "that to an increasing extent in the recent past measures have been taken against citizens of the Soviet Union, the CSSR as well as against those of the GDR who claim for themselves the rights of freedom of expression and conscience."¹³⁴

In France the French Communist Party (PCF) asked that Aleksandr Ginzburg and Anatoly Shcharansky be released.¹³⁵ A statement issued by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs said, "The trials which are... taking place in the USSR can only give rise to serious anxiety particularly in that respect of human rights and of fundamental liberties to which France is attached constitute one of the bases of a profound improvement of the relations between states."¹³⁶

The Danish Government also expressed its concern over the trials¹³⁷ as did the Italian, Norweigan, Canadian, and Dutch Governments.¹³⁸ The nine member states of the EEC issued a statement which said in part:

As signatories to the Helsinki Final Act the governments of the Nine are entitled to express their apprehension over measures of oppression as increasingly applied by the Soviet Union and some other states against citizens making use of their right to freedom of conscience and opinion.¹³⁹

The Soviet Response

In addition to the governmental actions that were taken in the West, the trials were widely covered by the Western media. The Soviet response to the massive protests in the West was to continue to discredit the Western media, the dissidents, and certain anti-Soviet groups. A TASS account of a Washington press conference, where Anatoly Shcharansky's wife made an appeal, noted derisively:

The floor is now given to Madame Shcharanskaya ...the audience applauds, cameras whir and newsmen present in the hall hastily produce their notebooks. The curtain goes up on another anti-Soviet show in which the lead part is played by an Israeli citizen who calls herself Avital Shcharanskaya. Within hours, reports on this "outstanding" event would fill the air and papers of the American press.

To make this propaganda show more effective, professional anti-Sovietees from various Zionist organizations who orchestrated it make use of local and visiting luminaries. ¹⁴⁰

A Radio Moscow broadcast aimed at discrediting the Western press said that 800 journalists around the world work for the CIA. "By publishing inspired slanderous inventions about the socialist countries," the broadcast went on, "the so-called free mass media in the West have as much as admitted that they are manipulated to serve unseemly objectives. Given the latest disclosures, they are now deprived of the latest pretense of posing as defenders of human rights and the principles on which the Helsinki agreements are formulated."¹⁴¹

In response to Western criticism of the trial of Yuri Orlov,

TASS said:

The London initiators of anti-Soviet smear campaigns do not want to calm down. The pretext for another clamour of this kind was the Moscow trial of a certain Orlov...What a lot rubbish did the self-styled "lawyers" of this anti-Sovieteer pile up! Malicious concoctions on "violations of human rights" allegedly occurring in the USSR alternate with fabrications on a "persecution of dissidents" and hypocritical complaints concerning "undemocratic" judicial procedure.

...Strange though it may seem the British Foreign Office also joined this unsavory clamour, alleging that all that it is concerned about is fulfillment of the Helsinki accords and that it is "worried" over the trial in Moscow. 142

This statement could have been aimed at Amnesty International or some other organization. However, the meaning of the message would not be lost on any group working on behalf of dissidents in the Soviet Union.

As with the Orlov trial, Western concern over Shcharansky's trial produced a Soviet counter reaction. Radio Moscow called the Western uproar political blackmail. In a broadcast to Poland it said:

A long time before the trial began, a campaign without precedent started in the United States over Shcharansky. Those participating in this campaign -- and this includes U.S. officials and the President himself -- are attempting to impose on world public opinion their warped viewpoint regarding the case...attempts are being made at present to exert pressure on the Soviet Judiciary, and this is unacceptable.

...the unprecedented hullabaloo which was started in the United States over Shcharansky's case, as well as over a number of cases concerning other people who have broken Soviet laws, is beginning to look like real political blackmail against the Soviet Union. Threats to use economic sanctions are being made, scientific contacts between the United States and the Soviet Union are being limited, and hints are being dropped

that there might be difficulties with detente in general...Political blackmail is totally unacceptable...¹⁴³

Thus, despite the widespread protests in the West, there was little change in Soviet attitudes during 1978.

1979

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions

There was also little change in Amnesty International's activities during 1979. The Organization continued to work for the same categories of political prisoners as in the previous year. The number of adoption and investigation cases increased to about 350. As the international attention that had focused on the Soviet Union in 1978 began to wane, Amnesty International appeared to increase its public activities relating to human rights in the Soviet Union. During 1979 it issued four press releases. On May 16th it published translations of reports on the trials of 12 convicted human rights activists.¹⁴⁴ In June, on the first anniversary of the trials of the Helsinki monitors, another press release said the Organization knew of 321 persons who were imprisoned, exiled, or in some way deprived of their liberty in the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁵ In July Amnesty International cabled Leonid Brezhnev to commute the death sentences of four persons, as part of its general campaign against the death penalty.¹⁴⁶

In September -- in what apparently was the first time the Organization made a submission to a United Nations body concerning the Soviet Union -- Amnesty International made an oral presentation to the UN's Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities concerning the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union and

Romania.¹⁴⁷ Following up this action the Organization issued a paper in November detailing 20 new cases of psychiatric abuse in the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁸

Perhaps the most significant action taken by Amnesty International during the year was the issuance of an open letter to Soviet President, Leonid Brezhnev, calling for the unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union and the announcement that an updated report on human rights in the Soviet Union would be published in April, 1980.¹⁴⁹ Part of Amnesty International's strategy as well as the reactions to previous efforts of the Organization by the Soviet Union are revealed in the open letter. Amnesty International said:

As is our practice in such campaigns, we shall address ourselves not only to government authorities in the USSR, but also to governments, political parties, individuals and institutions around the world who are thought to have any capacity for persuading your government to meet its international human rights obligations. We include among these institutions, of course, the International Olympic Committees in the countries where Amnesty International has members.

Your government has repeatedly denied that there is political imprisonment in the USSR. When Amnesty International and other organizations have asked for the release of prisoners in the USSR who had been imprisoned for the nonviolent exercise of their rights, your government has invariably either ignored our appeals or said that the prisoners named were imprisoned for some other reason than the exercise of their rights. 150

At the end of 1979 and the beginning of 1980, according to Amnesty International, the Soviet Union began a nationwide crackdown on all dissidents.¹⁵¹ In January of 1980 the Soviet Government exiled Andrei Sakharov to the city of Gorky. Up to that time, because of his fame in the Soviet Union and the West, Sakharov enjoyed a degree of immunity

from Soviet reprisals. Apparently, however, the Soviet authorities felt his activities could no longer be tolerated. The expected increase of foreign correspondents that would be in Moscow to cover the Olympic games was undoubtedly another factor.

When Amnesty International published its second edition of the report, Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions, in April of 1980, the introduction to the report said:

During the past four years the abuses documented in the first edition of this report have remained part of the official practice in the USSR... Amnesty International still has not heard of a single case in which a Soviet court has acquitted someone charged with political or religious offences... It was in view of the continuation of regular violations of Soviet citizens' rights that Amnesty International decided to publish a second edition of the report... 152

Another event relating to human rights in the Soviet Union during 1979 was the release of 10 dissidents from Soviet prisons. Five Jewish "refuseniks" were released to the West. They had been convicted in 1979 for an attempted hijacking. Five other prisoners, human rights activists, were exchanged for two Soviet spies who were imprisoned in the United States.¹⁵³ Shortly after these releases one of the human rights activists, Aleksandr Ginzburg, appeared before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and testified on the human rights situation in the USSR.¹⁵⁴

The Soviet Response

When Amnesty International issued its open letter a TASS report said this was another attempt to defame the Soviet Union:

The organization "Amnesty International" has circulated an "open letter" which for the umpteenth time deals with the topic of human rights in the Soviet

Union. When you get some way into this long "letter," you begin to wonder what, in this instance, was the reason -- so to speak -- for its appearance? Somewhere near the end this becomes clear. The reason was...the approach of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow.

The authors of the "letter" report their intention to get in contact with the International Olympic Committee and the national Olympic committees of various countries in order to use the Moscow games as a way of "informing" the international public. Republication in April, 1980 of the five-year old "Revised and augmented report on the human rights situation in the USSR" is also announced.

Thus, we have a very serious attempt to defame the Soviet Union on the eve of the Olympics by means of the most flagrant misinformation. It is also very obvious why it is precisely next year's Olympic Games that have been chosen as the target for the renewal of the noisy campaign of slander, which has already more than once boomeranged on its organizers and inspirers. During the period of the 1980 Olympics, Moscow and other Soviet cities will be visited by hundreds of thousands of Western tourists, many of whom will be able for the first time in their lives to see on the spot the real achievements of advanced socialism. And millions of people in the West will become acquainted with Soviet reality for the first time, when they watch the Olympic programs on the screens of their television set.

The organizers of the new wave of speculative anti-Soviet fabrications on a well-known theme are striving to impose on the Western public in advance tendentious, prejudiced attitudes to everything Soviet and to sow among prospective guests of the Olympic Games in Moscow the seeds of unfriendliness, distrust, and suspicion with regard to Soviet people.

Among the people who regard themselves as members of Amnesty International there are probably some who sincerely believe that they are working for a just cause. It is precisely in order to attract such people that Amnesty, along with its vigorous anti-Soviet activities, from time to time issues exposures of the activities of Pinochet and dictators of his kind. But its chief and determined

purpose is to find various ways of discrediting socialism and its real achievements among which is the real safeguarding and guaranteeing of human rights and freedoms. As regards the hypocritical propaganda pharisaically termed the "fight for human rights," that is in fact nothing but a ramified campaign of ideological subversion against the world socialist system, and primarily against the Soviet Union. And the "open letter" circulated by Amnesty International is an integral part of that campaign. 155

In addition to responding to Amnesty International's open letter, the Soviet media continued its themes of discrediting the dissidents and their supporters and condemned human rights violations in the West. In one area the Soviet Union stepped up its attack. It gave increased emphasis to United States' support for "repressive regimes" citing the examples of Israel, South Korea and "Latin American repressive regimes."¹⁵⁶

In an attack on the United States a Radio Moscow broadcast said:

The American administration is lecturing the whole world on human rights while it is actively supporting the world's most reactionary regimes whose leaders are stained with the blood of their own people and where the jails are full of innocent victims. 157

However, the major attack appeared to be reserved, as in the past, for the Western media. Part of the Soviet strategy, in its attack on the Western press, was to gain the support of third world countries. In reporting on the International Conference on Problems of Mass Media in countries of Asia and Oceania (which was held in Kuala Lumpur), for example, TASS said the majority of the participants called for "an end to the information imperialism" of the Western powers in developing countries.¹⁵⁸ A Radio Moscow broadcast attempted to show that the Western media focused only on human rights violations in African

countries of "socialist orientation" and quoted Guinea's President Sekou Toure on the self-styled human rights champions in the West."¹⁵⁹

When Amnesty International's Geneva branch issued a statement on human rights in Ethiopia, Radio Moscow said:

Amnesty International is not the first to distort the true situation in socialist Ethiopia...Amnesty International is obviously trying with its fabrications to misrepresent the situation in Ethiopia and discredit the revolutionary government. 160

Among the concerns of the Soviet Union was the possible effect of Western broadcasts to the Soviet Union. The connections between Western broadcasting stations and the dissidents were deplored in a Pravda article:

In their broadcasts Voice of America, the BBC, and Deutsche Welle are constantly operating as samizdat publishing houses for dissident opuses and blatantly slanderous statements created for immediate needs...

Hardly a day passes without the "voices" which broadcast to the USSR and the other socialist countries transmitting the "latest news" from ...dissidents. As is known, even from official American sources, this "information" is gathered not only by Western correspondents but also by certain not too scrupulous diplomats who behave as if they were accredited to dissident garbage heaps...

These tactics clearly contradict the Helsinki agreements, despite the West's attempts to hide behind references to "freedom of information." 161

There was also a degree of exasperation evident in the Soviet media's comments concerning the subject of human rights, as the following excerpt from an Izvestiya article shows:

Every time people in the West start talking about...violations of human rights in the Soviet Union, it arouses among our people, to put it mildly, a very definite feeling of

disgust and active repugnance. Indeed, we are heartily sick of this whole iniquitous campaign whipped up with such maniacal stubbornness by anti-communist and anti-Soviet forces. ...To assert that man has no rights in our country is blasphemy.

These so-called defenders of human rights should recall that citizens of the USSR have the rights to labor, to leisure, the right to health care, the right to education, to housing, and so forth. And they not only have those rights, Soviet people have real GUARANTEES of their rights. 162

Summary

In reviewing Amnesty International's efforts on behalf of political prisoners in the Soviet Union during the five-year period, 1975-1979, it has been shown that numerous other efforts by individuals, organizations, and governments were made toward the same goals, albeit with varying levels of consistency and for possibly different reasons. Certainly, the politics of East-West relations were intermingled with humanitarian concerns.

The Soviet response during the period was fairly consistent, repulsing the attacks and charges, increasing the pressure on the dissidents and discrediting their supporters. The Soviet Union defended its record on human rights and criticized violations in the West.

Amnesty International maintained fairly constant pressure on the Soviet Union over the five-year period, at times varying the level of publicity directed toward the country. Amnesty International's relationship to the varied activities taken on behalf of the dissidents and political prisoners is analyzed in the following chapter.

Czechoslovakia

Introduction

Amnesty International's interest in the human rights situation in Czechoslovakia dates back to 1962 when Sean MacBride, the former Foreign Minister of Ireland, undertook a mission to the country on behalf of the imprisoned Archbishop of Prague. In the intervening years the Organization took up the cases of a number of political prisoners -- a Roman Catholic priest in 1972, a political scientist in 1973, six persons who put on a puppet show in 1975, and others.¹⁶³ However, the number of persons adopted by Amnesty International was usually considerably less than the number of Soviet prisoners who were adopted. In early 1977 the Organization was working on 25 adoption cases. The number of adopted Soviet prisoners usually stood at around 250. However, given the great difference between the population of the Soviet Union and that of Czechoslovakia, the relative number of adopted prisoners is more or less equal.

Although Czechoslovakia received greater public attention from Amnesty International during the years 1975-1979 than did other Eastern European countries, the level of attention was less than that directed toward the Soviet Union. This lower level of activity was a derivative of the political realities that exist in Eastern Europe. As Rudolf L. Tokes put it, "By virtue of its political-military hegemony over the area the most important participant [in the human rights struggle in Eastern Europe] is the USSR. Dissident and human rights activism, wherever it might take place, represents a distinct threat to the political and social stability of Russia's client states, hence all

cases of opposition and dissent are followed with the closest attention."¹⁶⁵

Part of the reason for the lower amount of attention directed toward Czechoslovakia is that information has been rather difficult to obtain. In its briefing paper on Czechoslovakia, which was published in 1977, Amnesty International said, "Arrests and detentions are only rarely announced publicly; the government issues no public statements concerning the number of prisoners it holds and, in most cases, releases are unpublished." Until 1977, when the Charter 77 movement began, information coming out of Czechoslovakia was rather scarce. Individual protests did occur from time to time, but there was no organized effort to supply information to the West. After 1977 the amount of information relating to human rights in Czechoslovakia increased, primarily due to the efforts of those involved in the Charter 77 movement.

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1977

At the beginning of the period under review Amnesty International paid relatively little attention to Czechoslovakia. No actions were taken, for example, in 1975 to focus publicity on the country. Instead, the Organization elected to work through its membership for adopted prisoners. On three occasions in 1975 -- in January, October, and December -- the Organization designated political prisoners in Czechoslovakia as "prisoners of the month." In contrast, protests were made by its members with respect to its "prisoner of the month" campaign three times in regard to Soviet prisoners, once each in regard to Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia, twice in regard to the GDR, and not at all with respect to Hungary and Poland.

In an isolated action, responding to a specific event -- the impending deportation of Kurds -- the Organization sent a cable to Gustav Husak, the President of the Czechoslovakian Soviet Socialist Republic (CSSR) urging that the action not be carried out.¹⁶⁶

On two other occasions in 1975 the Organization drew attention to events in Czechoslovakia through its Newsletter. Within Czechoslovakia it is a tradition to declare amnesties on certain national holidays or anniversaries. On the 30th anniversary of the liberation in May, the Government of the CSSR announced an amnesty indicating that it would apply to minors, mothers of two or more children, and older men and women.¹⁶⁷ Seeing the announcement as an opportunity to gain publicity, Amnesty International pointed out in its Newsletter that the amnesty did not apply to political prisoners.¹⁶⁸ The only other mention of Czechoslovakia in 1975 was when the Organization noted that Czechoslovakia had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.¹⁶⁹

This scant activity during 1975 was, in general, a reflection of the human rights activity within Czechoslovakia itself. There were no major events that prodded Amnesty International into taking more extensive actions. The single event that gained considerable public attention in the West was the publication of a letter by the deposed Czech leader, Alexander Dubcek. The letter, which was widely published in the Western press, criticized the Czech regime saying its leaders were creatures of dictatorship.¹⁷⁰ The letter prompted the Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, to defend Dubcek.

One other action which received press attention in the West was an open letter by the Czech playwright, Pavel Kohout. The letter, addressed

to the German writer, Heinrich Boll, and to playwright, Arthur Miller, denounced the persecution of writers by the Czech Government since 1968.¹⁷¹

During 1976 Amnesty International gave increased attention and publicity to human rights in Czechoslovakia as the result of its attempts to influence the outcome of trials of members of two rock music groups. The Organization sent a representative to observe the trial of 14 of these musicians in August, issuing a press release to publicize its action.¹⁷²

However, the trial was postponed to September. At that time Amnesty International again sent an observer to the trial who was barred from entering the courtroom.¹⁷³ Another press release was issued on September 30th protesting the exclusion of the observer.¹⁷⁴ A third press release issued on November 10th announced that another observer would be sent to the appeal hearing for the musicians who had been convicted.¹⁷⁵

Once during the year the Organization activated its members to send letters of protest in regard to a "prisoner of the month" campaign. In contrast, Soviet political prisoners were singled out for this campaign on five separate occasions in 1976. Two campaigns were directed toward the GDR and one each with respect to prisoners in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. No such actions were taken with respect to Hungary, Poland, or Romania.

While Amnesty International's efforts relating to the protection of human rights in Czechoslovakia increased during 1976 -- evidenced by its increased interventions with Czech authorities and by additional Newsletter articles -- its primary activity centered on the trials of the rock musicians. Efforts to assist them continued into 1977.

The major event connected with human rights in Czechoslovakia from 1975 to 1979 was the publication of a document called Charter 77, which

was signed by over 200 Czech citizens. The document, which was to spawn a fledgling human rights movement in that country, criticized the lack of fundamental rights. Charter 77, which was widely published in the West, ended the relatively lethargic Western response to the situation of human rights in Czechoslovakia. However, the significance that Charter 77 was to have, both within Czechoslovakia and in the West, did not appear to have been immediately recognized by Amnesty International. The Organization did, however, adopt four theatre directors and writers who had signed Charter 77 after they were arrested. The four persons were Vaclav Havel, Frantisek Pavlicek, Jiri Lederer, and Ota Ornest.¹⁷⁶

The publication of Charter 77 apparently prompted Amnesty International to release a 16-page briefing paper on human rights violations in Czechoslovakia in March of 1977.¹⁷⁷ The paper covered a number of areas concerning the legal aspects of arrests of prisoners of conscience and their treatment. It also noted that in September and November of 1976 the Organization's representatives were barred from observing trials.¹⁷⁸ However, despite the increasing publicity that Charter 77 was receiving in the Western press, Amnesty International's report gave only slight mention to the movement. As the year went on and the publicity increased Amnesty International also increased its publicity through its Newsletter to its briefing paper and to the continuing arrests of persons connected to Charter 77. In turn, the Organization increased the number of adoption cases it was working on.¹⁷⁹

Later the Czech Government denied a visa to an Amnesty International representative preventing him from observing the trial of five additional persons connected with Charter 77. In August Amnesty International issued a press release on this matter.¹⁸⁰ When four of these persons

were tried, another Amnesty International representative was barred from the courtroom. All four were convicted of subversion (the fifth was convicted earlier).¹⁸¹ After the trial was over Amnesty International, on November 22nd, sent a letter to the CSSR judicial authorities saying that restricting public access to the trial was contrary to international standards and to Czechoslovakian laws.¹⁸²

Additional publicity was given to the human rights situation in Czechoslovakia by Amnesty International through its Newsletter in the August, September, and November issues.

Among the subsidiary actions taken by Amnesty International's national sections was the gathering of signatures for a petition in support of Charter 77 members by its Austrian members. The petition, which was signed by over 15,000 persons including the Austrian Chancellor, was to be presented to the CSSR Embassy in Vienna. However, the Embassy refused to accept it.

Other International Actions

Charter 77 described itself in the following manner:

Charter 77 is a free and informal and open association of peoples of various convictions, religions, and professions, linked by the desire to work collectively for respect for human and civil rights in Czechoslovakia and the world -- the rights provided for in the enacted international pacts, in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, and in numerous other international documents against wars, violence, and social and mental oppression. It represents a general declaration of human rights. 183

The document was released to coincide with the upcoming Belgrade Conference and with Amnesty International's designation of 1977 as Prisoner of Conscience Year.¹⁸⁴ Originally signed by over 200 persons

the Charter gained a following of some 1,000 intellectuals, students, and workers by 1980.¹⁸⁵ In late 1977 an allied group called the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS) was formed. By 1980 the two groups had distributed over 1,000 documents describing events relating to human rights in Czechoslovakia.¹⁸⁶

The issuing of the Charter received immediate coverage in the Western press. Parts of the manifesto were quoted in an article in Le Monde, which stressed that Czechoslovakia had signed various international agreements on human rights.¹⁸⁷ The arrests of Pavel Kouhout, Vaclav Havel and others were also reported in the Western press.¹⁸⁸ When the Czech dissident Zdenek Mlynar addressed an open letter to Willy Brandt, Francois Mitterand, Bruno Kreisky, Olof Palme, and to the communist party leaders in Italy, France, and Spain, it was reported in detail in the London Times.¹⁸⁹

Other newspapers and news agencies gave considerable coverage to Charter 77. Czechoslovakian broadcasts complained about several Western media outlets for reporting on Charter 77. Singled out were: La Stampa, the Daily Telegraph, the Times (London), La Libre Belgique, Die Welt, The New York Times, the International Herald Tribune, Reuters, and DPA.¹⁹⁰

The New York Times ran a running account of the activities of the dissidents as well as the reaction of the Czech authorities. From January 11th to the 18th the paper ran daily stories on the events in Czechoslovakia. On January 27th it printed the complete text of Charter 77.¹⁹¹

In addition to the heavy press coverage of events in Czechoslovakia, a number of Western leaders became active supporters of the dissidents. Austria's Chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, referring to the harassment of the

Charter 77 signatories said a number of things would have to be done in this case. "The Austrian Federal Government," he said, has always concerned itself -- though not publicly, and often in cooperation with Amnesty International -- with cases of arrested persons."¹⁹² Letters of protest, he said, would not be enough.

Although Kreisky did not say what would be required, the Austrian Government indicated its willingness to grant asylum to those signers of Charter 77 who wanted it,¹⁹³ but said that any forcible expulsion of the dissidents would "blatantly" conflict with the spirit of Helsinki.¹⁹⁴

The Norwegian Government, reacting to the plight of the dissidents, showed its displeasure by cancelling a visit to Norway by the Czechoslovakian Foreign Trade Minister.¹⁹⁵ The Norwegian Government also informed the Czech Government that no trade agreements would be signed at that time. According to the newspaper, Arbeiderblat, the action was taken to protest the CSSR Government's action against the signers of Charter 77.¹⁹⁶

In explaining the attitude of the Swedish Government concerning the events in Czechoslovakia, Foreign Minister Karin Soder said, "I believe that Sweden has every reason to point out what we mean by democratic freedoms and rights which are not provided for in Czechoslovakia in the way meant by the Helsinki [Agreement]..."¹⁹⁷

Also intent on explaining Western views was the Dutch Foreign Minister. Before departing for a trip to Prague, Max Van der Stoep said he would bring up humanitarian concerns arising from the Helsinki Agreement and even offered his Czech counterpart time on Dutch television. This would be in exchange for time on Czech television so Van der Stoep could explain the Netherlands' views on civil rights.¹⁹⁸ While in Prague

he met with one of the leaders of the Charter 77 group, Professor Jan Patocka. In a show of disapproval the Czech Government cancelled Van der Stoel's scheduled meeting with President Gustav Husak.¹⁹⁹

Adding his voice to the Western protests was Francois Mitterand, leader of the French Socialists, who demanded an end to repression in Czechoslovakia.²⁰⁰

Not to be outdone by the Western governmental protests, several European communist parties joined in the protests. The Italian Communist Party (PCI) "strongly condemned" the Czech repression.²⁰¹ The French Communist Party (PCF) leader, George Marchais, criticized the Czech authorities for persecuting the dissidents.²⁰² In Great Britain, the communist party newspaper, Morning Star, called for an end to the harassment of Charter 77 members.²⁰³ And in Belgium, that country's communist party was also critical of the Czech Government.²⁰⁴

In the United States the Carter Administration embarked on its activist human rights policy and took several actions supportive of the Charter 77 members. In January the State Department charged that the Czech Government had violated provisions of the Helsinki Agreement by harassing and arresting the human rights activists. This was the first time the United States had publicly accused another government of not adhering to the Helsinki Accord.²⁰⁵ Later in the year, after the trials of the dissidents, the American, French, British, and Dutch delegates to the Belgrade Conference expressed their opposition to the trial even taking place.²⁰⁶ The United States delegate, Arthur Goldberg, called the trial "a particularly disturbing development."²⁰⁷

Additional attention was focused on the events in Czechoslovakia by the United States Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

which held a series of hearings in 1977. On May 9, 1977, the commission heard a number of witnesses who were critical of Czechoslovakia's record of compliance with the Helsinki Agreement. The text of Charter 77 was inserted into the record.²⁰⁸ However, illustrating the West's generally greater concern over events in the Soviet Union, most of the hearings held by the commission in 1977 dealt with that country rather than with Czechoslovakia.

Further action was taken by 14 Western nations at the Belgrade Conference when they urged Czechoslovakia to respect the right of its citizens to monitor their government's observance of the Helsinki Accord.²⁰⁹

Added to these governmental actions were the voices of various individuals and organizations. The organizations protesting the situation in Czechoslovakia included the International Committee of Support for Charter 77, a Paris-based group, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the Polish Workers Defense Committee.²¹⁰ Actions by individuals included the cancellation of an appearance in Prague by composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein.²¹¹

The Czechoslovakian Response to Charter 77 and Its Supporters

The response of the Czech Government to the publication of Charter 77 was swift and strong. The Communist Party newspaper, Rude Pravo, described Charter 77 as an anti-state, anti-people, and demagogical fabrication "which grossly and falsely slanders the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the revolutionary achievements of the people." It went on to say that the Charter was published simultaneously in the West according to a precisely drafted scenario and that a decisive role was played by anti-communist centers.²¹² The dissidents were also discredited by

Rude Pravo; the paper said the dissidents were supported by the CIA which provided space in the Western press for their writings.²¹³

The Western press took the brunt of the criticism from the Czech Government. Rude Pravo said, "Today, in the case of the slanderous pamphlet Charter 77 we witness again unrestrained tendentious calumny, deliberate and malevolent misinformation...the British press particularly excels in this touching care for a handful of renegades -- as if in an effort to shout down the bloody massacres from Northern Ireland."²¹⁴

A Prague Radio broadcast noted the following:

Last week some Western mass media and propaganda centers once again showed all the signs of anti-Czechoslovak hysteria. It was prompted by the so-called Charter 77, a pamphlet written by political failures of 1968 who were left stranded at the margin of Czechoslovak society.

...Scrutiny of the text of Charter 77 shows that the notion of freedom as prostituted by Western ravishers of human rights, is nothing more or less than a call for a reform or dismantling of socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia.

...one gets the impression that the Helsinki Final Act consists entirely of basket three, that is, humanitarian questions. Western bourgeois mass media and the Czech pamphleteers deliberately ignore the other nine principles. ²¹⁵

Czech authorities took even more direct means to stop the flow of information. Journalists from a number of Western countries were detained, searched, or expelled. A West German correspondent and an NBC reporter were detained.²¹⁶ Two French reporters were expelled,²¹⁷ and a Canadian journalist had his belongings confiscated.²¹⁸ And to back up its attack on journalists, the Czech Government informed the American Embassy that American and other Western journalists would no longer receive visas unless they agreed beforehand not to interview

dissidents. The Embassy was also told that visas would not be granted to correspondents whose work the Czech Government considered objectionable.²¹⁹

Not only did the Czech Government try to prevent news from leaving Czechoslovakia, it blocked it from getting in. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were jammed. The jamming was justified, said the Czech trade paper, Prace, since the radio stations interfered with the information policies of the socialist countries.²²⁰

Certain Western politicians were also singled out for criticism by the Czech authorities. Accused by Rude Pravo of interfering in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs were the U.S. State Department, AFL-CIO President George Meany, Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, and Norway's Prime Minister Odvar Nordli.²²¹

The extent of Western criticism of the trials of those connected with Charter 77 can be seen by a commentary delivered over Prague television. It is quoted here at length since it illustrates the range of Western protests as well as the Czech Government's views on who were responsible for the protests -- the press, the Americans, Czech emigres, delegates to the Belgrade Conference, and Amnesty International:

...That was Ambassador Arthur Goldberg, leader of the American delegation at the meeting of signatories to the Final Act at Belgrade. It is well known that the fate of the dissidents in the socialist states is in the main focus of his attention. And first and foremost the trial of Otto Ornest, Jiri Lederer, Frantisek Pavlicek, and Vaclav Havel in Prague has served this diplomat as a pretext for an attack on our state, Government, and Judiciary. This he sees as a trial of defenders of human rights -- this is the favorite term which Mr. Goldberg uses without regard to the real situation -- as a violation of the Final Act. He made a sharp protest against

the severity of the sentences...

Several Dutch Ministers were swift to follow up with their own calumnies. The socialist dominated Parliament of Portugal issued a dramatically worded protest...

The Daily Telegraph carried a touching description of the qualities of the defendants by Sir Cecil Parrott, former British Ambassador to Czechoslovakia and an agent of British intelligence. These qualifications obviously gave him courage to lament the severity of the sentence passed on Ornest. The International Herald Tribune is engaged in scaring its readers about terrorists and...the trial against, and I quote, four prominent dissidents. It comes to the same thing: first, frighten your bourgeois with a machine gun, then nail him. There's a trial in Prague. Let's hope the communists won't come to power in the West. You would see what would happen then. That's what is printed in the Neue Zuercher Zeitung.

Springer's Die Welt is still calling the defendants "prominent Czechoslovak intellectuals" and announces in amazing unanimity with all the rest that the Eastern bloc is violating the Helsinki document. See how uniform the Western press is...And here's another interesting point. The bourgeois press has had its calumnies confirmed by the Italian Communist Party paper, Unita. It is, to put it mildly, peculiar when a right-wing newspaper reprints long commentaries from the communist press. Of course, the chief editors are well aware of what they are doing. Unita did not disappoint the anti-Czechoslovak campaign. Quite the reverse. It did excellently. It praised the dissidents, slandered the Czechoslovak state organs and made its protest...

Last week, on Friday and Sunday, we gave you the views of Otto Ornest about his case. We have asked him once again to come on television and talk about the anti-Czechoslovak campaign which has been launched about the case.

Ornest: "Today, I repeat those words of mine with special emphasis in order to disassociate myself totally from my 'defenders' be they the handful of spokesmen for Charter 77...or be they the supporters of the USA who put me in my present position -- I mean above all Pavel Tigrid and

Jiri Pilikan -- or be they in the institution known as Amnesty International, or be they the participants in the Belgrade conference -- to whom the meanest and most trivial affair is used to destroy and render ineffective any constructive talking, because their only aim is to stop progress, to put obstacles in the way of peace efforts and the slackening of international tension...222

The brief mention of Amnesty International in the above commentary was expanded on in an article in Rude Pravo, which proceeded to question the Organization's credibility. An account of the article was given by the Czechoslovak news agency, CTK:

Rude Pravo says that Amnesty International is an anti-communist organization despite the fact that its ranks include upright people as well as cold-war warriors. The paper's London correspondent says the organization remained silent over the cause of Angela Davis and found no political prisoners in the UK. It was a pity that none of the London staff visited Northern Ireland before drawing up their "unbiased report" on the latter topic. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Amnesty International is a similar case of reactionary forces exploiting noble ideals, Rude Pravo says.

The paper's Bonn correspondent says that Amnesty International holds that everything would be fine in the world if there were no punishments for political reasons. The absurdity of this argument would mean defending the crimes of the Nazis who also acted on their political convictions. The organization's alleged objectivity and false liberalism casts a smokescreen over social problems and conflicts, which plays into the hands of the political right because it slanders progressive forces. The activity of Amnesty International in the FRG is concerned solely with other countries in order to divert attention from the violation of human rights in the FRG itself. 223

The attack on Amnesty International did not stop with the Rude Pravo article. A Prague broadcast continued the attack implying that Amnesty International intervenes only in regard to communist countries. The broadcast said:

Amnesty International headquarters in London decide who is and who is not worthy of Amnesty International's intervention. However, what did Amnesty International do when a police tribunal in the French city of Cherbourg condemned teacher Serge Levillier for protesting against nuclear weapons? Nothing. What did this organization do in the defense of some 4,000 political prisoners in Israeli occupied territories? Again nothing. Or what did Amnesty International do to save the South African anti-apartheid leader, Steve Biko? Did Amnesty lodge a protest with the South African police? No, nothing of that kind.

...There is evidence that Amnesty International cooperates closely with those who strive to prevent the easing of tensions in the world. That Amnesty's ostensible objectivity is in fact a well thought out attack against the socialist countries...224

These attacks on Amnesty International indicate that the Czech Government perceived the Organization to be in the mainstream of the Western protests on behalf of the Charter 77 dissidents. The highly charged atmosphere surrounding the question of human rights in Czechoslovakia in 1977 became less so during 1978.

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1978-1979

During the remainder of the period under review Amnesty International continued to interject itself between the Czech Government and the dissidents, protesting sentences, urging amnesties,²²⁵ publicizing arrests and trials, and becoming increasingly involved in the activities of Charter 77 and its offshoot, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Accused (VONS). Perhaps because greater information on arrests was becoming available to Amnesty International, adoption and investigation cases increased to 60 in 1978. By 1979 the number dropped to 55 and by 1980 it was down to 38.²²⁶

The Organization's efforts to observe trials was no more successful in 1978 and 1979 than in the previous years. Attempts were made to observe the trials of several dissidents in 1978 and of 10 VONS members in 1979. In the 1978 attempt Amnesty International's representative was detained for three hours and questioned about the Organization's activities. He was again searched and questioned at the border crossing into Austria for another two hours.²²⁷ With respect to the 1979 trial the Organization issued a press release publicizing its intention to send an observer. This was followed up in July by a request to the Czech President to discontinue the proceeding against the dissidents. Despite these efforts the trial of six of the dissidents was held in October and all were found guilty of subversion. Part of the indictment against the six said that VONS material was handed over to two Dutch citizens, representatives of Amnesty International, "an organization which is constantly spreading slander against the CSSR throughout the world."²²⁸

After the trial Amnesty International issued another press release announcing that it had adopted all 10 VONS members as prisoners of conscience.²²⁹ It also wrote a letter to Czech judicial authorities outlining the deficiencies of the trial. A similar document was distributed internationally by the Organization.

In addition to supporting those members of VONS who were on trial, Amnesty International actively assisted the Charter 77 movement by translating, publishing, and distributing internationally a document on prison conditions in Czechoslovakia that was prepared by Charter 77 members.²³⁰

As in the previous years Amnesty International continued to devote articles in its Newsletter to Czechoslovakian events. For example, in

1979 articles were published in the March, June, August, September, and November issues of the Newsletter. In contrast, only one article dealt with the GDR, one with Bulgaria, three with Poland, and none with Hungary. This publicity was accompanied by various actions undertaken by Amnesty International groups concerning prisoners who were either ill or mistreated.

One of the convicted dissidents for whom Amnesty International worked was Ota (Otto) Ornest. Amnesty International had, to no avail, cabled Czech judicial authorities that his and other convictions be quashed. However, Ornest subsequently recanted on Czech television and disassociated himself from the Charter 77 movement and his supporters. This disavowal eventually led to his sentence being reduced and later to freedom.²³¹

Other International Actions

There was relatively little Western attention focused on the human rights situation in Czechoslovakia during 1978. The international media continued to report on the activities of the dissidents as before, but the sense of urgency that generated widespread protests in 1977 was missing. Even the Czechoslovak media tended to tone down its criticism of Western supporters of the Charter 77 dissidents. One of the reasons for the more relaxed attitude of Czech authorities was their belief that the threat to their control posed by the dissidents was largely contained.²³² Another reason stemmed from the fact that international attention was now being directed at the Soviet Union where a number of well known dissidents were on trial.

During the visit of Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev to Prague, the authorities rounded up at least 25 human rights activists to prevent any

demonstrations from taking place.²³³ A number of those who were detained were released after Brezhnev's departure, but some were quickly rearrested.²³⁴

In a sense, therefore, 1978 appeared to be a year of transition in regard to the human rights situation in Czechoslovakia. Within Czechoslovakia the Charter 77 members did not put forth any new demands nor did outside support result in any concessions from the Government. In another sense, perhaps the low level of activity during 1978 was simply part of a natural cycle where international attention alternately focuses on different areas in different years. Certainly the plight of those who were imprisoned should have generated as much response in the West during imprisonment as before.

In 1979 a number of initiatives were taken in the West to support Czech dissidents, but the protests did not reach the fervor that marked those of 1977. One of the more subdued initiatives was made by the President of Austria, Rudolf Kirchschlaeger, during a visit to Prague in March. The Austrian President said he discussed the question of the dissidents with his Czech counterpart who agreed that people should not be imprisoned for their political convictions.²³⁵ However, most of the protests during 1979 took place during and after the trial of six VONS members in October.

The trials evoked protests from most Western Governments. Protests were made by the United States, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden, among others. In the United States the Administration denounced the sentences calling them "unreasonably harsh."²³⁶ The French Foreign Minister showed his displeasure by postponing a planned visit to Prague.²³⁷ In Germany the Government said the trial was contrary to the United Nations Charter, human rights conventions, and the Helsinki Final Act.²³⁸ Also in Germany, the SPD Presidium called for the dissidents' release so they could have a

fair trial to be conducted under international supervision. This was echoed by the Brussels-based Christian Peace Movement which demanded that the trial be open to trade union organizations, human rights defense committees, Western lawyers, journalists, and diplomats.²³⁹

In France the communist party said that an acquittal would serve justice and socialism.²⁴⁰

The Czech response to these activities was subdued, in contrast to its counter-campaign of 1977. Except for the usual comments about anti-socialist elements within Czechoslovakia and slander campaigns in the West, there was little evidence that the Government was any longer overly concerned either about the dissidents or the Western protests.

Summary

As the above narrative shows, international protests over the human rights situation in Czechoslovakia were sporadic and uneven. Public attention in the West centered on specific events, dissident trials, and then ebbed after sentences were passed. Amnesty International's efforts were aided by the Charter 77 movement and the organization, VONS, which made extensive amounts of material about human rights in Czechoslovakia available to the West. The relationship that Amnesty International had with these groups and the part they played in the protection of human rights in Czechoslovakia is analyzed in the following chapter.

Footnotes

¹See "East Europe Measures Its Freedoms Inch by Inch," The New York Times, December 21, 1980. See also Tad Szulc, "Living with Dissent," Foreign Policy, Summer, 1973. No. 31, p. 191.

²See testimony of Niall MacDermott, Secretary General of the International Commission of Jurists in International Protection of Human Rights. The Work of International Organizations and the Role of U.S. Foreign Policy. Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. House of Representatives. 93rd Congress, 1st Session. (Washington: 1974), p. 22.

³See Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway, Psychiatric Terror: How Soviet Psychiatry is Used to Suppress Dissent (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977), pp. 202-210.

⁴Szulc, op. cit., passim.

⁵Ludmilla Alexeyeva, "The Human Rights Movement in the USSR," Survey, Autumn, 1977-78. Vol. 23, No. 4, p. 73.

⁶Egon Larsen, A Flame in Barbed Wire: The Story of Amnesty International (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1979), p. 81.

⁷Alexeyeva, op. cit., p. 73.

⁸Bloch and Reddaway, op. cit., p. 74. There are about 30 samizdat publications in the Soviet Union. They deal with specific human rights issues, feminism, religious issues, literary and historical topics.

⁹Loc. cit.

¹⁰Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1980), p. 2.

¹¹Bloch and Reddaway, op. cit., p. 83.

¹²Larsen, op. cit., p. 87.

¹³Sandy Vogelgesang, American Dream Global Nightmare. The Dilemma of U.S. Human Rights Policy (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), p. 98.

¹⁴Alexeyeva, op. cit., p. 74.

¹⁵ Andrei Sakharov, "Why I Speak Alone," Observer (London), June 8, 1975, p. 19.

¹⁶ Alexeyeva, op. cit., p. 78.

¹⁷ See testimony of Niall MacDermott, cited above in footnote 2, p. 20. However, an estimate by Andrei Sakharov is said to put the total number of political prisoners in the Soviet Union at any time from 10,000 down to 2,000. See Implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Findings and Recommendations Five Years After Helsinki. Report submitted to the Congress of the United States by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Washington: 1980), p. 161

¹⁸ The Status of Human Rights in Selected Countries and the U.S. Response, Subcommittee on International Organizations, U.S. House Committee on International Relations, 95th Congress, 1st session (Washington: July 25, 1977), p. 59. Noted below as The Status of Human Rights...

¹⁹ Elizabeth Drew, "Human Rights," The New Yorker, July 18, 1977.

²⁰ Facts on File, July 23, 1977, p. 550.

²¹ Facts on File, Feb. 14, 1977, p. 357.

²² Facts on File, April 26, 1975, p. 285.

²³ Amnesty International Newsletter, May, 1975.

²⁴ See the following editions of The New York Times: April 19th, p. 2 and 5; April 20th, p. 8; April 21st, p. 4; Sept. 7th, p. 4; and Dec. 10th, p. 14; all 1975.

²⁵ Annual Report 1975-76 (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1976), p. 199.

²⁶ Amnesty International Newsletter, Jan., 1976. Many dissidents are convicted under Article 70 of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) Criminal Code or corresponding articles in the various republics. A person can be convicted for the mere possession of literature containing statements defamatory of the Soviet system. However, Article 70 requires that an anti-Soviet intent is necessary for conviction. Another article, 190-1, makes it a crime to circulate statements known to be false which are defamatory of the Soviet system. In this case, no anti-Soviet intent need be present. See Appendix, "Soviet Law and Helsinki Monitors," Basket Three: Implementation of the Helsinki Accords, Hearings before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 95th Congress, 2nd Session, Volume VI (Washington: June 6, 1978), p. 120. Noted below as CSCE Hearings.

- ²⁷Amnesty International Newsletter, May, 1976.
- ²⁸See Larsen, op. cit., p. 97.
- ²⁹See Sandy Vogelgesang, op. cit., p. 98.
- ³⁰Facts on File, July 25, 1976, p. 955.
- ³¹Loc, cit.
- ³²Vogelgesang, op. cit., p. 103.
- ³³See Radio Moscow in English to North America, Nov. 5, 1975. FBIS (SU), Nov. 6, 1975.
- ³⁴Quoted in Berlingske Tidende (Copenhagen), Oct. 12, 1975. Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Daily Report. Western Europe, Oct. 14, 1975. Noted below as FBIS (WE).
- ³⁵Svenska (Stockholm), Nov. 7, 1975, p. 5 FBIS (WE), Nov. 14, 1975.
- ³⁶CSCE Hearings, Vol. 1, pp. 1, 2.
- ³⁷Alexeyeva, op. cit., p. 74.
- ³⁸Literaturnaya Gazeta (Moscow), Oct. 13, 1975, p. 9 FBIS (SU), Oct. 21, 1975.
- ³⁹Andrei Sakharov, op. cit., p. 19.
- ⁴⁰Hamburg Domestic Television Service, Aug. 3, 1975. FBIS(SU), Aug. 5, 1975.
- ⁴¹Bild Am Sonntag (Hamburg), Oct. 12, 1975, p. 3. FBIS(SU), Oct. 29, 1975. See also Die Welt, Nov. 17, 1975, p. 1. FBIS (SU), Nov. 19, 1975 and Der Spiegel (Hamburg), Nov. 17, 1975. FBIS(SU), Nov. 19, 1975.
- ⁴²Stockholm Domestic Service, Oct. 12, 1975. FBIS(SU), Oct. 29, 1975.
- ⁴³L'Europa (Milan), Oct. 24, 1975, pp. 44-45, FBIS(SU), Oct. 29, 1975.
- ⁴⁴L'Humanite (Paris), Dec. 20, 1975. FBIS(WE), Dec. 21, 1975.
- ⁴⁵Amnesty International Newsletter, Nov., 1975.

- ⁴⁶TASS in English (Moscow), Jan. 5, 1976. FBIS(SU), Jan. 7, 1976.
- ⁴⁷Facts on File, Oct. 25, 1975, p. 789.
- ⁴⁸TASS in English (Moscow), Oct. 10, 1975. FBIS(SU), Oct. 30, 1975.
- ⁴⁹Literaturnaya Gazeta (Moscow), Oct. 13, 1975, p. 9. FBIS(SU), Oct. 21, 1975.
- ⁵⁰Pravda (Moscow), Oct. 29, 1975. FBIS(SU), Oct. 30, 1975.
- ⁵¹Za Rubezhon (Moscow), No. 23, May 23, 1975, p. 17. FBIS(SU), June 5, 1975.
- ⁵²Loc. cit.
- ⁵³Loc. cit.
- ⁵⁴Facts on File, Jan. 17, 1976, p. 30.
- ⁵⁵Bloch and Reddaway, op. cit. p. 209.
- ⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 322, 323.
- ⁵⁷Ibid., p. 331.
- ⁵⁸Ibid., p. 288. Emphasis in original.
- ⁵⁹Facts on File, Dec. 25, 1976, p. 955
- ⁶⁰Amnesty International Press Release, Dec. 21, 1976.
- ⁶¹TASS in English (Moscow), Jan. 5, 1976. FBIS(SU), Jan. 7, 1976.
- ⁶²Loc. cit.
- ⁶³TASS in English (Moscow), Feb. 3, 1976. FBIS(SU), Feb. 10, 1976.
- ⁶⁴Pravda (Moscow), Jan. 23, 1976, p. 4. FBIS(SU), Jan. 29, 1976.
- ⁶⁵Literaturnaya Gazeta (Moscow), Jan. 21, 1976, p. 9. FBIS(SU), Jan. 29, 1976.
- ⁶⁶Radio Moscow in French to Europe, Feb. 8, 1976. FBIS(SU), Feb. 10, 1976.

⁶⁷Radio Moscow in German to Germany, Feb. 5, 1976. FBIS(SU), Feb. 10, 1976.

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⁷⁰Sovetskaya Belorussiya, (Minsk), Aug. 10, 1976, p. 3. FBIS(SU) Aug. 25, 1976.

⁷¹TASS in English, Dec. 25, 1976. FBIS(SU), Jan. 5, 1976.

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⁷³Mezhdunarodnaya, No. 1, 1976. Dec. 19, 1975, pp. 95-103. FBIS(SU), Jan. 30, 1976.

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⁷⁵Rosemary Righter, Whose News? Politics, the Press, and the Third World (New York: Times Books, 1978), p. 135.

⁷⁶Human Rights and Foreign Policy. Memorandum presented to the Lower House of the States General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on May 3, 1979 by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation (The Hague: 1979), p. 119.

⁷⁷See testimony of Sig Mickelson, President of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in CSCE Hearings, Vol. 111, p. 40.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁸⁰As quoted in Appendix II, "A Freedom House Advisory: An Analysis of Compliance with the Information Section of Basket Three of the Helsinki Accords of 1975," in CSCE Hearings, Vol. III, p. 190.

⁸¹TASS in English, July 19, 1976. FBIS(SU), July 20, 1976.

⁸²TASS International Service (Moscow), Dec. 18, 1976. FBIS(SU), Dec. 20, 1976.

- ⁸³TASS in English (Moscow), Dec. 10, 1976. FBIS(SU), Dec. 14, 1976.
- ⁸⁴Amnesty International Report 1978, p. 240.
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- ⁸⁶Amnesty International Report 1978, p. 244.
- ⁸⁷Campaign for the Abolition of Torture Monthly Bulletin, Feb., 1977 (Amnesty International Publications).
- ⁸⁸Campaign for the Abolition of Torture Monthly Bulletin, Sept., 1977. (Amnesty International Publications).
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- ⁹²Implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Findings and Recommendations Five Years After Helsinki. Report submitted to the Congress of the United States by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Washington: 1980), p. 159.
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- ⁹⁴Drew, op. cit., p. 38.
- ⁹⁵Vogelgesang, op. cit., p. 104.
- ⁹⁶Facts on File, April 2, 1977, p. 226.
- ⁹⁷Statement by Dante Fascell, Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe in CSCE Hearings, Vol. I, p. 42.
- ⁹⁸Facts on File, Feb. 19, 1977, p. 117.
- ⁹⁹Literaturnaya Gazeta (Moscow), No. 18, May 4, 1977, pp. 9 and 14. FBIS(SU), May 9, 1977.

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- ¹⁰¹CSCE Hearings, Vol. I, p. 42.
- ¹⁰²Agence France Presse (Paris), Feb. 19, 1977. FBIS(WE), Feb. 22, 1977.
- ¹⁰³Paris Domestic Service, Feb. 21, 1977. FBIS(WE), Feb. 22, 1977.
- ¹⁰⁴"Diplomacy and Human Rights," Financial Times (London), March 7, 1977, p. 10.
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- ¹⁰⁶Neue Zuercher Zeitung (Zurich), July 27, 1977, p. 13, FBIS(WE), July 27, 1977.
- ¹⁰⁷See testimony of William H. Luers, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, CSCE Hearings, Vol. III, p. 5.
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- ¹⁰⁹TASS in English (Moscow), Sept. 1, 1977. FBIS(SU), Sept. 2, 1977.
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- ¹¹²TASS in English (Moscow), June 3, 1977. FBIS(SU), June 6, 1977.
- ¹¹³Izvestiya (Moscow), July 2, 1977. FBIS(SU), July 8, 1977.
- ¹¹⁴Ibid.
- ¹¹⁵Human Rights and Foreign Policy. Memorandum presented to the Lower House of the States General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on May 3, 1979 by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation (The Hague: 1979), p. 154.
- ¹¹⁶TASS in English (Moscow), Jan. 7, 1977. FBIS(SU), Jan. 7, 1977.
- ¹¹⁷TASS International Service (Moscow), Feb. 21, 1977. FBIS(SU), Feb. 22, 1977.

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- 129 See testimonies of Alan Dershowitz and Ramsey Clark, CSCE Hearings, Vol. VI, pp. 45-87, pasim.
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- 135 L'Humanite (Paris), July 11, 1978. FBIS(WE), July 17, 1978.
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- 149 Amnesty International Press Release, Oct. 10, 1979.
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CHAPTER 6

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA: AN ANALYSIS

Overall Strategy

The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, as the targets of the most extensive public actions taken by Amnesty International with respect to Eastern Europe during 1975-1979, are also singled out in this study. As was stated in the previous chapter, Amnesty International's work generally reflected the state of human rights in Eastern Europe. The relatively slight attention paid to Hungary and Poland during the years under review was consistent with the relatively high degree of tolerance of dissent in these two countries. But equally little public attention was directed at Bulgaria, the GDR, and Romania, which are not considered by Western observers as being as tolerant of dissent as were Hungary and Poland. However, as was noted in the previous chapter, Amnesty International usually maintained a large number of adopted East German political prisoners and initiated a major campaign against Romania in late 1978.

In Chapter 3 it was noted that a number of factors are considered before Amnesty International embarks on a major campaign on behalf of political prisoners in a particular country. If we consider Romania, for example, several factors apparently induced Amnesty International to embark on a major campaign in November, 1978. Presumably, Amnesty International's policy makers decided that the Government of Romania would be sensitive to external opinion or pressure. Romanian leaders had

publicly indicated their adherence to the international human rights covenants; in early 1978 the Presidents of Romania and the United States made a joint statement that observance of human rights is a basic principle for international peace and security.¹ In addition, since Romania's good relations with the West are a basic element in its foreign policy, the country might have been willing to make concessions concerning human rights in order to mollify Western opinion.

Another possible reason for the campaign against Romania in 1978 involved development. In view of the low level of activity by Amnesty International with respect to Romania prior to the 1978 campaign, it is doubtful that the campaign was primarily intended as an escalation of pressure; in 1978 the Organization was working for only 20 Romanian prisoners. Therefore the campaign is seen as an attempt to generate interest in human rights in Romania, to lead to a dialogue with officials, and to stimulate the flow of information about human rights violations and prisoners to the Organization.

Whereas Amnesty International directed a major campaign toward Romania for about three months in late 1978 and early 1979, its activities with respect to the Soviet Union were in the form of a continuous campaign. This was also true with respect to Czechoslovakia. Through the actions of its adoption groups working on behalf of 300-350 political prisoners in the Soviet Union, by the steady stream of letters from the Organization's members and interested others who took part in the numerous "prisoner of the month" and torture campaigns, an unprecedented barrage of protest was directed at Soviet authorities. Coupled with the publication of two major reports and frequent press releases, the extent of this activity toward the Soviet Union was unmatched by the Organizations' activity

toward any other country, with the possible exception of South Africa. If we consider this activity on a proportional basis, Czechoslovakia and some other countries may have received a relatively equal amount of attention.

Amnesty International's overall strategy toward Eastern Europe appeared to be to maintain constant pressure on the hardline regimes while trying to bring about further improvements in the other states through reduced pressure and efforts at cooperation. For example, while the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were hostile toward Amnesty International, Romanian officials invited the Organization's representatives to hold talks. And although the Organization had many adopted prisoners in East Germany, it maintained a low public profile, apparently to keep prisoners coming to the West through arrangements with the West German Government.

Another factor that contributed to the high level of activity toward the Soviet Union was pressure from its membership. With the majority of the Organization's members being citizens of Western countries, it is not surprising that extensive activity concerning human rights is directed at the main ideological and political opponent of these countries. The ideological struggle is often brought to the fore by the many Eastern European emigre groups that exist in Western Europe and North America. These groups and others, like Amnesty International, also seek to maintain pressure and publicity on violations of human rights in Eastern Europe. Throughout the West many persons have family ties to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. They are concerned about the human rights situation and prod governments to take action. The extent of these ties constitutes a delicate issue between the East and the West, particularly between the

two Germanies. Given this intrinsic interest in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, it would be difficult for Amnesty International to be lax in reporting or pressuring the Soviet Union on human rights. There are numerous organizations -- formal and informal, permanent and ad hoc -- that could either preempt Amnesty International's work or further politicize the human rights campaign in the West pushing it into a direction that would have a negative influence on that work.

With regard to both the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia Amnesty International alternated between attempts at leading public opinion and following it. Early in 1975 it tried to get public opinion to focus on the plight of its adoption group members in Moscow. Later in the year, when the Organization published its first report on the Soviet Union, it appeared to be attempting to capitalize on the extensive publicity on human rights in the Soviet Union as a result of the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to Andrei Sakharov. When it began its international campaign in 1979, which was to culminate in the publication of its second report on the Soviet Union, Amnesty International attempted to condition Western public opinion prior to the opening of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was an unforeseen event which succeeded in conditioning and forming Western opinion in a way that Amnesty International's campaign alone would not have done. For example, the boycott of the 1980 Olympics proposed by President Carter was not a U.S. policy objective prior to the Soviet invasion.

In 1977, when Charter 77 was issued in Czechoslovakia, Amnesty International appeared to be following Western opinion. The text of Charter 77 stated it was "established on the threshold of what has been

declared the year of political prisoners." And although Charter 77's release was timed in part to coincide with Amnesty International's naming of 1977 as "Prisoner of Conscience Year," the Organization appeared not to have been aware that the document was to be issued or that it would create the impact that it did in the West. Before Amnesty International published its briefing paper on Czechoslovakia, in 1977, the Western press and political leaders had been reporting on and supporting the Charter 77 movement for nearly three months.

Amnesty International's activities directed toward the two countries appeared to be coordinated with the ebb and flow of international attention. During 1978, when the Soviet trials of well-known dissidents took place, Amnesty International was in the mainstream of Western protests, prodding here and there, without trying to actually lead public opinion. Western opinion in support of the dissidents was, in fact, so widespread and politically charged that it would probably have been imprudent for the Organization to attempt to be in the forefront. During the following year, when Western protests directed at the Soviet Union eased, Amnesty International initiated a major campaign to keep the spotlight on the Soviet Union.

This accomplished several things. By increasing publicity when Western public opinion was ebbing, Amnesty International separated itself somewhat from the political considerations that are part of the motivations of Western political leaders. It was an effort to maintain its independence and to reassert that its primary concerns involved humanitarian issues. There is, of course, a balance to be maintained. Total independence, or isolation, from Western political forces would diminish the Organization's potential influence as much as total sub-

servience to those forces.

Focusing on the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia also accomplished another balance -- in Amnesty International's work worldwide. The Organization is often accused in the West of concentrating on right-wing military or authoritarian governments while neglecting communist and left-wing regimes. If there is an imbalance, it is due to the limited potential influence that a Western-based organization can have on some of the left-wing countries and to the difficulties involved in obtaining reliable information. For example, to look at a country outside the scope of this report, Amnesty International did not publish a major report on China until late 1978. Earlier, the Organization maintained a policy of no adoptions with respect to political prisoners in China, partly due to the inability of the Organization to obtain reliable information. Not until the rapprochement between the United States and China was Amnesty International able to begin to gather data as China began to open up to Westerners. In contrast, information from the Soviet Union -- while not complete -- does reach Amnesty International, allowing it to press its causes.

In view of the Soviet Union's and Czechoslovakia's lack of positive response, and indeed their antagonism, to Amnesty International, the Organization's continuous efforts on behalf of political prisoners in those countries must involve considerations other than simply the protection of individual political prisoners. It is postulated that the high level of activity is due to pressure from its membership, to the need to maintain its image of moral authority in the West, to the possibility that concessions to outside pressure may set precedents, and to the expectation that its efforts will nurture greater expressions

of concern for human rights within these and other Eastern European countries.

In connection with this last aim Amnesty International has consistently supported human rights activists in both Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. There are, of late, indications that this link was considered by some to be counter-productive. In its 1980 annual report Amnesty International's outgoing Secretary General wrote, "There is a danger that unless Amnesty International makes a conscious effort to avoid it, the support for Amnesty International will come in some countries only from movements called 'dissident'...Amnesty International is not and should not be a movement of dissidents or opposition elements in national internal affairs."²

However, if a strategy evolves whereby the Organization seeks to attain greater cooperation with Eastern European governments, a delicate balance would have to be maintained in this area also. The appearance of cooption would have to be strenuously avoided.

The Role of Western Nations in the Protection of Human Rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia

In the previous chapter the major international and transnational actions taken in support of human rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were reviewed. As was seen, Western governments and leaders tended to become most actively involved during periods when either dissidents were on trial or some major event took place in those countries. This was the case in 1975 when Andrei Sakharov was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize; in 1977 when Charter 77 was issued; in 1978 during the trial of Soviet dissidents; and in 1979 during the trial

of Czechoslovakian dissidents. Their involvement was more likely toward the end of the period than during the beginning.

Two factors contributed to the greater involvement of Western governments and leaders in matters relating to human rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia -- the signing of the Helsinki Agreement and the activist policy of the Carter Administration. Various political factors undoubtedly also motivate Western leaders to protest against the human rights violations in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. However, an examination of all these factors would be beyond the scope of this study.

The Helsinki Agreement thrust the issue of human rights into the center of East-West politics in a way that Amnesty International's campaigns and reports could not have done in isolation from other events. The Agreement legitimized Western concern over violations of human rights in Eastern Europe. It brought the subject of human rights into the forefront of discussions concerning the implementation of a major international treaty signed by 35 countries. The formation of Helsinki watch groups in Czechoslovakia and the USSR further stimulated Western concern. However, before the advent of the Carter administration's policy of speaking out publicly on human rights violations some Western governments were reluctant to voice protests. Even at the Belgrade Conference in 1977 some of the larger Western European states did not press the issue of human rights. By 1978, with the extensive publicity given to the trials of Soviet dissidents, with the prevailing opinion that the trials were considered to be contrary to the Helsinki Agreement, and with the emphasis given to human rights by the United States, it would have been difficult for Western leaders to continue to maintain

their silence. By the time of the Madrid Conference (which began in late 1980) the Western countries exhibited a degree of unity on the question of human rights that was not evident at Belgrade.³ No doubt Soviet activities in Afghanistan were as instrumental for producing this result as was the Soviet treatment of dissidents.

However, the unity shown at Madrid on the issue of human rights did not carry over into other areas. During 1980 there was a "massive purge of dissidents," according to an article by Anthony Lewis in The New York Times. Lewis said, "All kinds of groups have been swept up in the systematic K.G.B. effort. They include editors of underground journals, nationalists from the Ukraine and the Baltic states, religious leaders and people working for human rights. The latest arrests and trials have not evoked widespread protests abroad. That may be because better known dissidents are already silenced...But whatever the reason for the Western response, there is no doubt of its effect. The failure of governments and private groups to express their outrage has encouraged the K.G.B. to intensify the repression."⁴

The lack of Western response in 1980 compared to the widespread protests of 1978 to trials in the Soviet Union suggest that when dissidents achieve celebrity status in the West, efforts on their behalf will obtain greater support than if they are unknown. In this respect the work of Amnesty International and other human rights groups can be seen as influencing Western Governmental officials since these groups, along with the press, contribute to that celebrity status. The lack of Western protests in 1980 may also be attributed to a reluctance on the part of governments to squander their resources and prestige. The

protests in 1978 did not bring about any change in Soviet attitudes. In addition, the sharp response of the Soviet Union may have deterred further outspokenness. Even the Carter Administration, surprised at the vehement Soviet reaction, decided to tone down its criticism of the human rights situation in the Soviet Union.

However, while Western governments may not always publicly criticize every violation of human rights or react to each bit of information made available by Amnesty International or other groups, there is evidence that governments do take seriously the work of the Organization. The Austrian Chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, said his government often cooperated with Amnesty International, although not publicly, on cases of arrested persons. Such cooperation may be in the form of offering asylum for political prisoners and using diplomatic channels for matters of concern to Amnesty International.⁵ It should also be mentioned that a person, such as Kreisky, who appears to have a deep commitment to furthering the observance of human rights, can often make a difference in the role a country plays in the international protection of human rights. Certainly this was true of Jimmy Carter and the role of the United States during the Carter Administration.

The Swedish Government has on frequent occasions publicly supported the work of Amnesty International at the United Nations and elsewhere. In a speech made before a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly Sweden's Foreign Minister said, "Moreover, let me emphasize the deplorable lack of respect for political dissidents, of which we receive daily evidence. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights endorses the right of every human being to hold whatever opinions he wishes, without

interference. Nonetheless, people are being thrown into prison in a great many countries, their only crime being that they have expressed inconvenient opinions. Amnesty International is an organization that deserves much credit for the way in which it has focused the attention of the world on the fate of many of these people."⁶

Similarly, the Netherlands Government has also been supportive of Amnesty International's work. The Dutch section of Amnesty International has discussions twice a year with the Minister of Foreign Affairs on general issues, and more often, if specific matters have to be discussed, such as the release of prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union.⁷

We have also seen how Amnesty International representatives are frequently invited to testify before U.S. Congressional committees and how its reports are used as documentation for reports issued by the State Department and the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. President Carter also made reference to the importance of the reports published by Amnesty International and other NGOs.⁸ However, there are limits to how far Amnesty International's objectives can be carried through by governments. These limits and other problems relating to Amnesty International's influence with governments will be analyzed in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Amnesty International and the Media

Both the Eastern and Western media were major actors in the battle over the rights of Soviet and Czechoslovak dissidents. However, unlike the situation in some of the Latin American countries, the government-

controlled press in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia did not serve as sources of information concerning human rights violations. Except for the purpose of countering publicity in the Western press, news of trials generally goes unreported. In some cases the Soviet news media acted as public accusers of dissidents, accusing them of crimes even before they were officially charged. The main functions of the Soviet and Czechoslovak press, in regard to the dissidents, were to counter Western criticism, support the official governmental positions, and to discredit the dissidents and their supporters.

In many respects the USSR and CSSR Governments appeared to be more concerned over the reporting of dissident activities than they were of efforts made by organizations such as Amnesty International or of statements made by Western leaders. While their most strident and consistent criticism was directed at the Western press, harsh words were however, also directed at Amnesty International. Criticism of Western governments and Western leaders was, for the most part, more restrained.

Without the Western media it is doubtful that a human rights campaign would exist. Without organizations such as Amnesty International it is doubtful that it could be sustained. As was discussed in Chapter 4 the media are vital in regard to the dissemination of information about human rights violations, but their attention span is limited. Massive amounts of information on the Soviet and Czech dissidents were showered upon the Western public sporadically as events occurred. Trials of dissidents were front-page news; prisoners languishing in prisons were not.

Despite the intermittent nature of the reporting of dissident

activities, it was still quite extensive. As such, Amnesty International's media strategy appeared to be aimed at filling the gaps, seeking to maintain a sustained pressure, and to focus attention on the problems relating to its work. With respect to this last aim, Amnesty International often issued press releases to gain publicity for its own activities as it did in 1977 when a member of its adoption group in Moscow was questioned by authorities. Similarly, in 1976 Amnesty International issued several press releases concerning its attempts to observe the trials in Czechoslovakia. And again, in 1979, a press release was issued saying that the Organization would seek permission from the Czech Government to observe a trial.

Since relatively few press releases were issued by the Organization, several possible reasons are suggested why Amnesty International sought publicity for its operational activities. First, of course, the Organization wanted to increase the pressure on the governments and perhaps bring about a measure of protection for its representatives. Second, these announcements alerted the Western public that Amnesty International was actively seeking to protect human rights in the particular situation. And third, it was likely that news of its efforts would be broadcast to the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia; it was expected that this would offer further encouragement to human rights activists in those countries.

It was to these international broadcasting services that the Soviet and Czechoslovak Governments directed their most vehement criticism. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were frequently singled out for criticism and occasionally jammed. Other stations such as the Voice of America, the BBC Foreign Service, Deutsche Welle and others were also targets of Soviet displeasure.

Soviet opposition to the Western media also extended into other areas such as the UNESCO efforts, backed by communist and third world countries, to put restrictions on the gathering and dissemination of news. Biased reporting on human rights is often cited as one of the reasons why such restrictions are needed.

Nongovernmental Organizations

Within the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia several unofficial organizations were formed after the signing of the Helsinki Agreement to monitor the implementation of the treaty in those countries. Within the Soviet Union some groups focused generally on the provisions of the Agreement while others had more specific and limited concerns. In Czechoslovakia Charter 77 had broad human rights concerns. Within both countries these groups saw themselves as part of a larger international network of organizations involved in the protection of human rights. Amnesty International, as one of the major human rights organizations in the West, was perceived as a vital link in that network.

Amnesty International's interest in and connection with these human rights and dissident groups predates the Helsinki Agreement going back to what has been called the beginning of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union -- the human rights demonstration held in Moscow in 1965. Since 1971 Amnesty International has been instrumental in disseminating news of these human rights activities by translating and publishing samizdat material.

Much of Amnesty International's work related to the civil and political rights outlined in its mandate centered on the activities of human rights activists in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. This

emphasis is a natural result of the process by which the Organization obtained its information. Through the various samizdat publications Soviet and Czech dissidents inform the West about events relating to human rights in their countries. Many of these events involve the persecution of persons connected with and producing these publications. Since these secretly produced writings are frequently the only source available that detail human rights violations in these countries, organizations in the West such as Amnesty International tend to rely on them.

The connection between Amnesty International and these dissident groups is crucial to the maintenance of its work relating to these countries. The importance of these links has also been recognized by the Soviet and Czech Governments which attempt to sever them as soon as they are made. For example, in addition to arresting dissidents who supply information to the West, others are harassed or forced to emigrate. For example, Andrei Tverdokhlebov, was sentenced to five years internal exile and then forced to emigrate upon his release. Other members of Amnesty International's Moscow adoption group were fired from their jobs or subjected to constant harassment by the K.G.B.⁹

The releases and expulsions of prominent dissidents from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia are generally regarded as "victories" in the West. Except for the individuals themselves who are freed, the victories are rather hollow for they accomplish several things for the communist governments. First, they deprive Western human rights organizations of their reason for protesting. Second, they deprive the fledgling human rights movements in these countries of their leaders. And third, they deprive organizations such as Amnesty International of their sources of information.

A related result is that once in the West dissidents are often no longer considered to be news by the media. Interviewing a dissident in the shadow of the Kremlin wall is news; interviewing the same dissident in Paris may not be. Consequently, less information about dissidents is available to be broadcast to the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia. The cycle becomes broken.

In the West, in addition to Amnesty International, numerous other organizations became involved in the protection of human rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. With many of these groups Amnesty International had informal contacts. Church, labor, political, and human rights groups frequently cite information developed by Amnesty International. As one example, a lobbyist for Americans for Democratic Action has said that 70 to 90 percent of its information about human rights comes from Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists.¹⁰

In Europe, the communist parties of France, Italy, and Spain were particularly active, to the consternation of the Soviet and Czech Governments, in generating support for the dissidents.

Amnesty International, International Human Rights Instruments, and Intergovernmental Organizations

As with the Latin American governments discussed in previous chapters, Amnesty International based its actions on behalf of political prisoners in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In Latin America the American Convention on Human Rights also came into play. The similarity, however, ends there. While Amnesty International

often sought to have the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights intervene in Latin America, its strategy in relation to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia did not include working through intergovernmental agencies. As far as could be determined the Organization only once submitted a statement to the UNCHR's Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities concerning the Soviet Union. Neither did Amnesty International give priority to working through the Helsinki review process. One observer has noted that "some international human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists, while continuing their very active work in defense of human rights have not placed special emphasis on the provisions of the Helsinki Agreement. Others, such as the International League for Human Rights, have made frequent reference to the Helsinki Final Act in relation to specific human rights problems."¹¹

Within the United Nations there is little likelihood that the UNCHR, given the frequent coalitions between the Eastern European and third world countries, would find that the treatment of dissidents constituted "a consistent pattern of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms" as required by the commission. The chances of an Amnesty International submission on human rights in the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia getting a hearing or being acted on is extremely remote; for Amnesty International to concentrate on this process would be considered a waste of resources.

It is possible that in the future Amnesty International may direct more of its attention to the UNCHR with respect to matters concerning human rights in Eastern Europe as that body widens its areas of concern. Different world situations and events bring about different coalitions

among the commission's members. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, for example, spurred a number of third world countries in 1980 to sponsor a resolution condemning the Soviet invasion as a violation of human rights. At the commission's 1980 session it also debated the plight of Andrei Sakharov and adopted a resolution to enlarge international protection of the right of human rights spokesmen to speak out. Thus, as the UNCHR expands its role and evolves it may develop into an agency that is more conducive to acting on submissions made by Amnesty International and others concerning human rights in Eastern Europe.

Under the provisions of the Helsinki Agreement there is no agency or machinery set up to supervise or monitor implementation of the sections dealing with human rights. There is also no provision that anticipates or provides for involvement in the process by NGOs. The review process that has been used -- the Conferences at Belgrade and Madrid -- proceeded in a polarized atmosphere with the West accusing the East of human rights violations and vice-versa. Had Amnesty International tried to openly intervene in that process, it is unlikely that it would have been able to do so and still maintain an image of the objective observer. Given its mandate, its concerns would have reflected those of the Western delegates to the conferences rather than the concerns of the Eastern bloc. In such a politically charged atmosphere this would have diminished the Organization's reputation of independence and the possibility of attaining any future influence with the Soviet Union or the other Eastern European nations.

Another factor that has to be considered is the attitude of the Soviet Union and the other Eastern European states concerning international action based on international human rights treaties. The Soviet Union does not deny that it has certain obligations under the various international human rights instruments. It even admits that interpretations are to be

derived by international means. For example, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has a requirement that states report on progress being made to the Human Rights Committee. The Soviet Union accepts this requirement, but does not accept extensive inquiries about these reports. Beyond a certain point scrutiny is considered interference in its internal affairs.

The position of the communist states is that human rights of individuals can be determined only by national rather than international law. International obligations require only that states undertake measures to protect human rights and that they assume an obligation with respect to international cooperation to promote and protect human rights.¹³ International law involves the relations between states; individuals, in the Soviet view, are not subjects of international law. The focus of such intergovernmental bodies such as the UNCHR should be on gross violations of human rights that result from colonialism, racial discrimination, and the denial of self-determination.¹⁴

There is, however, a common area of agreement between the communist states of Eastern Europe and Amnesty International in that both consider the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a morally legitimate document, although these governments do not consider it legally binding in terms of international law.¹⁵ What is considered to be binding is the obligation of states to incorporate the rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into their constitutions and national law.¹⁶ The area of agreement, however, ends there. The communist view is summed up by an East German authority:

What the 1966 human rights accord which is authoritative in terms of international law and universal in its tendency can in all realism amount to is a compromise on agreement, negotiated before the forum of the international public, among states, some of which differ in their social systems, about the measures, means and methods required in the interest of safeguarding peace and interstate cooperation in the economic, scientific, cultural, and humanitarian fields.

...How these treaty partners...make their internal legal condition compatible with their interstate obligations is set down in their own legal systems. If some international convention gives no special rules about it, each state must decide on its own, in conformity with its own constitution, how it will transform its international law obligations into domestic law...It is not however within the area of United Nations responsibility to meddle with any intrastate guaranteeing of civil rights. 17

Given this interpretation of the various international human rights instruments by the East European governments, Amnesty International made little effort to utilize the mechanisms available for implementation, unlike its practice with respect to the Latin American countries. Nevertheless, the Organization did stress in its two reports the legal basis for arrests, trials, and imprisonment of dissidents. It also pointed out how national practices fell short of a particular country's own laws and international human rights standards.

Human Rights Concepts

As pointed out above, Amnesty International's views on the applicability of the rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights contrasted with the view of authorities in the Eastern communist states. These authorities consider that:

The questions of democracy, human rights, and free development of the individual cannot be

considered outside the context of the class struggle and the confrontation between the two diametrically opposed social systems.

The socialist states proceed from the assumption that the problem of human rights is rooted in social conditions and that it is impossible to ensure all-round development of the individual and real exercise of civil and political rights without granting social and economic rights. 19

Amnesty International, on the other hand, says it "neither understands nor accepts the attempts sometimes made to create a conflict or a contradiction between these two sets of rights...in the long run, civil and political rights are the basis of the other rights, and also of those of a collective nature."²⁰

For the communist theoreticians "no natural human rights exist ...and such a concept is only a bourgeois interpretation dating from the era when the bourgeoisie appeared on the world scene as a progressive class in the struggle with the representation of feudal society and when the emphasis on the natural character of human rights and freedoms played a positive role..."²¹ It is said that the abstract concept of natural human rights reflects the social position of man as an isolated individual rather than as a part of the society at large.

From this basic assumption of the communist states that the rights of the individual cannot be considered apart from the social conditions within a society, the conclusion is drawn that "these rights can be exercised only in harmony with the society's general interests and with other requirements made by the constitution...Freedom of thought and of criticism cannot mean that anyone should be able... to endeavor to undermine the peaceful constructive work of our socialist society..."²²

Rights are granted by the state and can be exercised only in conformity with state interests. The relationship between the individual's rights and his duty to the state was outlined by one Soviet authority in an article in Pravda.

The exercise of political freedoms under socialism -- in view of their close link with the citizen's participation in the management of the state and society -- entails two important consequences. First, the enjoyment of political freedoms is inextricably linked with the discharge of duties to society. Every citizen must observe the USSR Constitution and Soviet laws; safeguard the interests of the Soviet state, promote the consolidation of its strength and prestige, and defend the socialist fatherland; every able-bodied citizen must work conscientiously in a sphere of socially useful activity chosen by him and must observe labor discipline, and every citizen must safeguard and reinforce socialist ownership and combat embezzlement and squandering of state and public property; respect the national dignity of other citizens; and strengthen the friendship of the Soviet Union's nations and nationalities. This unity of the citizen's political rights and duties attests to the organic link between freedom and responsibility under socialism. 23

When an individual exercises his freedom of opinion and expression in a manner which is considered to be outside the framework outlined above, it is considered to be a criminal act. Punishment of such acts is based on Articles 70 and 190-1 of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) Criminal Code, which deal with anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda and attempts to defame the state and the Soviet social system. As the following commentary by a Czechoslovak newspaper shows, punishment of such deviance is not denying human rights, but protecting them:

The punishment of these individuals constitutes punishment on the basis of and in accordance with the law, and on the basis of a court sentence. This then is not "evidence" of an isolation of human rights, but proof of how the

socialist state determinedly protects these rights. Someone may object that such an approach, after all, constitutes a restriction of liberty -- because no one is accorded the right to fight socialism in our country. In our view, the withholding of such a right from a negligible group in fact assures the rights of society as a whole, and of each of its members in particular. 24

Western approaches to human rights take the opposite position; assuring the rights of individuals will benefit the society at large. The concept of the supremacy of the state over human rights presents Amnesty International and other Western organizations with a formidable obstacle in their attempts to influence Soviet behavior concerning the treatment of dissidents. However, by concentrating on the contradictions between Soviet law and practice, particularly as they relate to arrests, trials, and sentencing of dissidents, the Organization anticipated that some changes may be effected. For example, under Soviet law persons can be convicted of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda only if it can be proved that these persons intended to undermine or weaken the Soviet state or that they knew the material they were disseminating contained slanderous falsehoods. Amnesty International pointed out that these restrictions within the law were not observed by Soviet courts.²⁵ Similarly, the Organization noted the discrepancies between law and practice in regard to a defendant's right to counsel and to an open trial. The strategy involved was: (1) pointing out these shortcomings might have had an impact on Soviet prestige and; (2) it was probably easier to make the Soviet Union live up to its own standards than to internationally established standards. Attaining strict adherence to Soviet law would in itself

represent an improvement. Once that was established, then the Organization could concentrate on international standards.

Effectiveness

In discussing Amnesty International's effectiveness in protecting human rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia the same criteria considered in the Latin American case are considered here:

1. The direct effect of Amnesty International's efforts on political prisoners.
2. The effect of Amnesty International's pressure on the target governments.
3. The effect of Amnesty International's influence on other governments.
4. The effectiveness of Amnesty International's influence on IGOs and NGOs.
5. The promotion of human rights.

In its 1980 report on political prisoners in the Soviet Union Amnesty International said, "During the past four years the abuses documented in the first edition of this report have remained part of the official practice in the USSR. Dissenters in various categories have been arrested and imprisoned for non-violent exercises of their human rights and sentenced to imprisonment, frequently under criminal legislation which explicitly restricts the nonviolent exercise of human rights...Amnesty International still has not heard of a single case in which a Soviet court has acquitted someone charged with political or religious offences."²⁶

Despite the efforts made by Amnesty International, Western governments, other NGOs, and individuals, there is virtually no evidence that dissenters or political prisoners fared better at the end of the period

reviewed than at the beginning. The few highly publicized releases that occurred were executed to serve Soviet policy and were not necessarily in response to Western protests. The Western protests provided the Soviet Union with names of persons they could exchange. While the celebrity status of certain prisoners contributed to their being included in the exchanges that took place, it could be argued that it served others detrimentally. For example, five well-known dissidents were exchanged for two spies and another was exchanged for a Chilean communist. Perhaps two spies might have been worth 50 or 100 less well-known prisoners. Certainly the dissidents who were exchanged and released to the West benefited as did other dissidents who were sent into exile in the West. The dilemma, however, will probably continue, for the problem remains as to how best to focus public attention on the plight of dissidents. The public imagination is better able to identify with one or two heroic individuals than it can with faceless and nameless hundreds.

Amnesty International's strategy regarding political prisoners is two-pronged. First, the Organization works for a relatively large number of political prisoners in the Soviet Union. This results in a large continuous volume of protests directed to Soviet authorities by its members. Second, it focuses on certain prisoners for whom support can be mobilized. In this way, religious organizations, organizations working for Soviet Jewry, other human rights organizations, feminists, etc. can be mobilized on behalf of these dissidents. Widespread press coverage is, of course, necessary to generate further responses by governments.

While these protests, by Amnesty International's own admission, did not bring about any visible improvement in the situation for dissidents either in the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia, there was the expectation that over time incremental changes will occur. Certainly, the Soviet Union in the 1980s is different from what it was in the 1950s. Improvements can be seen in certain areas. Although Amnesty International sees the new (1977) Soviet Constitution as institutionalizing unjustifiable restrictions on Soviet citizens, other observers see the new Constitution as containing more references to law and legality and more references to the rights of individuals. In addition, current criminal legislation is less harsh. Also, in 1977, a decree of the Supreme Soviet is said to have alleviated the conditions of prisoners.

Certainly, there still exists a wide gap between the law and its practice and due process is lacking. But over the long run certain changes do occur. Whether or not these incremental changes are influenced by Western protests would be impossible to prove. More likely these changes come about because of a combination of factors, one of which is the necessity of a maturing revolutionary industrialized society to have a stable, efficient, and nonarbitrary legal system.

Although Amnesty International's efforts did not convince the governments of the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia to free many political prisoners, its efforts did produce a reaction. Both governments, as was seen in the previous chapter, were highly critical of the Organization's activities and considered them as part of the overall anti-Soviet and anti-Czechoslovak campaigns. In at least one case a dissident was indicted, in part, for specifically passing information to Amnesty International's representatives.

Obviously, judging from the strong criticism of Amnesty International by the Soviet and Czech media, the Organization's work struck raw nerves and its potential influence was taken seriously. An Izvestiya article said that Amnesty International's news releases and brochures prepared in its International Secretariat could be compared to logs which help feed the fire of anti-Soviet campaigns in the West.²⁷

Soviet criticism of Amnesty International is usually tempered somewhat by saying that the Organization does contain some sincere, progressive individuals. The caveat is probably due to the fact that in other situations Amnesty International's reports have been cited to back up Soviet positions. This is especially true in regard to Chile.²⁸

However, considered as part of the anti-Soviet campaign, the Organization is regarded as any other entity that poses a threat to the stability of the Soviet system; organizations posing such a threat are to be isolated, discredited, and if possible, neutralized. Certainly the Western media are considered greater threats, but as the above reference to the Izvestiya article noted, Amnesty International is seen as being part of the media campaign.

The Soviet and Czech response to Amnesty International was similar to the reactions of the Latin American governments considered in this study. In both areas attacks were levelled at the Organization. In all cases the governments included Amnesty International in what they considered to be orchestrated campaigns directed at their countries. There were, of course, slight variations. Argentina permitted an Amnesty International mission to visit the country to investigate the human rights situation. In Chile a Church-sponsored symposium on human rights was held and was attended by the Secretary General of Amnesty

International. It is highly unlikely that a similar gathering could have been held in the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia.

The reaction to Amnesty International's efforts by Western governments was substantially different. We have seen how a number of Western governments were actively involved in the protests over the treatment of dissidents in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. This is not to say that these governments were involved simply because of Amnesty International's activities. The press, other organizations, the European communist parties, and political leaders were all involved in the process. As the Chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe put it:

The desire for CSCE implementation by Western organizations, like that of Eastern activists, has translated into pressure on governments to encourage compliance. The essential difference lies in the manner in which political leaders have responded. In the East, demands have been feared as a symbolic undermining of the basic political structure, and communist regimes have reacted with increased harassments, repressions, and arrests. The impact of increased public opinion has been a largely positive response from government officials. Private groups have been plugged into the governmental process ...the knowledge and resources of these non-governmental bodies are now an integral part of the monitoring and encouragement of CSCE implementation. 29

To the extent that Amnesty International contributed to this process over others would be difficult to determine without access to documents detailing these activities. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a generalized level of support for Amnesty International by many Western governments. This generalized support does not always translate into support for specific cases or situations since there are constraints on governmental actions in this area. In the final chapter of this study, these relationships and constraints will be discussed further.

Although Amnesty International has relations with various international organizations, its strategy regarding the protection of human rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia did not stress working through such organizations. This is in contrast to its strategy with respect to Latin America. Given the record of the UNCHR, attempting to work through that body during the period under review would not have been fruitful. Amnesty International did, however, make one submission to the UNCHR's subcommission dealing with the abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union and Romania. As mentioned above, as the role of the UNCHR expands, Amnesty International may be expected to direct more of its attention to that body.

Through its efforts to protect human rights in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, Amnesty International is inevitably involved with other nongovernmental organizations in those countries and in the West that are working toward the same goals. The organizations in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia form part of the network by which information about human rights is written, translated, published, and distributed. During the post-Helsinki years these groups have been indispensable sources of information. If members of these groups were arrested and tried, Amnesty International worked to generate support on their behalf. The Organization's ability to produce accurate information about human rights activities within these countries is highly dependent upon the continued existence of these groups. The response of governments to these linkages is discussed further in the final chapter.

Naturally, Amnesty International is not the only organization in the West to which the dissident groups look. On occasion Amnesty International will work with these other Western organizations in regard

to specific situations or cases as it did with the International Committee of Mathematicians for the Defense of Yury Shikhanovich and Leonid Plyusch. In another instance it made material available to the World Psychiatric Association when it met in Honolulu. In other instances it cooperated with other NGOs when statements were submitted to intergovernmental organizations. One such statement submitted to the United Nations dealt with persons subjected to any form of detention or imprisonment and did not single out any particular country.

Inevitably, in the process of working to protect human rights -- by its reports, press conferences, and press releases -- Amnesty International contributed to the promotion of human rights. Its reports on the Soviet Union were generally regarded in the West, particularly by the press and such governmental bodies as the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe as definitive and authoritative. Other information the Organization produced was frequently widely distributed to other organizations.

To sum up, it is concluded that Amnesty International's efforts produced little direct improvement in the treatment of dissidents; that its activities were extremely discomfiting to the USSR and CSSR Governments; that it occasionally was able, in concert with the media and other groups, to prompt Western leaders to speak out on human rights violations; and that its effectiveness with intergovernmental bodies depended upon the political alignments within those bodies.

Footnotes

¹Amnesty International Report 1978, pp. 226-227.

²Amnesty International Report 1980, pp. 11 and 13.

³The New York Times, Nov. 19, 1980.

⁴The New York Times, Nov. 12, 1980.

⁵Letter from Mag. Franz Schneider, Chairperson - Amnesty International, Austrian Section, Oct. 9, 1980. See also preface to Thomas Claudius and Franz Stepan, Amnesty International: Portrait Einer Organization (Munich, Wien: R. Oldenbourg, 1978) written by Austrian Chancellor, Bruno Kreisky.

⁶Speech by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Andersson, at the General Assembly of the United Nations: 23rd September, Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1975, Minister for Foreign Affairs, (Stockholm: 1977), p. 73. See also Press Release, 26th February, Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1974 (Stockholm: 1976), p. 154 and Swedish Draft Resolution in the United Nations concerning political prisoners; 29th November, Documents on Swedish Foreign Policy 1976 (Stockholm: 1978), p. 151 for further comments on the Swedish Government's attitude toward the work of Amnesty International.

⁷Letter from Teunis Kamper, Campaign Coordinator, Dutch Section, Amnesty International, Jan. 13, 1981. See also Human Rights and Foreign Policy. Memorandum presented to the Lower House of the States General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on 3 May 1979. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (The Hague: 1979), pp. 67-70, 77 on Dutch attitudes toward Amnesty International and other NGOs.

⁸Dept. of State Bulletin, January, 1979, p. 1.

⁹Implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Findings and Recommendations Five Years After Helsinki. Report submitted to the Congress of the United States by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Washington: 1980), pp. 93-94.

¹⁰David B. Ottaway, "The Growing Lobby for Human Rights," Washington Post, Dec. 12, 1976, Section B., p. 1.

¹¹Virginia Leary, "The Implementation of the Human Rights Provisions of the Helsinki Final Act. A Preliminary Assessment: 1975-1977," in Thomas Buerghenthal and Judith R. Hall (eds), Human Rights, International Law, and the Helsinki Accord, (Montclair, N.Y.: Allanheld Osmun/Universe Books, 1977), p. 125.

¹²"Human Rights: The Soviet Report to the International Committee," Soviet Life, May, 1979, No. 5.

¹³Franciszek Przetacznik, "The Socialist Concept of Protection of Human Rights," Social Research, Vol. 38, No. 2, Summer, 1971.

¹⁴V. Zorin, "International Cooperation in the Sphere of Human Rights," International Affairs (Moscow), Sept., 1979.

¹⁵Herman Klenner, "Human Rights and International Law," Einheit (East Berlin), Vol. 33, No. 11, Nov., 1978. Joint Publications Research Service, No. 72512, p. 34.

¹⁶V. Kartashkin, "Human Rights and the Modern World," International Affairs (Moscow), No. 1, 1979.

¹⁷Klenner, op. cit.

¹⁸Vincent McGee (Chairman of the Board, AIUSA), "Reaffirming a Mandate," AIUSA Anniversary Supplement, May, 1981.

¹⁹O. Rusakova, "Human Rights and International Relations," International Affairs (Moscow), Feb., 1980, p. 84.

²⁰Amnesty International Report 1978, p. 1.

²¹Zdenek Kostal, "Two Concepts of Human Rights," Zivot Strany (Prague), No. 13, June 20, 1977, pp. 48-50. Joint Publications Research Service No. 69621, p. 15.

²²Imre Szabo, "Human Rights in Our Homeland," Nepszabadsag (Budapest), April 4, 1979, p. 7. Joint Publications Research Service, No. 073555, p. 61.

²³D. Zlatopolsky, "Questions of Theory: Developed Socialism and Political Freedoms," Pravda (Moscow), Mar. 14, 1980, pp. 2-3. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report, Soviet Union, Mar. 27, 1980.

²⁴Pravda (Bratislava), Feb. 1, 1978, p. 1. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report, Eastern Europe, Feb. 14, 1978.

²⁵Prisoners of Conscience in the USSR: Their Treatment and Conditions (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1980), p. 11.

²⁶Ibid., p. 1.

²⁷As cited in Amnesty Action, April, 1981.

²⁸See for instance the statement of the representative of the Byelorussian SSR in UN Document E/CN. 4/SR.1318.

²⁹Dante B. Fascell, "The Helsinki Accord: A Case Study," Annals, March, 1979, p. 73.

CHAPTER 7

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Amnesty International's activities concerning human rights in Africa reflect the range of its mandate. Reports of torture are said to be common. The death penalty, as well as extra-judicial killings constitute another concern of the Organization. Prison conditions are said to fall far short of the standards set by the United Nations. Political trials and the lack of due process in a number of countries are said to violate international human rights standards.

During the period under review Amnesty International intervened in a large percentage of African countries in order to assist persons whose rights were violated. With respect to most of these countries Amnesty International's actions were sporadic, responding to specific events or reports. In some years a single cable or letter from the Organization's headquarter's constituted its only public action, apart from whatever communications were sent by its adoption groups on behalf of individual prisoners. Countries such as Liberia, Niger, Cameroun, Djibouti, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zaire (until the end of the period), to name only a few, were the targets of few interventions. Those countries closer to Europe such as the North African countries of Libya, Morocco, and Egypt received somewhat more attention by Amnesty International. However, leftist Algeria was virtually ignored. By

1979 the Organization had published reports on human rights violations in Uganda, Ethiopia, Guinea, and Morocco.

In contrast, an overwhelming amount of activity was directed toward South Africa, with Rhodesia a close second. The extent of this activity toward South Africa equaled or perhaps even surpassed that directed toward the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. Although Rhodesia was the target of more actions than Uganda, the latter is selected for review to include an African country under a non-European regime.

The sparse attention paid to most of the African countries by Amnesty International was not due to a lack of interest; it was due primarily to the lack of information and the limits on the Organization's potential for influence in the area. In testimony before the United States House of Representatives subcommittee, Amnesty International's representatives outlined some of the factors that affected the process of information gathering essential to its work. Among the factors listed is an awareness of the existence of human rights by the population at large. In some countries the average citizen may not even have had the expectation that rights should not be violated.

Another factor cited was whether a citizen could be confident that reporting a violation would not lead to further reprisals. In such a case a society with the most flagrant violations may not even be cited by an international organization because fear by the populace makes reliable information unavailable. Other factors included the role of the press and the extent of the coverage of human rights violations, whether an independent judiciary existed, and whether there were organizations within the country dedicated to the protection of human rights.¹

When considering these factors, among others, it is not surprising that Amnesty International concentrated on South Africa. Despite the system of apartheid, the country had a developed legal system, a robust press, and a language understood by Europeans and North Americans. In addition, since South Africa's geographic position had strategic importance in East-West politics, what happened in South Africa was of interest to Western countries. Although other factors may limit the amount of information available to Amnesty International (such as the "banning" of journalists), the highly developed infrastructure of the country made it easier for the Organization to collect information on human rights there than in other African countries.

In some countries such as Uganda and Equatorial Guinea Amnesty International was unable to work for individual political prisoners because they were either immediately killed or forced into exile.² In these situations the Organization developed a technique whereby its groups worked on "Country Action" dossiers. By the use of this technique Amnesty International's groups campaigned for all, rather than individual, political prisoners.³

Another factor that added to the difficulties encountered by Western human rights organizations was the general instability of the post-colonial African states. There have been serious conflicts between ethno-linguistic groups and among elites in many African countries. Between 1958 and 1970, for example, "there were 40 successful coups d'etat, 17 attempted ones, and five assassinations of heads of government."⁴ According to John K. Ebiasah, since attaining their independence the governments of black African nations, with few exceptions, "have engaged in a systematic erosion of the fundamental rights and freedoms of their citizens...

successful and unsuccessful attempts to take over governments by force have become a way of life in both Anglophone and Francophone Africa."⁵

Given this environment -- the numerous conflicts, general disregard for traditional civil rights, the lack of continuity of governments, and the lack of information -- with respect to many African countries, Amnesty International was unable to carry through sustained campaigns. Occasionally, when governments changed, political prisoners would be released by the new rulers. However, as was the case in Uganda, the release of prisoners would be followed by new arrests and killings.

Thus, given its limited resources, Amnesty International had to establish priorities; with respect to sub-Saharan Africa the Organization apparently determined that its resources could be best utilized by concentrating on southern Africa.

Uganda

Background

During most of the period under review, 1975-1979, Uganda was ruled by Idi Amin who came to power in 1971. He was forced out of office in April, 1979 after Tanzanian and Ugandan guerrilla forces captured the capital.

Under Amin Uganda was considered to be one of the world's worst offenders of human rights. One writer has said that Amin "turned his nation into a slaughterhouse."⁶ Another said that Amin relied on official terror.⁷ A former Attorney General of Uganda (who was president briefly after Amin's downfall) said the country "is one vast chamber of horrors, where the members of the armed forces murder, maim,

and rob unarmed civilians at will on orders of the most vicious and brutal dictator in modern times."⁸

Soon after Amin assumed power there began a series of killings of soldiers who were members of the tribes from which the former president drew his support -- the Lango and the Acholi.⁹ The former president, Dr. Milton Obote, was a member of the Lango tribe. The numerous killings have been documented by Michael H. Posner in testimony before a United States Senate subcommittee.¹⁰

In addition to killing his opponents, Amin initiated a large-scale expulsion of Asians who had been living in Uganda. In August, 1972 Amin said that the Asians, who numbered between 60,000 and 80,000 had to leave the country within 90 days.¹¹ Most of the Asians who left were helped to resettle by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the governments of Great Britain, Canada, the United States, India, Pakistan, Australia, and several European countries.¹²

Up until 1975 the random killings, the massacres, the arrests, and the torture continued. In a report published by the International Commission of Jurists in 1974 it was noted that thousands of Ugandans had been killed and that the rule of law was no longer observed. The ICJ report was presented to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, but no action was taken by that body.

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1979

There is little available evidence that Amnesty International gave much attention to Uganda during the years 1975-76. In its 1974-1975 annual report Amnesty International said the major problem continued to be the disappearance of opponents of Idi Amin rather than political

imprisonment.¹³ Reacting to a specific event which was widely reported by the Western press, Amnesty International became involved in the Dennis Hills affair. Hills, who was a British teacher and author, was arrested in Uganda and sentenced to death by a firing squad. In attempts to intervene on Hills' behalf Amnesty International on June 12th, 1975, sent cables to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and to various African heads of state asking for their help.¹⁴ Eventually, through negotiations between Uganda and Great Britain, Hills was released. His arrest and sentence had caused a crisis atmosphere to develop between the two countries.¹⁵

After having taken virtually no public actions concerning Uganda in 1976, Amnesty International began to increase its activities in 1977. Although the Organization was concerned about a variety of human rights abuses by the Ugandan regime, a single event caught the attention of the Western press and public. This was the killing of Archbishop Janani Luwum. He was the Archbishop of Uganda, Burundi, and Boga-Zaire. Early in 1977, Amnesty International announced through a press release that it had submitted a report on human rights violations to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.¹⁶ This was followed by a cable to President Amin -- coupled with a press release on February 17th -- indicating the Organization's concern over the deaths of persons who had been held in custody.¹⁷

Later in 1977, in an apparent attempt to generate additional pressure, Amnesty International's International Council, which met at Bad Honnef, West Germany, recommended that the Organization's national sections ask their respective governments to see that its report to the UNCHR be brought up at the next meeting of the commission. The UNCHR had tabled the report indefinitely. The International Council also recommended that

the Organization ask the OAU to intervene in Uganda.¹⁸

Increased publicity was given to events in Uganda by Amnesty International through its Newsletter. In January of 1977 the Organization reported "a continuing pattern of government-sanctioned atrocities in Uganda."¹⁹ Four additional issues of the Newsletter included articles which focused on human rights violations in Uganda.

Continuing to intervene directly in the human rights situation, Amnesty International cabled President Amin to commute the sentences of twelve persons who were to be executed. The Organization also requested the United Nations, the OAU, and several African heads of state to intervene to prevent the public executions. Simultaneously with these requests the Organization activated its members in an "urgent action" campaign.²⁰

Normally Amnesty International's groups constitute a major resource upon which the Organization can draw as part of its strategy toward a particular country. In the case of Uganda, as was noted above, the Organization was unable to adopt prisoners; they were either killed, disappeared, or their names were unknown. In addition, relatives who might have supplied information about arrests feared reprisals if they protested. In other situations, such as massacres where hundreds or even thousands of persons were killed, obtaining identification of the victims was virtually impossible. In response to this situation Amnesty International undertook special campaigns during 1977 and 1978 "in which groups protested to the Ugandan authorities, distributed information in their own countries, and sought to involve other concerned individuals and organizations in their appeals and publicity."²¹

In an attempt to gather support from American lawmakers Amnesty International in June of 1978 prepared a report to be presented to a subcommittee of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The report outlined the "overthrow of the rule of law...the extensive practice of murder by government security forces, which often reaches massacre proportions...the institutionalized use of torture" and the regime's disregard for international opinion.²² The report was also published internationally.

During the remainder of the period until Amin's overthrow in April, 1979 Amnesty International continued to publicize human rights violations in Uganda. After Amin's overthrow the Organization cabled its congratulations to the new president. However, the human rights situation did not seem to improve. In its 1979 annual report Amnesty International noted that after Amin was overthrown, hundreds of political prisoners were released from various prisons.²³ But in its 1980 report the Organization said that more than 5,500 members of Amin's security forces were being detained. In the capital, Kampala, it was said that there were waves of killings, sometimes as many as 100 a week.²⁴

Other Transnational and International Actions

While Uganda's Amin was generally condemned by Western observers, attention appeared to center on specific events. In 1975 it was the Dennis Hills affair. In 1977 Western attention focused on Uganda due to the killing of the Archbishop of Uganda, Burundi, and Boga-Zaire, Janani Luwum.

In 1975 international action seemed to be aimed towards support of the British Government in its quarrel with Uganda over the Hills affair

rather than as a protest over the large-scale human rights violations. In June of 1975, in the midst of the negotiations between Great Britain and Uganda involving Hills, the West German Government announced that development assistance would be forthcoming only if domestic opponents of Amin and jailed foreigners were pardoned.²⁵

Several African heads of state also were moved to intervene in the Hills affair on behalf of the British Government. President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya sent a telegram to Amin.²⁶ Other African leaders such as the Ivory Coast President Felix Houphouet Boigny, Ghana's Colonel Ignatius Acheampong,²⁷ and Gabon's President Bongo²⁸ appealed to Amin to spare Hills' life.

Perhaps in a delayed response to the Hills affair, Denmark in 1976 announced that all aid to Uganda would be terminated.²⁹

In a separate development, having already severely limited diplomatic relations with Uganda, the United States became embroiled in a new dispute with Amin and his supporters. In 1975, following a speech by Amin at the United Nations General Assembly, the United States Ambassador, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, denounced Amin as a "racist murderer."³⁰ This attack brought an immediate response from many African, Arab, and other delegations assailing Moynihan's remarks. The representatives of Dahomey, who spoke for the 46-member African group of nations in the United Nations, said it was a deliberate act of provocation against Amin.³¹

Moynihan's remarks were partly addressed to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) which, despite the charges of atrocities attributed to the Amin regime, held its 12th annual summit meeting in Kampala, the capital of Uganda. As the leader of the host country Amin assumed the chairmanship of the OAU. Three countries -- Botswana, Tanzania, and

Zambia -- elected to boycott the Kampala meeting.³² Although there were protests by others over the choice of the site for the OAU summit, the principle of noninterference in another nation's internal affairs tended to take precedence over concerns about human rights.³³

Despite the endorsement of Amin by the OAU, some African countries, particularly Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia complained about specific instances when human rights were violated. In July, 1976, Kenya protested to the United Nations Security Council about the massacre of Kenyans by the Amin regime.³⁴ The Tanzanian Government began inquiries into reports that 100 students were killed at Makerere University.³⁵ Concerned about the safety of 27 Zambian students at the same university, Zambia also made inquiries.³⁶

Of the nongovernmental organizations involved with the question of human rights violations in Uganda, most notable was the International Commission of Jurists. In addition to the report it published in 1974, the ICJ submitted five communications to the United Nations. In 1976 the UNCHR's Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted a resolution requesting that the UNCHR undertake a thorough study of human rights in Uganda; by the end of 1976 no action had been taken.³⁷

International criticism of the Amin regime mounted in 1977 after Archbishop Luwum was killed by Ugandan security forces. Prior to his being killed the Archbishop had tried to meet with Amin to talk about problems in Uganda, but was rebuffed. Apparently the Archbishop's initiative provoked Amin, for several days later the prelate's house was searched by security forces. After his death Uganda radio reported that the Archbishop had been killed in an auto accident.³⁸ The announcement brought immediate international protests.

One protest was made by Great Britain. That nation called on the UNCHR to investigate the deaths of Luwum as well as others, but the request was turned down. The UNCHR's decision was, in turn, denounced by Great Britain's Foreign Secretary, David Owen.³⁹

In the United States the President and the Secretary of State publicly condemned the human rights abuses in Uganda; this led to threats against Americans living in Uganda.⁴⁰ On February 17, 1977, the new Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, called the deaths of Luwum and others assassinations. Later, in 1978, both houses of Congress held hearings on human rights in Uganda. Recommendations were made by several witnesses that legislation be passed prohibiting the importation of Ugandan coffee.⁴¹ Responding to these recommendations and the continuing violation of human rights in Uganda, Congress banned further trade with Uganda. The ban was to last until the President determined that gross violations of human rights were no longer occurring. After Amin was deposed, the ban was lifted.⁴²

At the United Nations, although the UNCHR had rejected the British proposal concerning Uganda, the Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, did call for an impartial investigation into the Archbishop's death.⁴³ This initiative was followed up by the five Nordic countries which submitted a draft resolution to the General Assembly calling for an investigation into what were called crimes against fundamental human rights in Uganda.⁴⁴ By March, 1978, the UNCHR finally announced it had taken actions on nine countries, including Uganda; the nature of those actions was not made public.

Other international action was taken by the Commonwealth nations

and by the EEC. The Commonwealth heads of state, meeting in June of 1977, issued a statement condemning the repression in Uganda.⁴⁵ The statement noted that the "excesses were so gross as to warrant the world's concern."⁴⁶ The EEC decided to bar all aid to Uganda that would permit the country to continue violating human rights.⁴⁷

On the nongovernmental side the International Commission of Jurists and the World Council of Churches called for an investigation. Other church groups and officials added their voices to the condemnations.⁴⁸

The Ugandan Response

Perhaps the most significant response by Uganda to the various charges of human rights violations throughout the five-year period was the continued violations. Despite the reports by nongovernmental organizations and the widespread governmental condemnations of the Amin regime, reports of new abuses continued. In addition to the reports of students massacred at Makerere University in 1976, other reports dealt with "atrocities that were occurring at Naguru Prison in Kampala."⁴⁹ Even Ugandan military officers were not safe. After the Israeli raid on Entebbe Airport in July of 1976 numerous senior military officers were killed.⁵⁰

As the reports of the massacre at Makerere University were carried by the British Broadcasting Corporation, Amin was prompted to issue a denial and to appeal to British journalists to stop making false reports. By reporting the story, Amin said, the BBC had degraded the standard of the British news media.⁵¹

After the UNCHR refused to consider the report submitted by the

International Commission of Jurists in 1976 Uganda Radio said that the chargees had been based on allegations by expelled Asians and Ugandans. It said, "These people, in collaboration with the imperialists, carried out a smear campaign intended to damage the name of Uganda and, in particular its leader, President Amin."⁵²

In an apparent response to outside criticism, Amin, in late 1974, had set up a Commission of Inquiry to investigate disappearances in Uganda. The report of the commission, which was never made public, was completed in 1975 and apparently named 308 persons who had disappeared.⁵³ After the British press reported that 250,000 persons had disappeared, Amin condemned the media and said that only the 308 persons named by the Commission of Inquiry were missing.⁵⁴

Amnesty International was also singled out by Amin. In his October 1, 1975, speech at the United Nations Amin said that Amnesty International was blackmailing over 100 nations of the world. The Organization, he said, was "fed on rumors and concoctions from discredited criminals in exile" and contributed to the "smear campaigns perpetuated by colonial and imperialistic powers."⁵⁵

Apparently the reports about Uganda in the Western press nettled Amin, but they were not likely to move him to institute reforms. Amin was particularly critical of the British who, he said, could not solve their own problems. And as Kampala Radio reported, "The President noted with concern that there are so many people in other parts of the world dying because of political activities and wondered why the imperialists are focusing their attention on Uganda, where there is nobody arrested because of political activities."⁵⁶

Always present was the threat of reprisals against nationals of

countries that criticized the Amin regime. For a time, Amin barred all Americans from leaving the country, for example.

Summary

As the above shows, despite international protests against the human rights violations in Uganda, its President seemed almost oblivious to outside concern. Amnesty International's activities, as part of those protests, fell far short of that directed to other countries discussed in this study. The reasons for this diminished level of activity despite the extensive and continuing violations of human rights in Uganda, are discussed in the following chapter.

South Africa

Introduction

Amnesty International's efforts on behalf of political prisoners in South Africa is and has been a part of the anti-apartheid movement which has opposed the white-minority ruled regime in that country. Apartheid has been declared by the United Nations General Assembly as a crime against humanity. This assessment, that apartheid as officially proclaimed by the South African Government is, by itself, a massive violation of human rights, has influenced the range of transnational and governmental actions taken against South Africa. Amnesty International sees apartheid as a system of institutionalized racial segregation and domination which constricts the rights of all South Africans.

The scope of this study prohibits a full and detailed account of the numerous international and transnational actions taken on behalf of the anti-apartheid movement. Therefore, this section, unlike the previous

sections devoted to individual countries, will limit the main discussion to an overview of Amnesty International's activities during the 1975-1979 period and the primary South African response. However, a brief review of the international and transnational activities relating to the protection of human rights in South Africa is in order to put the activities of Amnesty International in perspective.

As has been noted in other sections of this study, South Africa has often been singled out by the United Nations for criticism because of human rights violations there. International pressure directed at the system of apartheid was often channeled, at first, through the Organization of African Unity and then through the United Nations.⁵⁷ Within the United Nations, concern over the racial policies of South Africa dates back to 1946. In that year the Indian Government complained to the General Assembly about the treatment of persons of Indian origin in South Africa.⁵⁸ When the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, South Africa was one of eight states that abstained.⁵⁹ In the succeeding years the United Nations adopted a series of resolutions dealing with the South African policy of apartheid. As early as 1952 the General Assembly established a commission to study the racial situation in South Africa. In response to these actions and resolutions the South African Government insisted that its racial policies were entirely within its domestic jurisdiction and not subject to inquiry by the United Nations.⁶⁰

By 1962 the U.N. General Assembly escalated its attack on South Africa. It passed resolution 1761 (XVII), the intent of which was to secure a complete economic and political boycott of South Africa. It also formed a Special Committee on Apartheid.⁶¹ Actions by the world

community against South Africa were accelerated in 1960 when 69 South Africans were killed by South African security forces during what has become known as the Sharpeville Massacre. This led to calls for economic and social sanctions by the African states.⁶² Social sanctions, the exclusion of South Africa, was achieved rather easily, but economic sanctions were more difficult to achieve since even some African countries with economic ties to South Africa would have been hurt by them.⁶³ By 1966 the General Assembly declared that apartheid was a crime against humanity.⁶⁴

The UNCHR became more active with respect to the South African human rights situation in 1967 when it established an Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts to investigate charges of torture and ill treatment of prisoners, detainees, or persons in police custody in South Africa.⁶⁵ Based on recommendations of the UNCHR the General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions condemning the practice of torture and the mistreatment of prisoners by the South African Government. The UNCHR was also involved in the matter of trade union rights and eventually produced a report on the subject.⁶⁶

During 1966, the International Year for Human Rights, the U.N.'s Special Committee on Apartheid was particularly active in countering South African propaganda. Also by that year the UNCHR "was producing numerous resolutions annually that explicitly condemned apartheid."⁶⁷

In addition to the process of passing resolutions in international organizations, a number of Western states -- particularly Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, and Denmark -- were active in providing financial support for various liberation movements in southern Africa. Sweden alone contributed \$1 million to these movements in 1971-72.⁶⁸

Throughout the entire period the United Nations General Assembly, the UNCHR, UNESCO, and other international organizations continued to maintain pressure on South Africa to end its system of apartheid. Over the years the emphasis changed from reform to liberation. Drawn into this vortex of activity were various nongovernmental organizations.

According to George W. Shepherd, Jr., the anti-apartheid movement is composed of "exiled and imprisoned leaders of all races; the internal opposition to apartheid; the various groups, classes, parties, organizations in the 'homelands' as well as the external movements, intellectuals, organizations...[and governments]."⁶⁹

Shepherd's study -- Anti-Apartheid: Transnational Conflict and Western Policy in the Liberation of South Africa -- details the role that nongovernmental organizations have played in the anti-apartheid movement. He says that the human rights NGOs have assisted the United Nations "process of identifying injustice." By the late 1970s, Shepherd says, Western NGOs had established a working alliance with African liberation movements.⁷⁰ Various NGOs such as the International Defence Aid Fund (IDAF), the International University Exchange Fund (IUEF), the International Commission of Jurists, and the World Council of Churches have all developed programs of liberation support. Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists have worked with the IDAF on southern African issues, particularly in regard to providing legal analysis and defense for the rights of southern Africans. In 1973 two-thirds of the IDAF budget was governmental, primarily Scandinavian. The IDAF also had close links with the U.N.'s South Africa Trust Fund.⁷¹

Within the United States a number of other organizations have worked on southern African issues. The American Committee on Africa (ACOA) has

for over a quarter of a century supported the liberation movements in Africa. The organization's recent actions have been aimed at stopping bank loans to South Africa and halting the sale of Krugers in the United States.

The Washington Office on Africa is another organization that has been an active lobbyist devoted to isolating South Africa and to bringing about change. Other organizations include: the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, which is composed of religious, education, peace, and labor organizations; the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, which works in conjunction with the National Council of Churches; and the American Friends Service Committee. All of these organizations tend to work on a cooperative basis, often publicizing each other's efforts and activities.⁷² The NGOs are said to have played a "very significant role in support of U.N. programs, especially in the area of humanitarian assistance to liberation movements."⁷³

The policy of the United States toward South Africa has tended to be one of disassociating the country from South Africa's policy of apartheid and maintaining good relations with the independent nations of Africa on the one hand while balancing this against economic and security considerations on the other. The United States has enforced an embargo upon arms to South Africa, but has neither encouraged nor discouraged investment there.⁷⁴

Both the Soviet Union and the United States are united in opposing apartheid. But as Richard Falk has said, although "a virtually universal consensus has formed in opposition to apartheid...there is still much disagreement on what to do about it."⁷⁵ And while this universal consensus may exist, some Western states have supplied arms to South Africa.

Great Britain, France, and Italy are said to be the major suppliers. Even though the United States declares its adherence to the arms embargo, arms made in the United States are said, by one critic, to reach South Africa indirectly.⁷⁶ In addition, South Africa's main trading partners are the United Kingdom, the United States, West Germany, Japan, and France. Great Britain is said to be the largest investor in South Africa; the United States is second. The current total of U.S. investments is reported to be nearing \$2 billion.⁷⁷

Thus, while most of the world expressed its opposition to apartheid, some Western countries maintained extensive economic ties while curtailing political ties. Even African countries have been economically dependent on South Africa. For example, 30 percent of Zambia's trade is with South Africa.⁷⁸

Concurrent, but also divergent, with these extensive international and transnational activities, Amnesty International carried out its work for South African political prisoners.

Amnesty International's Activities Prior to 1975

Amnesty International's interest in South Africa dates back to the early years of its existence. It was noted in the second chapter of this study how the Organization's efforts on behalf of a South African prisoner, Nelson Mandela (who is still considered by many black South Africans as their leader, despite his imprisonment), led to an internal crisis within the Organization in 1963 and 1964 over the question of whether it should work for prisoners who had used violence.

In 1965 Amnesty International published a report on prison conditions in South Africa. The South African Government's response was to ban the

report and to indicate that future communications from Amnesty International would not be received.⁷⁹

In 1973 Amnesty International said that torture is an administrative practice in South Africa and that "police repression is built into the South African system." In the 1975 version of the Organization's Report on Torture Amnesty International relied in part on the report, Maltreatment and Torture of Prisoners in South Africa, published in 1973 by the United Nations' Special Committee on Apartheid.⁸⁰

An Overview of Amnesty International's Actions - 1975-1979

Amnesty International's actions relating to human rights in South Africa during the period 1975-1979 amounted to a continuous campaign. Its reports and publications focused not only on South Africa, but on that country's control of Namibia as well.

During the period under review Amnesty International used the full range of its techniques to apply pressure on South Africa. Its Newsletter gave extensive coverage to human rights violations in the country. Some issues had as many as five separate articles dealing with South African problems. In the July, 1976 Newslettter, for example, one item dealt with two members of the National Youth Organization who were rearrested immediately after being acquitted in a trial. Another item reported on an Amnesty International appeal to the United Nations Secretary General and to the U.N. Commissioner for Namibia to intervene with the South African Government to prevent executions. One of the three prisoners selected for the Organization's "prisoner of the month" campaign was from Namibia. An appeal connected with Amnesty International's Campaign Against Torture dealt with the death of a member of the African National Congress (ANC)

and on behalf of another South African prisoner. A fifth item mentioned South Africa as one nation, among others, in which journalists were imprisoned.⁸¹ This type of extensive coverage continued throughout the period under review.

Amnesty International's groups were also used extensively. In addition to working for individual political prisoners, members were called on to participate in frequent "prisoner of the month" campaigns and appeals against torture. For example, in 1976 South African or Namibian prisoners were named prisoners of the month three times. Members also participated in special campaigns such as the major worldwide campaigns conducted by the Organization in 1978. These campaigns focused on specific issues such as the death penalty or the use of banning orders by the South African Government.⁸²

Additional publicity concerning human rights in South Africa and Namibia was generated through the use of press releases and reports. During 1977 South Africa was mentioned in no less than five press releases issued by the Organization. Also in that year the Organization published a briefing paper on Namibia. A major report, Political Imprisonment in South Africa, was published in 1978. This was followed by an update in 1979.

When Amnesty International published its 1978 report, it anticipated that the response of the South African Government would be negative. The Organization said the South African Government would respond in two ways. "They may attempt to raise doubts about the integrity of Amnesty International by attacking the reasons for publishing this report and by demanding that attention is turned to human rights violations in black African countries -- they may be expected to ignore or minimise the work that Amnesty International is doing in this field. The South African

authorities may declare this report an 'undesirable' publication..."⁸³

The report detailed the legal situation of political prisoners and their treatment. It said that "all the evidence indicates that torture is extensively inflicted on political detainees, and that the Government sanctions its use."⁸⁴

Much of Amnesty International's work concerning South Africa was coordinated with the activities of the United Nations. For example, Amnesty International's report on South Africa, which initiated a major worldwide campaign by the Organization was timed to coincide with the United Nations Conference on Southern Africa. In 1977, Amnesty International made a submission in connection with the United Nations' Special Committee on Apartheid's Day of Solidarity with South African prisoners. In subsequent years other submissions were made to the UNCHR or to its Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa as well as to the Special Committee on Apartheid.

Working within South Africa and in bordering states are various groups opposed to apartheid. There are black liberation movements and white organizations that work to end apartheid. The liberation movements include the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa (PAC). White South African organizations include the Christain Institute and the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). Amnesty International has frequently worked for, and in conjunction with these groups. When Steve Biko, the leader of the Black Consciousness movement was killed while in police custody in 1977, Amnesty International joined in the international protests. The Organization also utilized its groups as part of its various campaigns to intervene on behalf of members of several of these organizations.

As an example, in February, 1978 a "prisoner of the month" campaign was conducted on behalf of a member of the Unity Movement who was under a five-year banning order.⁸⁵ Amnesty International also publicized events relating to members of the African National Congress (ANC), the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), and the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), among other groups.⁸⁶

When Amnesty International published its report on South Africa in 1978 it emphasized that the publication focused on those who had been imprisoned for their active opposition to apartheid rather than those who were convicted for violating discriminatory racial legislation.⁸⁷ The Organization made clear that its work had a broader focus than might be construed from its work for political prisoners. The Organization said:

Amnesty International believes that no reforms in the present structure will be sufficiently far-reaching to remove the causes of political imprisonment unless the whole system of apartheid is dismantled. It is to be hoped that this report will help generate international pressure to achieve this end. While apartheid remains, there can be no structure which conforms with and guarantees universally recognised standards of human rights. ⁸⁸

Amnesty International's problems relating to obtaining coverage for its reports and activities relating to South Africa were similar to the problems it had with respect to other areas. In a sense, the South African policy of apartheid and the manifestations of that policy, except in isolated sensational cases, were not considered "news" in the conventional meaning of the word. As was stated earlier in this study, reports of torture continuing were not news; similarly, the mere continuation of apartheid was not considered news. Occasionally the international media concentrated on human rights related issues as it did when Steve Biko was killed. American press coverage was said to be poor, one observer

noted, with little attention given to apartheid.⁸⁹

The South African Response

The overall response of the South African Government to the anti-apartheid movement was the continuation of that policy. Richard Bissell, writing in 1977, said, "In terms of the internal apartheid policy and the condition of the black man in South Africa, little changed."⁹⁰ By the end of the period under review there was still little change. In fact, new laws were passed which increased the powers of security police to detain persons for indefinite periods.⁹¹ By the end of the 1970s the South African Government had clamped down on blacks and adopted what has been called "a siege mentality."⁹²

Like other countries, South Africa responded to criticism of its human rights record by attacking its critics and emphasizing whatever positive positions it could maintain. For example, in 1977 a South African broadcast pointed out that Freedom House, in its 1975 Survey of Freedom, gave higher marks to South Africa than to any other African country, except Botswana.⁹³

Part of the South African response was directed at the human rights policy of the Carter Administration. A commentary over South African radio said:

Nor is one aware of complaints directed by Washington to Zambia, where political opponenents have been languishing behind bars without trial for years; or to Tanzania, where according to the New York Times there are now more than 2,000 political prisoners, nor to Mozambique, where according to the London Observer, the authorities maintain what it called horror camps. Yet these are three of the frontline states being courted by Washington to help bring freedom to Rhodesia. ⁹⁴

Amnesty International was also singled out for criticism by the South African press and Government. In 1978 the newspaper, Die Transvaler, made the following observations:

Amnesty International maintains the far-fetched assertion that the general practice of the security policy in South Africa is detention. It is just as far fetched to assert that the Government condones the practice.

Amnesty International never likes to be specific in its accusations, but prefers to make the kind of vague, generalized statement -- a type of behavior that ill befits a Nobel Prize Winner. Furthermore, it is absolutely impossible for us to understand why Amnesty International wants to become involved in South African affairs to the point where it has come out with the statement that "No reforms in the present structure" will be "far-reaching enough to eliminate the reasons for arrests."

The Die Transvaler editorial went on to say that progress is being made and that Amnesty International damages its own credibility in not realizing this.⁹⁵

The main responses of the South African Government to Amnesty International's activities included banning the Organization's 1978 report, Political Imprisonment in South Africa, and publishing a 76-page booklet, Amnesty for Terrorism. The booklet was published by the South African Department of Information. In the introduction to this tract the South African Government gave the reasons for its publication:

In January 1978 Amnesty International, with headquarters in London, published a brochure entitled, Political Imprisonment in South Africa, which is now being distributed throughout the world. Usually, the South African Government would have ignored a screed as scurrilous as this, but on this occasion it has decided to publish a reply immediately. The major reason is the reputation for respectability that the organization has carefully built up for itself. No

doubt, most of its members accept without question that Amnesty International is impartial, eschews all falsehoods, has no ulterior motives, and is inspired only by selfless concerns for what it calls "prisoners of conscience" throughout the world, regardless of the political persuasion of the government at whose hands these "political prisoners" are suffering.

...No doubt there are many well-meaning and genuinely concerned people among its members and on its mailing list, who may accept as gospel the organization's latest brochure on South Africa, unless its distortions and half-truths are rebutted with a few of those facts so carefully ignored or suppressed by Amnesty International. 96

The publication went on to say that when Amnesty International published its earlier report on South African prisons in 1965, a subsequent report by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) largely refuted Amnesty International's findings.⁹⁷ It criticized Amnesty International's connections with the United Nations saying that "Amnesty International has unequivocally and unquestioningly accepted the United Nations as its mentor in its pronouncements and that it has vested resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly with inviolate sanctity and eternal truth. Regardless of the circumstances or implications, these resolutions are trotted out in this booklet and elsewhere as if they were holy commandments of some new religion."⁹⁸ Countries other than South Africa, the South African Government said, "are at last beginning to wake up to the double standards applied by the United Nations and its Commission on Human Rights, of which Amnesty International is such a faithful disciple."⁹⁹

The overall aim of the South African pamphlet was to discredit the Amnesty International charges, labeling them as fabrications and half-truths.

According to Amnesty International, the South African booklet, Amnesty for Terrorism, was widely circulated in the United Kingdom, the United States, and other English-speaking countries. Later editions translated into French, German, and Dutch were also distributed. Amnesty International's response to Amnesty for Terrorism was to challenge the South African Government to lift the order banning its 1978 report on that country and to publish an update in 1979.

Summary

Throughout the period reviewed the problems of human rights violations in South Africa, especially in the form of apartheid, were inextricably entwined with the system of white supremacy in South Africa. Amnesty International's role was to assist the process of opposition by groups both within and outside of South Africa. The following chapter will analyze these developments according to the criteria utilized in earlier chapters.

Footnotes

¹ See testimony of Vincent McGee, Stephanie Grant, Amnesty International USA to the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives - 31 October 1979. Amnesty International Document.

² Amnesty International Report 1978, p. 34.

³ Ibid., p. 36.

⁴ Eddison Jonas Mudadirwa Zvobgo, "A Third World View," in Donald P. Kommers and Gilbert D. Loescher (eds.), Human Rights and American Foreign Policy (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), p. 98.

⁵ John K. Ebiasah, "Protecting the Human Rights of Political Detainees: The Contradictions and Paradoxes in the African Experience," Howard Law Journal, Vol. 22, 1979, No. 3, pp. 257-258.

⁶ Sandy Vogelgesang, American Dream Global Nightmare: The Dilemma of U.S. Human Rights Policy (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Co.).

⁷ Richard Falk, "Responding to Severe Violations," in Jorge I. Dominguez, et. al. (eds.), Enhancing Global Human Rights (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p. 222.

⁸ Godfrey Lukonhwa Binaisa, "The Rape of Uganda," Journal of Current Social Issues, Summer, 1978, p. 71.

⁹ Pierre Naudin, "The Violation of Human Rights in Uganda," in William A. Veenhoven (ed.), Case Studies on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976) Vol. 5, p. 417.

¹⁰ See Michael H. Posner, Violations of Human Rights in Uganda 1971-1978, Testimony prepared for the Subcommittee on Foreign Economic Policy of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, June 15, 1978, Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights.

¹¹ See the account of Charles Harrison, "Uganda: The Expulsion of the Asians," in Veenhoven, op. cit., Vol. 4, pp. 289-315.

- ¹² Ibid., p. 311.
- ¹³ See Amnesty Action, December, 1975.
- ¹⁴ Amnesty International Newsletter, July, 1975.
- ¹⁵ Facts on File, July 5, 1975, p. 477.
- ¹⁶ Amnesty International Press Release, Feb. 6, 1977.
- ¹⁷ Amnesty International Press Release, Feb. 17, 1977.
- ¹⁸ Report and Decisions of the International Council Meeting of Amnesty International, Bad Honnef, West Germany, 1977, p. 42. Amnesty International Document.
- ¹⁹ Amnesty International Newsletter, January, 1977.
- ²⁰ See Amnesty International Newsletter, October, 1977 and Amnesty International Report 1978, pp. 90-91.
- ²¹ Amnesty International Report 1978, p. 90.
- ²² Human Rights in Uganda, June, 1978, p. 1. An Amnesty International Report.
- ²³ Amnesty International Report 1979, pp. 38-39.
- ²⁴ Amnesty International Report 1980, p. 88.
- ²⁵ Stern (Hamburg), June 26, 1975, p. 18. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Western Europe), June 27, 1975.
- ²⁶ Kampala Domestic Service, June 10, 1975. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Sub-Saharan Africa), June 12, 1975. Noted below as FBIS(SSA).
- ²⁷ GNA in English (Accra), June 21, 1975. FBIS(SSA), June 25, 1975.
- ²⁸ Agence France Presse (Paris), June 23, 1975. FBIS(SSA), June 25, 1975.
- ²⁹ Aktuelt (Copenhagen), July 17, 1976, p. 14. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Western Europe), July 21, 1976.

³⁰Facts on File, Oct. 11, 1975.

³¹Loc. cit.

³²Facts on File, August 2, 1975, p. 549.

³³See Laurie S. Wiseberg, "Human Rights in Africa: Toward the Definition of the Problem of a Double Standard," Issue, Vol. VI, No. 4, Winter, 1976, passim.

³⁴Nairobi Domestic Service, July 13, 1976. FBIS(SSA), Aug. 10, 1976.

³⁵Dar es Salaam Domestic Service, Aug. 11, 1976. FBIS(SSA), Aug. 13, 1976.

³⁶Dar es Salaam Domestic Service, Aug. 11, 1976. FBIS(SSA), Aug. 13, 1976.

³⁷Nigel S. Rodley, "Monitoring Human Rights by the UN System and Non-governmental Organizations," in Kommers and Loescher, op. cit., p. 165.

³⁸Posner, op. cit., p. 56.

³⁹London Press Association, Feb. 22, 1977. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Western Europe), Feb. 23, 1977.

⁴⁰Roberta Cohen, "Human Rights Decision-Making in the Executive Branch: Some Proposals for a Coordinated Strategy," in Kommers and Loescher, op. cit., pp. 223, 230. See also Elizabeth Drew, "Human Rights," The New Yorker, July 18, 1977, p. 52.

⁴¹Newsletter, July, 1978. American Association for the International Commission of Jurists.

⁴²Vogelesang, op. cit., p. 212.

⁴³Facts on File, June 25, 1977.

⁴⁴Stockholm Domestic Service, Dec. 6, 1977. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (Western Europe), Dec. 7, 1977.

⁴⁵Facts on File, June 25, 1977.

⁴⁶Human Rights in Uganda, June, 1978, p. 2. An Amnesty International Report.

⁴⁷Facts on File, July 2, 1977.

⁴⁸Facts on File, Feb. 26, 1977, p. 139

⁴⁹Posner, op. cit., p. 33

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 34.

⁵¹Kampala Domestic Service, Aug. 10, 1976. FBIS(SSA), Aug. 11, 1976.

⁵²Kampala Domestic Service, March 6, 1976. FBIS(SSA), March 9, 1976.

⁵³Posner, op. cit.

⁵⁴Kampala Domestic Service, June 26, 1975. FBIS(SSA), June 26, 1975.

⁵⁵As quoted in Amnesty Action, December, 1975.

⁵⁶Kampala Domestic Service, Feb. 23, 1977. FBIS(SSA), Feb. 24, 1977.

⁵⁷See Richard E. Bissell, Apartheid and International Organizations (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1977) for a full and detailed account of the numerous actions taken by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, and other international organizations in regard to the opposition to apartheid in South Africa.

⁵⁸United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights (New York: United Nations, 1974). UN Document E.74 XIV.2, p. 41.

⁵⁹Thirty Years of Human Rights at the United Nations: The Record and the Prospects, A Symposium sponsored by the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, the Columbia University Program of General Education, and the Columbia University Center for the Study of Human Rights, Dec. 7, 1978, p. 11.

⁶⁰Loc. cit.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 42

⁶²See testimony of John W. Foley, Director, Office of Southern African Affairs, Dept. of State, in International Protection of Human Rights: The Work of International Organizations and the Role of U.S. Foreign Policy, Hearings before the Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives. 93rd Congress, First Session (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), p. 172.

⁶³Bissell, op. cit., p. 32-33.

⁶⁴Susan M. Mowle, "The Infringement of Human Rights in Southern Africa: The Response of the United Nations and the United States," Appendix 32, in International Protection of Human Rights: The Work of International Organizations and the Role of U.S. Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 948.

⁶⁵United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights, op. cit. p. 45.

⁶⁶Bissell, op. cit., p. 136.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 139.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 157.

⁶⁹George W. Shepherd, Jr., Anti-Apartheid: Transnational Conflict and Western Policy in the Liberation of South Africa (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977), p. 6.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 43.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 125.

⁷²For other details of NGOs and South Africa, see Actions of International NGOs in the Implementation of United Nations Resolutions on the Problems of Apartheid and Assistance Provided by them to the Oppressed People of South Africa. Center Against Apartheid, United Nations Department of Political and Security Affairs, March, 1978.

⁷³Shepherd, op. cit., p. 21.

⁷⁴See Mowle, op. cit., pp. 957-964.

⁷⁵See Falk, op. cit., p. 220

⁷⁶Sean Gevasi, "Arms for Apartheid," Southern Africa Perspectives, No. 8, 77. The Africa Fund.

⁷⁷Southern Africa Must be Free, Resources for Education and Action, American Friends Service Committee, p. 17.

⁷⁸Gregory Jaynes, "Cutting South African Ties a Tough Goal for Neighbors," The New York Times, April 5, 1981.

⁷⁹Egon Larsen, A Flame in Barbed Wire: The Story of Amnesty International (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1979), p. 3.

⁸⁰See Amnesty International Report on Torture (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1973, 1975), pp. 128-133.

⁸¹Amnesty International Newsletter, July, 1976.

⁸²See Amnesty International Report 1980 and Amnesty International Report 1978, passim.

⁸³Political Imprisonment in South Africa (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1978), p. 7.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 56

⁸⁵Amnesty International Newsletter, Feb. , 1978.

⁸⁶See for example, Amnesty International Report 1980, pp. 74-79.

⁸⁷Political Imprisonment in South Africa, op. cit., p. 7

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 8.

⁸⁹See Shepherd, op. cit., p. 40.

⁹⁰Bissell, op. cit., p. 40.

⁹¹See Political Imprisonment in South Africa: An Update to an Amnesty International Report (London: Amnesty International Publica-

⁹²Johannesburg Domestic Service, March 4, 1977. FBIS(SSA), March 4, 1977.

⁹³ Johannesburg Domestic Service, Sept. 23, 1977. FBIS (SSA), Sept. 26, 1977.

⁹⁴ Die Transvaler (Johannesburg), Jan. 20, 1978. Joint Publications Research Service, No. 70696, p. 109.

⁹⁵ Amnesty for Terrorism (Pretoria: Published by Simondium Publishers on behalf of the South African Department of Information, 1978), p. 1.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

⁹⁹ Political Imprisonment in South Africa: An Update to an Amnesty International Report, op. cit., p. 31.

CHAPTER 8

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN UGANDA AND SOUTH AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS

Overall Strategy

During the period under review Amnesty International's efforts to protect human rights in sub-Saharan Africa concentrated on southern Africa with the major thrust directed at South Africa and Rhodesia. Other sub-Saharan African countries received relatively little attention. Some countries were virtually ignored. In some instances certain countries such as Zambia, in 1976, were the objects of Amnesty International's concerns for a short period which was then followed by longer periods of inactivity. In recent years Zaire was the focus of substantial activity by the Organization.

There are various levels of activity that Amnesty International effects when attempting to intervene on behalf of political prisoners. At the lowest level the Organization might simply mention an event relating to human rights that occurred in a particular country. At a slightly higher level the Organization might transmit a cable to a government official or have its groups work on cases of individual prisoners. Higher levels of activity can be regarded as an escalation of pressure. Issuing of press releases and reports, sending missions, and presenting submissions to intergovernmental organizations are examples of these higher levels. The initiation of a major worldwide campaign represents the highest level of activity. In a major campaign

the Organization pulls out all the stops, utilizing all of its techniques in order to apply maximum pressure. With respect to the overwhelming majority of African countries, the level of Amnesty International's activities during 1975-1979 remained at the lower end. In contrast, throughout the entire period, South Africa was the object of continuous high-level activity by Amnesty International.

In Amnesty International's update to its report on South Africa, the Organization refuted the South African claim that it is more concerned with human rights in South Africa than in the rest of Africa. It noted that its 1977 report contained information on 36 African countries.¹ In giving this response, the Organization appeared to be dissembling somewhat. While it is true that its 1977 annual report mentioned 36 African countries, the annual report represents only one aspect of Amnesty International's efforts. Taking the full range of Amnesty International's activities into account, there is no doubt that the overwhelming proportion of Amnesty International's activities directed at sub-Saharan Africa was directed at southern Africa, with South Africa being the main target.

There are several reasons that can be deduced for Amnesty International's concentration on South Africa. First, as discussed in the previous chapter, there are various factors that limit the information gathering process that is essential to Amnesty International's work. These factors are far more determinative of Amnesty International's inability to work in black Africa than in South Africa.

Second, given Amnesty International's meager influence with many African governments when dealing with human rights problems in those countries, its actions directed at South Africa -- the prime opponent

of many black African states -- can be a means of attaining influence with them. Within the United Nations Amnesty International and the black African states were frequently on the same side on the issue of human rights in South Africa.

A third factor is that South Africa has extensive economic ties with the Western states from which Amnesty International draws most of its members. The potential for influencing these Western states on these economic ties is greater with respect to South Africa than with respect to other African states.

A fourth factor is that South Africa has strategic importance for the West. While this may have the potential for limiting the involvement of Western states in the human rights situation in South Africa, there is also the potential for Amnesty International's members and supporters in Western countries to pressure their governments to sever whatever military links may exist. On the other hand, given the potential for instability in South Africa because of the human rights situation there, Western states may be persuaded to use their influence in an attempt to forestall any destabilization.

A fifth factor is that to be on the side of the anti-apartheid movement is a popular stance in today's world. Not to take a stand on a country that is almost universally condemned would be a strategic mistake for an organization such as Amnesty International.

This last factor concerning Amnesty International's activity with respect to South Africa could also be applied to the Organization's activity with respect to Uganda. Even though Uganda received a degree of support from African states during Amin's reign, the country was universally condemned in the West as having one of the worst human

rights records in the world. Amnesty International could not have ignored human rights violations there despite its negligible influence with that country's ruler. It is also possible that, given Western repugnance toward the Amin regime, coupled with the relatively widespread press coverage of certain events, and the prior attention given to Uganda by the International Commission of Jurists, the Organization determined that it could muster enough international pressure on the Amin regime to bring about some improvement in the observance of human rights.

The Role of Western Nations in the Protection of Human Rights
in Uganda and South Africa

There is a certain duality in the role that Western nations played in regard to South Africa which affected Amnesty International's ability to influence these nations concerning its efforts to protect human rights. There is general agreement among Western states that South Africa's system of apartheid should be abolished. Methods for achieving this end, however, have not been agreed upon. If we consider the thrust of the anti-apartheid movement -- the call for an arms embargo, the aid to liberation movements, the advocacy of economic and social sanctions, the pressure to end loans and investments, and so on -- it is apparent that the movement exists because these goals, which to be achieved would involve the cooperation of Western nations, have not been met. Even when a particular goal has been achieved -- such as the arms embargo -- certain nations continue to supply arms. Even arms from countries that have adhered to the embargo are said to reach South Africa through indirect means.

In the economic sphere, Western nations are reluctant to jeopardize

their own economies by curtailing investment in South Africa or by prohibiting companies from operating there. The EEC countries have partially responded to the anti-apartheid movement by reaching agreement on a code of conduct for companies operating in South Africa,² but not to end investment.

Strategic considerations dominate United States policy. While opposing apartheid, the United States has always advocated peaceful change and has opposed the isolation of South Africa. Under the Carter Administration, the rhetoric concerning apartheid increased, but basic overall policy remained the same. The Administration even encouraged expansion of U.S. business development in South Africa as a means of ending apartheid, equating increased investment with increased influence.³

Other Western states, particularly the Scandinavian countries (as noted in the previous chapter), were more aggressive in opposing apartheid by supporting various liberation movements.

Given these diverse attitudes by Western states to South Africa, Amnesty International was not likely to achieve a unified response to its efforts to end apartheid and the human rights violations resulting from that policy. Amnesty International therefore tended to operate within the mainstream of the anti-apartheid movement, being supportive of groups operating in bordering states and within South Africa that were actively opposed to apartheid. Included were such groups as the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). Presumably, as an element of its strategy, Amnesty International gave priority to seeking support from those Western countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands that were more active in supporting the various liberation movements in South Africa.

With respect to Uganda, although most Western states condemned the Amin regime, Western pressure appeared to have little effect. Amnesty International's efforts seemed to reflect that reality. Although violations of human rights in that country were established facts since the beginning of the Amin regime, it was only in 1977 that the Organization began to substantially increase its pressure on that country. It is conceivable that since the International Commission of Jurists had been fairly active with respect to Uganda during the early period, Amnesty International decided not to duplicate that organization's efforts. It is also possible that Amnesty International considered that additional efforts by the United States and Great Britain -- the two Western countries that were most involved with Uganda -- would be unproductive. At times the Amin regime threatened reprisals against British and American citizens, which appeared to be effective in toning down criticism by Great Britain and the United States.

Amnesty International and the Media

Certain specific events relating to human rights in Uganda and South Africa caught the attention of the international media. Most notable were the Dennis Hills affair in Uganda, the Soweto uprising in 1976 and the killing of Steve Biko in South Africa. But, as with other countries discussed in this study, the coverage was sporadic and uneven. Despite this, there were obvious differences in the media strategies employed by Amnesty International with respect to South Africa and Uganda. Little effort was made by Amnesty International (except in 1977) to use the media to publicize its efforts in Uganda. In contrast, the use of press releases and the publication of reports was a basic feature of the strategy employed by the Organization against South

Africa. Again, greater international, and specifically Western, concern over South Africa may be seen as one reason. That is, the Western media were probably more receptive to news of events in South Africa than in Uganda. In general, however, Amnesty International's media strategy was consistent with the overall level of activity directed at each of the two countries.

On the other side of the picture -- the reporting of events connected with human rights violations by the domestic press -- significantly more reporting was done by the South African media than that in Uganda. Within Uganda, Kampala radio generally responded to Western criticism by disparaging it. In South Africa news of arrests, trials, and other events were frequently reported by the press. In this regard, Amnesty International's information gathering process was assisted by the press in South Africa and made more difficult in the Ugandan case. In South Africa, although information about human rights violations is more extensive, restrictions do exist; newspapers have been banned and journalists occasionally detained.

National Nongovernmental Organizations and Amnesty International

There is a marked contrast between the role that nongovernmental organizations played in South Africa and Uganda. We have seen how Amnesty International's information gathering process was limited with respect to Uganda. As far as can be determined, national nongovernmental organizations did not play any significant role in the protection of human rights in that country. Given the conditions within the country during Amin's rule, it is doubtful whether such organizations could have been able to establish themselves much less operate. In other countries Amnesty International is able to obtain the names of

persons who are arrested through the assistance of national NGOs or relatives of prisoners. With respect to Uganda, Amnesty International could not use its usual practice of adopting political prisoners because names were not known, detainees were killed, and the numbers of persons involved were so large that adopting a small number of prisoners would have had little significance.

In contrast, the anti-apartheid movement, which included Amnesty International, was dependent upon and supported various nongovernmental groups and liberation movements.⁴ Amnesty International's publications frequently publicized events connected with the Christian Institute, the Pan Africanist Congress, the Black Consciousness Movement, the African National Congress, and others. Information was made available by the anti-apartheid network of organizations as well as by the usual press and diplomatic sources. With an established information network in place, Amnesty International was able to maintain a high level of activity directed at South Africa.

Amnesty International, International Human Rights Instruments, and Intergovernmental Organizations

In conformity with its actions concerning the protection of human rights in other countries, Amnesty International did not rely solely on the prospect that South Africa and Uganda would adhere to international human rights instruments. Neither country had ratified the international human rights covenants and neither considered the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as having any legal or legitimate significance. There is also no African declaration or commission on human rights to which Amnesty International could have looked for assistance.

While the politics of the United Nations permitted Amnesty International to channel much of its information concerning human rights violations in South Africa through that body, it prevented the Organization from using that forum with respect to Uganda. As was discussed in the previous chapter, Amnesty International tended to coordinate its activities with the United Nations when focusing on South Africa. In contrast, not until 1977 did Amnesty International make a submission to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights concerning Uganda. And it was not until 1978 that the Commission took some unspecified action on human rights in Uganda.

On several occasions Amnesty International sent cables to the Organization of African Unity and to various African heads of state asking them to intervene in the human rights situation in Uganda. Considering the OAU's endorsement of the Amin regime in 1975 -- by conferring upon him the chairmanship of that body -- there was little chance that Amnesty International would have received assistance from that quarter. While some African countries were opposed to the Amin regime -- e.g., Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, and Botswana -- their opposition was insufficient to sway the OAU into taking any action against Uganda.

Within the United Nations, various bodies dealt with South Africa and its policy of apartheid. These included the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the Special Committee on Apartheid, the South Africa Trust Fund, the UN Center Against Apartheid, the UN Commissioner for Namibia, and the UNCHR's Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa. In addition to the actions taken by these and other UN organs concerning South Africa, 1978-1979 was named the International Anti-Apartheid Year. In order to attain maximum exposure for its reports

and statements and to maximize its potential effectiveness, Amnesty International often timed its actions to coincide with actions taken by the various UN bodies. As one example, Amnesty International initiated its major campaign and published its report on South Africa during the International Anti-Apartheid Year.

Human Rights Concepts

Amnesty International's position on the universality of human rights and its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been discussed previously in this study and need not be belabored here. With respect to South Africa and Uganda, it is obvious that these countries did not share this commitment. The position of the South African Government was that:

There simply are no "universally recognised standards of human rights." Drawing up a Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one thing; whether it is feasible, and therefore applicable, is quite another. These "standards of human rights" -- would they be those that have come to be firmly established in the great Western democracies after centuries of evolution, or those of the Communist world where neither individuality nor criticism of the system is tolerated, or those of certain African countries where a thief has his hand chopped off and other criminals are fed to crocodiles, or those of certain Middle East countries where slavery is still practiced on a large scale and adulterers are beheaded?

...It is a mundane fact that the world is inhabited by peoples with disparate cultures, traditions, customs, and systems of values and justice which have been established over many centuries. Surely it is the height of naivety and futility to expect all suddenly to conform to a new set of paper standards devised in 1960 in a suburb of London.⁵

In its report on South Africa, Amnesty International detailed its concerns -- the legal structure, detention without trial, torture, political trials, the treatment of prisoners, banning orders, and the death penalty. Amnesty International said that the security laws of

South Africa were used to suppress all forms of black political opposition.⁶ The South African Government's position was that the various security laws were necessary to combat terrorism and to maintain internal security.⁷ The South African Government said that preventive detention is found in many other countries and is not in conflict with any universally accepted standards.⁸

The South African Government denied that torture took place and declared that Amnesty International's accounts of torture contained lies and exaggerations.⁹ Deaths in detention were attributed to suicide, natural causes, or in a few cases, could not be explained. The South African Government said, for example, that "no one knows exactly how injuries were caused from which [Steve] Biko died."¹⁰

For the purposes of this study it is not necessary to examine all the points of contention between Amnesty International and South Africa and the variations in how each viewed human rights. To Amnesty International, laws which prevent the black majority from attaining political power are fundamentally contrary to what the Organization considers universally accepted human rights. Apartheid, according to Amnesty International, "is a system of institutionalized racial discrimination against blacks in all walks of life."¹¹

According to South Africa:

The Republic is not prepared to compromise on the basic premises and objectives of its policy, which in the peculiar circumstances of South Africa is the only policy that will ensure self-determination for all of the peoples of the country. South Africa will resist attempts to bring about change in the established order by subversion, sabotage, terrorism, and foreign intervention. The country will not bargain with terrorists. But when caught, these terrorists

will continue to enjoy the privilege of an impartial hearing in an open court. 12

Given these antithetical viewpoints concerning apartheid, it is difficult to envision areas where agreement may be reached.

With respect to Uganda, various reports and studies have documented the total disregard for human life that characterized the Amin regime. If such little value was placed on human life, it is scarcely conceivable that other aspects of civil and political liberties would have been respected. In fact, the formalities of arrest, trial, and sentencing rarely occurred under Amin. One observer said that "Amin has demonstrated his continued commitment to eliminate any person or group that he perceives to be a threat to his regime."¹³ The guiding philosophy did not include human rights considerations; the perpetuation of power was the sole motivating factor.

It would be misleading to say that the violations of human rights in Uganda were solely the fault of Idi Amin. Under Amin the Acholi and Langi tribes were singled out for persecution and many thousands were said to have been killed. In mid-1981, under President Obote, soldiers killed more than 50 unarmed civilians in an area where Amin's Kakwa people reside. Opposition leaders in present-day Uganda have accused President Obote of systematic violations of human rights including arbitrary arrest, detention without trial, and the killing of opponents.¹⁴ The cycle continued.

Effectiveness

As in previous chapters the effectiveness of Amnesty International is considered in relation to five areas:

1. The direct effect of Amnesty International's efforts on

political prisoners.

2. The effect of Amnesty International's pressure on the target governments.
3. The effect of Amnesty International's influence on other governments.
4. The effectiveness of Amnesty International's influence on IGOs and NGOs.
5. The promotion of human rights.

It is unlikely that Amnesty International's efforts on behalf of political prisoners in Uganda and South Africa had any direct effect resulting in their release. In the Ugandan case, the Organization was unable to work for individual prisoners. In South Africa, political prisoners usually served their full sentences and were placed under banning orders after their release. But arrests apparently continued as South Africa pursued its policy of containing the opponents of apartheid.¹⁵

There is some evidence, however, that the international protests did over the years lead to ameliorated prison conditions. The Government appeared to be particularly sensitive to proving that prisoners were treated humanely. Despite this, prisoners did occasionally die unnatural deaths while in custody.

It is obvious that in both the Ugandan and South African cases Amnesty International's activities were regarded as hostile acts by both governments. The Organization was occasionally the target of Idi Amin's tirades and was included among his enemies. The South African Government, by entitling its response to Amnesty International, Amnesty for Terrorism, equated the Organization's work with terrorism. Like

other countries, the South African response included an attempt to counter the effects of Amnesty International's reports on world opinion. It sought to influence the same group of nations that Amnesty International sought to influence. Amnesty International's aura of legitimacy, which was enhanced by its receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977, perhaps prompted South Africa to respond. As the South African booklet states, the Government would have previously ignored Amnesty International's charges, but did not do so because of "the reputation for respectability that the organisation has carefully built up for itself."¹⁶

In the previous chapter it was pointed out that Amnesty International's activities with respect to South Africa formed part of the anti-apartheid movement which to varying degrees is supported by most of the world community. Certainly, Amnesty International's frequent reports to the United Nations were welcome by those governments that pressed for action by that body. Western countries appeared to follow their individual policies and -- as with their actions relating to violations of human rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union -- responded most vigorously to certain events -- the killings of Steve Biko in South Africa and Archbishop Luwum in Uganda, the planned execution of Dennis Hills in Uganda, and the Soweto uprising in South Africa. In Africa, countries which may have concurred with Amnesty International's reports on South Africa were not moved to take action with respect to Uganda. Similarly, while the United Nations took numerous measures concerning South Africa, it was only in 1978 that the United Nations Commission on Human Rights indicated that some undisclosed action was taken with respect to Uganda.

As with its activities in other regions, a byproduct of Amnesty

International's work is the promotion of human rights. There is no way to measure precisely whether Amnesty International's reports, press releases, statements, and other actions contributed directly to the promotion of human rights in a particular country. In South Africa, Amnesty International's reports forced the Government to respond to criticism of its human rights record. Notwithstanding Amnesty International's assertions that the main purpose of the South African response was to discredit the Organization, a dialogue of sorts was initiated which had the potential of aiding in the clarification of the issues involved and perhaps encouraged the anti-apartheid activists. And despite the South African Government's defense of its human rights record in the booklet, Amnesty for Terrorism, some of Amnesty International's charges were aired in the publication.

The process, though, was not aided by Amnesty International's assertion that even reforms would not help as long as the system of apartheid existed. The Organization placed its dispute with South Africa in the form of a zero-sum game which did not allow for a dialogue. Perhaps inured by years of nonresponsiveness from South Africa, the Organization did not expect that a dialogue would produce any substantive results.

Footnotes

¹Political Imprisonment in South Africa: An Update to an Amnesty International Report (New York: Amnesty International Publications, 1979), p. 32.

²Human Rights and Foreign Policy, Memorandum presented to the Lower House of the States General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on 3 May 1979 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation (The Hague: 1979), p. 87.

³George Hauser, "Carter's African Policy," Southern Africa Perspectives, No. 2, 79. The Africa Fund.

⁴See George W. Shepherd, Jr., Anti-Apartheid: Transnational Conflict and Western Policy in the Liberation of South Africa (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977), passim.

⁵Amnesty for Terrorism (Pretoria: Published by Simondium Publishers on behalf of the South African Department of Information, 1978), p. 5.

⁶Political Imprisonment in South Africa (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1978), p. 18.

⁷Amnesty for Terrorism, op. cit., pp. 47-53.

⁸Ibid., p. 54.

⁹Ibid., p. 61.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 64.

¹¹Political Imprisonment in South Africa, op. cit., p. 105.

¹²Amnesty for Terrorism, op. cit., p. 75.

¹³Michael H. Posner, Violations of Human Rights in Uganda, 1971-1978, Testimony prepared for the Subcommittee on Foreign Economic Policy of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, June 15, 1978. Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights.

¹⁴Alan Cowell, "New Budget is Uganda's Last Chance," The New York Times, July 19, 1981, p. E3.

¹⁵Political Imprisonment in South Africa: An Update to an Amnesty International Report, op. cit., pp. 2-6.

¹⁶Amnesty for Terrorism, op. cit., p. 1

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Amnesty International's Strategy

The preceding empirical study examined Amnesty International's operations within the context of other international and transnational efforts to protect human rights in specific countries in three areas -- Latin America, Eastern Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa. The countries included in this study represent dissimilar political cultures and have different forms of government. However, there are certain similarities with respect to the issue area of human rights. Each was accused of violating human rights and each justified the measures it took -- which produced the human rights violations -- as necessary for its internal security. Amnesty International therefore had to deal with an issue determined by each government to be connected to the continuous existence of the state, or to the maintenance of the government in power -- which tended to be considered as equivalent. Except for Uganda, Amnesty International directed a continuous high level of activity toward the countries in this study. This fact, in itself, is an element in Amnesty International's strategy to protect human rights. If the writer had selected Algeria, the Congo, Gabon, Albania, Hungary, or Venezuela, there would have been little to analyze since Amnesty International did not elect to devote much attention to these and other countries.

The choice of a target, therefore, reflects a policy choice by the Organization that is not determined solely by the level of human rights violations in that particular country. In many cases that choice is limited by virtue of a combination of factors. A primary factor, as mentioned in previous chapters, is that information does not exist or cannot be made available to the Organization. Lack of information may be the result of a poorly developed infrastructure within a particular country, the absence of national nongovernmental organizations that might collect and supply information, fear on the part of the populace, or a closed society, among other factors.

Even if information is available, before the Organization decides to embark on a major campaign, it is constrained by other factors that further limit its choice. The highest potential for effectiveness exists with respect to those countries that have extensive political, economic, and cultural relations with the Western countries. The potential for effectiveness decreases as the level of these relations decreases. The existence of relations, therefore, is a primary factor which determines whether a major campaign is to be initiated.

By the time the Organization has decided to initiate a major campaign it has usually taken several previous steps in an escalation of pressure on the target country. In addition to adopting political prisoners, the Organization may have sent cables, issued press releases, sent a mission to the country, and so on. If a report is to be published, the government of the target country is usually given an opportunity to respond prior to publication. A major campaign by Amnesty International therefore means that previous attempts at intervention by the Organization

were ignored, rebuffed, or were met with a counteroffensive by the government. The campaign can be seen as an admission by the Organization that it had little influence with the target country's government and consequently had to appeal to other organizations (both nongovernmental and intergovernmental), governments, and individuals in order to increase the pressure. It is conceivable that in certain instances Amnesty International may have made private communications to a particular country (which were not available to the writer) which elicited a positive response. Given the content of Amnesty International's annual reports, however, it is unlikely that such a situation was the rule.

When Amnesty International undertakes a major campaign its strategy is based on several assumptions. The first is the expectation that the target government will perceive that the campaign will have a detrimental effect on its prestige and its political, economic, and cultural relations with the major industrial nations of the West. It is further expected that this perception will prompt the target government to take steps to improve its human rights performance.

The second ingredient of this strategy is the expectation that the governments of those Western countries where Amnesty International has strong national sections will respond to the Organization's appeals by actually limiting their political, economic, and cultural ties with the offending government.

The third expectation is that the campaign initiated by Amnesty International will generate discussion and concern among groups within the target country to bring added pressure to the government. There also appears to be the expectation that fundamental political changes will

eventually take place in the country as a result of the international and domestic pressure.

If we consider the first ingredient of Amnesty International's strategy and look at the responses of the countries included in the case studies, we see that part of this strategy worked. That is, the governments involved did perceive that their relations with other governments would be damaged by what they considered to be an international campaign against their countries. Often, the campaigns were labeled as slanderous. The most common response was the initiation of countercampaigns. The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia used their government-controlled media to refute charges and to offer rationales for their actions. The Latin American countries utilized nationwide broadcasting facilities and press agencies to promote their version of events relating to human rights violations. Argentina went even further by establishing an information center in Paris and hiring an American public relations firm to improve the country's image internationally. Uganda used the forum of the United Nations as well as its media to rail against Amnesty International and others it considered to be enemies. In South Africa the press was restricted in what it could report about human rights violations; occasionally publications and journalists were banned. For example, Amnesty International's report on South Africa was banned and the government countered the Organization's charges in an internationally distributed pamphlet; the Organization was linked to terrorism.

The charges of Amnesty International and others often resulted in a propaganda war. Each side attempted to counter the other's claims and hoped to garner world and domestic opinion to its side. While a

propaganda counteroffensive was probably not the response desired by Amnesty International, a public debate that focused attention on the target government's rationalizations concerning human rights violations might have proved useful.

For the most part the responses of the countries accused of violating human rights did not include changes in the policies that brought about the violations in the first place. Chile might be the exception. Although the Government did not alter its stance, the almost universal condemnation of the Chilean regime and the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration resulted in thousands of persons being able to leave the country. While this may have not been the most desirable solution, it did apparently save the lives of some prisoners and prevented others from being imprisoned.

It has been noted in the previous chapters that the effect of the campaigns on political prisoners was minimal; that is, it appears that few political prisoners were released because of the international pressure. One can only speculate as to what actions these governments might have taken had there been no international campaigns. It is presumed that the treatment of political prisoners, as bad as it was, may have been on the whole even worse. The countries involved were not deterred from pursuing their respective domestic policies, but it is plausible to assume that in certain instances they were constrained in their treatment of political prisoners. In general, however, faced with an international campaign against their countries, the offending countries discussed in this study tended to tighten their control.

If a general statement can be made regarding the second aspect of

Amnesty International's strategy -- its expectation that it could influence Western governments to take actions against a country violating human rights -- it would be that Western governments generally tended to follow and not alter their respective set policies concerning the international protection of human rights. If a Western state had a disposition to intervene in human rights matters, then Amnesty International's reports and data were used to bolster the government's stand. In the United States, for example, prior to the Carter Administration, several Congressional human rights activists conducted hearings using the testimonies of representatives of human rights organizations to support efforts at publicizing human rights violations throughout the world. In some cases governments had to rely on Amnesty International's data which was more extensive than that generally available.

To illustrate the contention that Western governments followed their set policies regardless of the information produced by Amnesty International, consider the response of the United States. Before the Carter Administration, the United States rarely made public statements concerning human rights violations in other countries. It preferred "quiet diplomacy" to public diplomacy. With the advent of the Carter Administration the Government's human rights policy became more highly visible as the President pursued his activist course. After the Carter Administration, President Reagan played down the Government's role in the international protection of human rights and again favored quiet diplomacy. However, where political considerations dominate -- e.g., with respect to Poland -- the Reagan Administration became quite vocal in denouncing the repression of the military regime.

It seems safe to say that while Western governments tend to follow their individual policies, there may be instances where they are prodded into taking some action because of information made public by Amnesty International. This would be particularly true if Amnesty International revealed that a national of a Western country had disappeared or was being held as a political prisoner in another country. We have seen, for example, how Amnesty International publicized the disappearance of Germans in Argentina. However, without access to specific documents, it would be difficult to prove whether the Organization's information prompted the German Government to make inquiries about their citizens.

In the midst of a highly publicized campaign by Amnesty International a Western country might also be constrained from taking actions which might be interpreted as contributing to the violations of human rights in an offending country. For example, sales of police equipment or arms may be held up. However, certain Western governments which are disposed to intervene in matters concerning human rights may, relying on data provided by Amnesty International, use its good offices to press governments for information, to seek the release of prisoners, and to protest the treatment of dissidents. All this need not be done publicly. Despite this, there are limits to the actions a Western country can take; these limits are discussed below.

The question may be asked, why, if governments follow their set policies with respect to the international protection of human rights, does Amnesty International continue its efforts to influence governments to take action? To adequately explain this apparent conundrum, it is necessary to posit a theoretical limit to the action that a Western

country will take with respect to the international protection of human rights. The extent to which governments will go in this regard is a reflection of the subordinate position that the protection of human rights plays in the calculus of the foreign policies of these governments. Amnesty International's role is to prod governments to take actions up to that theoretical limit. Without Amnesty International's information and pressure, the actions a government might take would generally fall far short of that theoretical limit. Beyond this function, the Organization is constantly striving to convince governments to extend that limit.

The third expectation of Amnesty International's strategy -- the hope to bring about fundamental changes in a violating country by creating or strengthening domestic pressure -- has elements of success and failure. It appears that through its major campaigns Amnesty International was able, in certain instances, to generate an increased awareness of human rights within the target country. Naturally, this is subject to variations in each country. But even a defiant response by the offending government or criticism of Amnesty International by the domestic media nevertheless puts the question of human rights into the spotlight. An Amnesty International campaign prior to the 1980 Olympic games which were held in Moscow might not have freed many political prisoners, but denunciations of the campaign by the Soviet media probably caused some Soviet citizens to wonder what it was all about. And, as we have seen, the Organization, virtually unknown in Uruguay in 1975, became fairly well known in that country by 1980.

By supporting national human rights organizations Amnesty

International attempted to bestow upon them an aura of legitimacy much as the Nobel Prize Committee did to Amnesty International, Andrei Sakharov, and the Argentine human rights activist, Adolfo Perez Esquivel when they were selected to receive the Peace Prize. By the international publicity and celebrity accorded to these individuals and groups it is expected that the offending governments will find it more difficult to repress their activities; it is also expected to aid the overall promotion of human rights.

The failure comes about in that the attitudes of the governments accused of violating human rights tend to harden as they attempt to minimize the effect of the international campaigns and to contain them from spreading within the country. For example, in Argentina, restrictions on the press and national human rights organizations increased as the international campaign intensified. And we have seen how relatives of "adopted" political prisoners in Uruguay also became subject to government repression. On occasion those persons within the country who are moved by the increasing awareness of the international concern to speak out become subject to greater repressive measures by the government. In some cases Amnesty International had to diminish the level of its activities because of the increased repression by the government.

It is impossible to estimate what may occur over the long run within a particular country. Amnesty International's strategy undoubtedly includes an expectation that its campaigns will bring about an inculcation of human rights concepts into the thinking of the populace at large. In turn, as the governmental process evolves, it is

expected that these concepts will not only be incorporated into the constitutions and laws of the country, but that protection of human rights will be realized by actual practice.

Amnesty International's Effectiveness

In discussing Amnesty International's effectiveness, several caveats should be first considered. It must be pointed out that Amnesty International's goals are limited, relating primarily to political prisoners, that the issue of human rights is not a vital element of the foreign policies of most nations, and that the system of international politics within which the Organization has to work places inherent limits (discussed below) on a transnational nongovernmental human rights organization. In the analytical chapters above Amnesty International's effectiveness was considered in relation to political prisoners, target and other governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, and the promotion of human rights. If we slightly vary our approach to the question of effectiveness and consider the overall process involved in the international protection of human rights, we can conclude that the Organization was effective in a number of areas which were generally peripheral to the primary focus of this study -- Amnesty International's interactions with target governments. During the period covered by this study Amnesty International:

1. Identified human rights violations.
2. Provided moral and financial support for victims of human rights violations.
3. Established linkages between domestic nongovernmental organizations and international

efforts to protect human rights.

4. Coordinated its activities with other groups.
5. Mobilized international campaigns on behalf of victims of oppression.
6. Provided information on human rights violations to governmental and intergovernmental bodies.
7. Publicized its activities through the media.
8. Contributed to the overall promotion of human rights.

Identifying violations is a necessary first step in the process of protecting human rights through international means. During the period reviewed Amnesty International, probably more than any other independent or governmental body, led the way in this area. The Organization was frequently cited in press accounts, by governmental and intergovernmental agencies, and by other nongovernmental organizations as the source of information concerning human rights violations. Although the Organization's work was criticized by those governments selected for review in this study, its overall findings concerning the human rights situation in a particular country have not been refuted by any other independent body. Given this record the Organization gained recognition as an impartial advocate of human rights.

By "adopting" and working for political prisoners in other ways the Organization afforded a measure of hope to them and their families. Through the Organization's relief efforts, in some cases, financial assistance was also provided. Further support was developed for human rights victims through the establishment of linkages between

nongovernmental groups operating within the country where violations occurred and groups operating in other countries. It has been shown that Amnesty International publicized the activities of local groups in Latin America, published material developed by Soviet and Czechoslovakian human rights activists, and supported opponents of apartheid. As the descriptive and analytical chapters of this study demonstrate, the ability of these domestic groups to operate varied according to the degree that they were considered to be a threat to internal security and order by their governments. At times, victims of human rights abuses and their domestic supporters often risked further oppression by making public their complaints or appealing to outside groups. During these periods when victims were unable to openly press their claims, Amnesty International functioned as a surrogate providing information about their plight. By acting in this manner Amnesty International worked around the objections of offending governments and alleviated the potential risk to domestic human rights activists.

It has been noted above that through its support Amnesty International lent a degree of legitimacy to these domestic groups. By providing this legitimacy it was hoped that these groups would be perceived as bona fide human rights organizations by their governments rather than being connected with opposition groups, dissidents, or terrorists. As the record shows, this outcome was not to be. The reactions of the governments singled out in this study to these domestic groups ranged from halting toleration to harsh repression.

In addition to providing the linkages between domestic groups and international organizations concerned with human rights, Amnesty

International coordinated the external activities. In initiating its worldwide campaigns Amnesty International enlisted the help of labor unions, lawyers, educators, parliamentarians, scientists, physicians, and others. In this process the Organization was instrumental in enlarging the human rights constituency in the West. Amnesty International's success in mobilizing international support for the victims of human rights violations can be measured by examining the statements of those governments that were the targets of these campaigns; all protested vehemently and considered Amnesty International to be an instrumental force behind the campaigns. As was noted in Chapter 3, one Uruguayan newspaper decried what it considered a slanderous campaign saying that Amnesty International's campaign reached "paroxysmal" proportions.

The campaigns had several effects. Within the offending countries government authorities, while deploring the international attacks, generally took the campaigns seriously; there was a perception that their relations with other countries would be damaged. However, this did not necessarily lead to an easing of oppression. As Nigel S. Rodney, a Legal Advisor to Amnesty International has said, "There is the common governmental phenomenon of retrenching in the face of public onslaught ... [and] the likelihood of the 'hard' reaction is increased if the information is perceived as being calculated to threaten the structure of a government's foreign relations."¹

Another effect of the campaigns was that they produced within the offending countries (to varying degrees) a greater awareness of human rights concepts and issues. To the extent that this was accomplished, the potential existed for these concepts to take hold and eventually lead

to a human rights constituency in these countries as well. As this involves a long-term socialization process, it is not possible to determine at this point the lasting effects.

Part of Amnesty International's efforts involved the provision of information about human rights violations to various governmental and intergovernmental bodies. Within the United States we have seen how the Congress utilized Amnesty International's data when developing human rights legislation. When hearings were held to focus attention on the human rights situation in various countries, Amnesty International's representatives were often called on to testify. The U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the State Department frequently cited information developed by Amnesty International. Intergovernmental organizations, such as the UNCHR, UNESCO, the ILO, the Council of Europe, and the IACHR, periodically received information from Amnesty International. How this information was utilized depended upon the political makeup within these organizations. Amnesty International's relationship with the IACHR, for example, was of value to both organizations and there was an obvious mutuality of interests. With respect to the United Nations, Amnesty International was able to work closely with that body when South Africa or Chile were the subjects of international concern. The relationship was not as fruitful when violations in the Soviet Union were considered.

The monitoring of human rights violations by Amnesty International and other NGOs filled a need that could not have been carried out by IGOs alone. While these intergovernmental agencies are mandated to carry out certain functions pertaining to the promotion and protection of human

rights, they depend on nongovernmental organizations for much of their information. By providing information to these IGOs on a formal and informal basis, Amnesty International acted as a constant reminder to governments that the various human rights instruments to which they were a party obligated them to undertake measures to promote and protect human rights.

Throughout this study it has been noted that the use of publicity was a major technique utilized by Amnesty International in its efforts to protect human rights. By its press releases, reports, and other publications the Organization focused public and elite attention on the various stages involved in the process to protect human rights -- from establishing the existence of violations to mobilizing international campaigns. Inevitably, the use of publicity by the Organization helped to increase public awareness, particularly in the West, of human rights issues. One measure of its success in this area was the growth of Amnesty International itself (as noted in Chapter 2) during the period reviewed. As its members and budget grew, the Organization was able to make an even greater contribution to the general promotion of human rights.

In considering Amnesty International's effectiveness with respect to the various elements involved in the international protection of human rights, it should be pointed out that the Organization's successes occurred primarily within that realm of international politics composed of Western industrialized democracies. Amnesty International's Western ties turn out to be a two-edged sword; they enhance the Organization's activities within the Western world, but limit its operations in other areas. As was pointed out above, there are various factors related to the

international political system that place limitations on the Organization's effectiveness. These factors are discussed below.

Amnesty International's Limitations

Amnesty International operates within a world where sovereign independent nation-states interact in a system of international politics. In doing so it comes face to face with various factors related to its place within this system that impose limits on its efforts to protect human rights. Among the factors that tend to limit Amnesty International's impact are:

1. The Organization's Western origins and makeup.
2. The values pursued by Amnesty International and by Western governments, from which the Organization would derive support, intersect only partially.
3. The potential for effectiveness with respect to the international protection of human rights varies according to the degree of cooperation that is attainable among nongovernmental, governmental, and intergovernmental agencies.
4. The internal and external security interests of states often are perceived as being incompatible with the protection of human rights.

Amnesty International has national sections in 40 countries. Six of these are in Latin America, one is in the Middle East, four are in Africa, seven are in Asia, and 22 can be included among those states considered to be Western. Included in this last group are Australia and

New Zealand. Closely related to this group is Japan, which is one of the seven Asian states. No communist states, no Arab states, and few third world states are represented. As has been noted elsewhere in this study, the overwhelming majority of Amnesty International's members and supporters are from Northwestern countries. There are said to be additional individual members and supporters in 86 other countries, but this does not change the Organization's basic Northwest orientation.

In order to be able to have any impact within the world political system some measure of power and influence must be available. If we look at that system we see that it is composed of super powers, major powers, middle powers, small powers, and ministates. Based on the observations contained in the descriptive chapters of this study, it would appear that Amnesty International has more impact -- within the issue area of human rights -- than a ministate and probably more than many small powers. If the Government of Togo, for example, were to accuse the Colombian Government of violating human rights, it is unlikely that it would cause much of a stir in the latter country. But such an accusation by Amnesty International elicited a presidential response via a nationwide broadcast and set off a national discussion of human rights in that country.

If it can be said, therefore, that as an actor in world politics, Amnesty International exercises a degree of power and influence, it does so within the issue area of human rights. Although it attempts to influence other actors concerning other areas, the Organization is not in a position to break off diplomatic relations or cultural ties, threaten economic sanctions, or withdraw foreign aid. Instead, it provides the rationale for Western (and other) nations to take these steps.

In conducting its activities, the Organization is not restricted to any particular region of the world. However, within each region it concentrated on certain countries during the period under review. In sub-Saharan Africa it focused on South Africa and Rhodesia. In Latin America, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile received the most attention. In Asia, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam (until 1976), India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and the Philippines were singled out. Beginning in 1977 China began to receive attention. In the Middle East the Organization focused on Iran, Israel, Iraq, and Syria. In Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were the prime public targets. Western European countries that received attention were Spain and Great Britain; somewhat less attention was given to Germany, Greece, and Turkey.

The overall pattern that emerges from this activity indicates that the East-West division as well as the North-South division in world politics determine the areas in which a Western human rights organization has the potential for maximum impact. The divisions are economic and cultural as well as political.

For maximum impact a Western human rights organization, operating as Amnesty International does, has to concentrate on those states that have substantial ties to the West or are seeking them. (Communication links are, of course, not the least important since information is an essential part of Amnesty International's operations.) Amnesty International's field of operations is consequently limited to those states that could be expected to suffer in some way from a deterioration in those relations. Some states such as Albania that deliberately isolate

themselves from the world community of nations are generally beyond the limits of being influenced regarding human rights, particularly by a Western human rights organization. In addition, those countries outside of Europe that look to the Soviet Union for economic and political support are also outside Amnesty International's potential sphere of influence, although the Organization has in certain instances given considerable attention to leftist regimes such as exist in Ethiopia. In that case the reasons for the Organization taking action might have been the massive human rights violations taking place which could not be ignored, pressure from its membership, the indeterminate state of the revolution in that country, the necessity to balance its operations, and the fact that Western countries still provided aid to that country. The United States provided military aid to Ethiopia until 1977. But this exception does not controvert the generalization that the deeper a country is within the Soviet orbit, the less chance a Western human rights organization has of being effective in protecting human rights. Similarly, the greater the distance between a third world country and the Western states in terms of political, economic, and cultural, as well as communication, ties the less impact such an organization is likely to have.

What might seem to be an apparent discrepancy in these generalizations is the great attention paid to the Soviet Union by Amnesty International. Although the Soviet Union obviously does not lie within the Western sphere of influence, there are substantial ties between the East and West that the Soviet Union would like to keep under its control. As long as the Soviet Union considers a policy of detente to be in its interest, it has to maintain ties with the West. Amnesty International,

in its attempts to influence Western leaders concerning human rights in the Soviet Union, was seen by that country as disturbing those ties, threatening its prestige, and supporting those elements that were considered detrimental to internal stability. In this case the international system with its divisions between East and West tended to give Amnesty International a certain amount of leverage that does not exist when the Organization focuses on a client state of the Soviet Union. The client state's ties are primarily with the Soviet Union and not with the West. A threat by Amnesty International to disturb those ties is not likely to be taken seriously.

A human rights organization such as Amnesty International, while operating across national borders, is nevertheless constrained by the international system. As changes in that system occur, so do Amnesty International's operations. A prime example concerns China. Prior to the opening made to China by the Nixon Administration, Amnesty International effectively did not take any actions concerning that nation, although mention was made in the Organization's annual reports. Only after the rapprochement with the United States did Amnesty International substantially increase its activities relating to human rights in China. The rationale apparently was that since China was seeking to improve relations with the West, threats to slow that improvement might influence China to take steps to curb human rights violations. Another possibility was that the Organization sought to inject the issue of human rights into the dialogue between the United States and China. And, since information was previously lacking, an initiative by the Organization might have been a way to forge lines of communication. Similarly, after the American

withdrawal from Vietnam, Amnesty International's activities relating to human rights in that country were markedly reduced.

If we consider the converse of this question for a moment -- that is, in what way does the work of nongovernmental human rights organizations have an impact upon the international system -- it is conceivable that there can be some marginal effect. To the extent that human rights organizations can influence friendly governments to alter their political, economic, and social relations with a government that is violating human rights, these alterations of policies will bring about certain changes in alignments within the international system. To illustrate: first, assume that the work of human rights organizations contributed to the cooling of relations between the United States and Argentina; second, assume that these attenuated relations prompted Argentina to seek closer ties with the Soviet Union. Then it could be said that the work of human rights organizations contributed to at least a change in the East-West alignment of the international system. In this particular case other factors were certainly involved and it is not implied that the activities of human rights organizations were solely responsible for these developments. Also, consider the anomalous situation in the United Nations in 1977. Judging from their rhetoric, Chile and the Soviet Union were and are irreconcilable opponents. Chile's President Pinochet has accused the Soviet Union of orchestrating a virulent campaign against his country. In turn, the Soviet Union's media referred to Pinochet's regime in the most vile terms. Yet the two countries managed to submerge their differences when they joined with Argentina in a coalition which attempted to deny human rights

organizations the privilege of consultative status with the United Nations. To the extent that the efforts of human rights organizations prompted this alliance, it can be said that they had an impact on international politics.

The second proposition to be considered in this section indicates that since Amnesty International's values and those of Western governments are not fully coincident, a limit is placed on the degree of support that the Organization can expect to receive from those governments. With respect to the promotion of human rights the governments of most Western states are in general agreement with Amnesty International. Human rights considerations -- especially with respect to civil and political rights -- form part of their political culture and have an influence on foreign policy. The adoption of international human rights standards by the United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies is supported by most Western countries. Most Western nations have worked for stronger methods of implementing human rights standards and have backed nongovernmental efforts in this area.

With respect to the international protection of human rights, governments can take various actions. They can first of all make clear that the protection of human rights is a fundamental part of their foreign policies. They can express support for victims of repression. Formal diplomatic protests can be sent to the offending governments and efforts within international forums can be supported. Aid can be withheld and economic sanctions can be applied to offending nations. Beyond these and other related actions, most governments would not normally consider humanitarian intervention by armed force as an option.

When reacting to specific situations in which human rights are violated in a foreign country a government may use none, some, or all of these options. However, there are inherent limits to governmental action that are not necessarily applicable to actions taken by organizations such as Amnesty International. Governments are installed to promote various values ranging from national security to full employment. A human rights organization pursues less diverse values. In order to pursue their foreign policy objectives governments usually give high priority to maintaining cordial relations with other governments. A human rights NGO such as Amnesty International does not appear to equate its effectiveness or *raison d'etre* with maintaining good relations with human rights violators.

When a Western government takes any of the possible actions available to it there is an inevitable reaction from the country accused of violating human rights, which not infrequently results in a deterioration of relations with that country. This, as noted above, may jeopardize other foreign policy objectives. In some circumstances a large powerful country such as the United States can afford to take more extensive actions than a smaller country. If a country is to consider economic sanctions, for example, against a violating country, it may inflict damage upon its own economy while the target of the sanctions takes its business elsewhere. In other circumstances a small country with fewer commitments may have greater freedom of action, but any action it does take will generally have less impact.

Another factor that limits the actions that a country can take is the extent of human rights violations throughout the world. Amnesty

International works for the release of "prisoners of conscience" which includes those who have violated some country's restrictions on freedom of expression. These restrictions occur in virtually all communist and authoritarian regimes. Even in democracies persons are occasionally imprisoned for expressing their views. For a Western country to take unilateral action against all violators would result in a self-imposed isolation, which most countries are not prepared to do. Even in situations involving gross violations of human rights a Western government has to consider whether its actions will be effective. More likely, governments will initiate multilateral actions through intergovernmental organizations. If the majority in the United Nations, for example, condemn Chile for human rights violations, there is little reason for that country to single out one other country for reprisals. European countries seem more prone to take multilateral actions concerning human rights violations. On several occasions the EEC has issued statements about human rights violations in African and Latin American countries. In cases where there was no universal condemnation, as in the Ugandan situation, we have seen how that Government threatened reprisals against citizens of the United States and Great Britain.

Given the limitations on governmental action, there is an inherent divergence between the aims of human rights NGOs and governments. The values pursued by Amnesty International and those of friendly governments intersect only partially. Whereas Amnesty International pursues its goals with a single-minded purpose, governments have to sort out and reconcile many values which are often contradictory. An analogy can be made to domestic American politics where the Government is faced with

satisfying many values while under pressure from single-issue interest groups. Thus, while Western governments and Amnesty International are in fundamental agreement over long-term objectives, there is an inevitable tension between them as to the means by which human rights should be protected in specific situations. Amnesty International generally seeks to escalate the pressure against a violating government while most otherwise friendly governments usually seek to maintain good relations with all governments.

The third proposition to be considered here is that the potential for effectiveness with respect to the international protection of human rights varies according to the degree of cooperation that is attainable among nongovernmental organizations, and governmental and intergovernmental agencies. In the situations described in the case studies we have seen a variety of intergovernmental, governmental, and nongovernmental interactions relating to the international protection of human rights. Since the human rights considered here are specific civil and political rights, the generalizations presented will not necessarily be appropriate to the international protection of other rights. That is, different combinations of situations may enhance the promotion and protection of economic, social, and cultural rights.

From the case studies presented it should be obvious that in the countries reviewed the civil and political rights of their citizens were often violated by their governments. Another observation which might seem obvious is that the protection of human rights has the highest potential for effectiveness with respect to those states that adhere to international human rights instruments and whose domestic legal systems

and practices already aim to protect those rights. These states might be considered to be at one end of a continuum. At the other end are those states that reject international standards and whose laws and practices offer no protection. International efforts toward the protection of civil and political rights are likely to be least effective with the countries at this end of the continuum. The potential for effectiveness increases as one moves from this end of the continuum to the other. Using this criterion we find the Western democracies at one end of the continuum and such countries as Equatorial Guinea -- where in 1978 Amnesty International said the rule of law was defunct -- at the other end. Other countries would fall at intermediate points on the continuum. With those countries at the lower end it is doubtful that any combination of nongovernmental, intergovernmental, and governmental actions short of armed intervention would be effective in bringing about improvement in the protection of human rights.

With those countries that are placed higher on the continuum the potential for effectiveness is increased when nongovernmental, governmental, and intergovernmental organizations are able to coordinate their activities and pressure with nongovernmental groups within the country being pressured. The ability of national nongovernmental organizations to participate in this process is crucial since they often supply the needed information and mobilize forces within the country to apply pressure on the government. The word, potential, is emphasized since there are other factors which contribute to the determination of whether these efforts are effective. Primary among these factors in the percep-

tion by some governments that the restriction of certain rights is necessary for the security of the state which, in turn, is equated with maintenance of the status quo. (This factor is discussed further below.)

The potential for effectiveness becomes greater still if the intergovernmental, governmental, and nongovernmental pressures originate within a regional system where the national interests of the various countries are compatible and where regional human rights instruments establish a legal basis for intervention by other countries. On that basis, the greatest potential for effectiveness appears to exist in Western Europe, followed by the Inter-American system. If other regional systems -- in Africa or the Arab countries, for example -- were to develop human rights conventions and mechanisms for implementation, the potential for effectiveness would be increased in those areas also.

However, even if a regional structure for implementing human rights standards was developed for each region, effectiveness would not be enhanced if the allegations of violations came from outside the region or from rival political systems; when allegations of human rights violations originate in rival political systems, resistance rather than responsiveness may be expected. One can think of a number of examples where such charges would not help in bringing about improvement: Arab states accusing Israel of violating human rights; South Africa accusing black African states; the Soviet Union accusing the United States, or vice versa (as Chapter 6 demonstrated); and Taiwan accusing China. All would have little chance of producing constructive efforts to end human rights violations. In such cases the human rights questions become intermingled with questions of security and ideology and the charges are regarded

solely as part of a propaganda offensive.

The fourth proposition indicates that efforts to protect human rights are often considered to be incompatible with the basic internal and external security interests of a state. In each of the countries discussed in this study the violations of human rights that occurred resulted from actions taken by the state in the name of internal security and order. The actions were taken to combat terrorism, to neutralize opponents, to curb dissent, and to consolidate military takeovers. It has been postulated above that the presence of nongovernmental groups within a particular country is essential to the international process of protecting human rights. However, this factor also has a negative side. Generally, these national groups that seek international support to combat human rights violations are often regarded by their governments as contributing to international defamation campaigns, foreign interference, and concomitant efforts to create instability in the country. Human rights organizations (international and national) are often lumped together with the opposition, terrorists, guerrilla movements, dissidents, and other enemies of the state. As such, the domestic and foreign policies of the offending governments concerning these efforts are linked to their primary goal -- the preservation of the state.

The view of these governments is that the state is threatened internally as well as externally; the two threats graft one onto the other. Efforts that are seen as contributing to the internal disintegration of the state are also seen as contributing to a diminished level of power and influence in the international system. A weak government which cannot mobilize all of its resources because of internal instability will

not be able to acquire much leverage in its dealings with other governments. Given these views, it is not surprising therefore that transnational human rights organizations such as Amnesty International are regarded by communist states as anti-communist and by South Africa and some Latin American states as part of terrorist aggression orchestrated and directed from abroad.

External threats are rarely defined; they remain diffuse. It is more difficult for internal opposition groups to combat a government's perception of indistinct subversive centers abroad or of some amorphous communist aggression. In some instances, the government's perception is fortified by the actions of terrorist organizations that seek to foment internal disorder. Certainly this was true with respect to the Uruguayan and Argentine situations. With respect to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, the turn of events in Poland and the development of an independent trade union -- which enjoyed moral, financial, and media support from the West and effectively broke (albeit temporarily) the Communist Party's monopoly of power -- has reinforced these governments' perceptions that any form of dissent is dangerous.

The level of governmental opposition to international efforts to protect civil and political rights tends to increase in approximate proportion to the growth of fear of an imminent or constant internal or external threat to the country. Fearing that its external opponents may take advantage of a weakened nation facing internal crisis, the government resorts to increased repression of dissidents and political opponents, greater propaganda efforts, and a tightening of restrictions on contacts between foreigners and citizens. International and inde-

pendent national media outlets are often harassed and occasionally silenced. The intent is to increase both the appearance and fact of government control to avert possible miscalculation by external opponents.

It appears therefore that the efforts of international human rights organizations which tend to increase these perceptions of insecurity by governmental elites are probably counterproductive in regard to the protection of human rights. Of course, it is conceivable that in some situations involving an extremely vulnerable ~~country~~ these efforts may frighten its leaders into taking action to improve its performance concerning human rights and thus ease the international isolation.

Therefore, if the international protection of human rights continues to be interpreted by the offending elites as threatening the security of their respective nations, then efforts by transnational human rights organizations that seek to blackball the country will not succeed in protecting human rights. Only to the extent that human rights organizations are able to separate the issues of human rights and national security -- a rare case -- will their chances for successfully protecting human rights become realistic.

Transnationalism and Human Rights

The previous discussion, which elaborated on Amnesty International's strategy, effectiveness, and limitations, illustrated how the transnational activities of the Organization operated across, while simultaneously being constrained by the international system of world politics. Implicit were various speculations relating to the concept of transnationalism as formulated by Keohane and Nye. These authors defined transnational relations as "contacts, coalitions, and interactions across

state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments."² Several questions were posed by these authors about the effects of transnational relations. Specifically, Keohane and Nye pondered over the effect that transnational relations might have on the ability of governments to deal with their environments. They asked, to what extent do governments suffer from a loss of control as a result of transnational activities? Kjell Skjelsbaek, in another chapter of Keohane and Nye's study, noted that "some NGOs probably have more power and influence in their respective fields than some of the smaller nation-states."³ In discussing transnationalism and human rights four questions are considered. They are:

1. How do governments accused of violating human rights deal with the transnational activities aimed at the protection of human rights?
2. Do transnational human rights activities enhance or diminish the influence of nation-states? Do governments suffer a loss of control as a result of these activities?
3. What are the elements underlying the influence of a transnational nongovernmental human rights organization?
4. What are the implications for the study of international politics?

In considering these aspects of transnationalism, it must be stressed that the discussion relates only to the issue area of human rights. The generalizations developed will not necessarily apply to

transnational activities relating to other issue areas.

It has been shown that governments that were accused of violating human rights reacted to the transnational activities of Amnesty International and others by seeking to counter what they considered to be external influences. In his article, "External Influences on the Internal Behavior of States," Karl W. Deutsch postulates that governments may attempt to reduce external influence in two ways -- by reducing the external inputs and by isolating linkage groups.⁴ The governments discussed in this study that were accused of violating human rights responded in both ways. All went to great lengths to reduce the external inputs and to isolate the various domestic linkage groups that sought to make contact with outside organizations.

With respect to the issue area of human rights, the external input consisted of Amnesty International's reports, the protests of participants in the international campaigns, accounts of human rights violations as reported by the international media, and the communications concerning actions taken by various intergovernmental and governmental bodies. The lengths to which the target governments went to reduce these inputs varied. All of the governments attempted to effectively neutralize them by initiating their own campaigns. Methods employed included the issuance of statements by government officials, presenting opposing arguments in the printed press and via national broadcasting outlets, taking issue with the work of transnational nongovernmental human rights organizations in international forums, and by restricting the flow of information. The documented responses of the various countries accused of violating human rights -- as outlined in the descriptive chapters of

this study -- illustrate the extent of these responses. Within the communist countries the press, as a matter of government policy is controlled, and restricting the media was not necessary. In other countries such as Uruguay and South Africa tight restrictions were placed on the press and on the circulation of material considered by these governments as detrimental. It was noted above that one of the responses of the South African Government was to ban Amnesty International's report on human rights violations in that country. In Argentina, newspapers were closed, publications were suspended, and editors were jailed and tortured.

Efforts to reduce external influence by controlling media content were coupled with actions to cut the linkages between domestic groups and external organizations involved in the international protection of human rights, such as Amnesty International. The method employed by the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia to cut these linkages was to eliminate the domestic groups. We have seen that a high price was to be paid by members of these groups for making contact with outside groups, ranging from harassment to imprisonment; the severance of the linkages tended to be complete. South Africa's approach was similar; opponents of apartheid were either banned or imprisoned, making contact with outside groups extremely difficult or impossible. In Argentina and Chile, the severance of the linkages was partial and intermittent. In Argentina, for example, although domestic human rights groups had their offices raided, their files confiscated, and their leaders arrested, they continued to operate, albeit with diminished capacity and perpetual fear. In all cases the aim of the various governments was to sever the linkages from both sides; domestic groups were to be isolated from internal as well as external organizations.

In generalizing about the extent to which these governments went to curtail these external influences and to isolate the linkage groups, it is possible to present several variables which had an impact on this process. The Western-non-Western dichotomy is one possible variable. The perceived threat to internal security is another. A third appears to relate to the extent that independent forces already exist in the country. That is, Western human rights groups had the least chance of maintaining linkages if the country was non-Western, if the government perceived an imminent threat to internal security and order, and if no independent forces already existed in the country. Conversely, efforts to counter these external influences would be least severe in those countries that lie within the Western sphere of international politics, whose governments do not perceive an imminent threat to internal security and order, and where independent forces exist.

Before concluding this section on how those governments accused of violating human rights coped with the transnational activities relating to the international protection of human rights, it should be pointed out that Western governments that supported these activities reacted in precisely the opposite manner. Instead of striving to limit these transnational connections, these governments -- within the limitations discussed above -- encouraged them.

The second question to be considered is whether transnational human rights activities enhance or diminish the influence of nation-states; do governments suffer a loss of control from these activities? The answer to the first part of the question is both yes and no, depending upon the country. The answer to the second part depends upon the relative power

of a particular country. In those instances when transnational human rights are consistent with the foreign policy of a Western country, focusing international attention on another country because of human rights violations may serve to magnify the former country's concerns without damaging its relations with the violating country. That is, the Western country's foreign policy aims are enhanced without incurring excessive costs. Since the actions were taken by a nongovernmental organization, the Western state can disclaim any responsibility for those actions. In such a case an organization working to protect human rights can be considered as an instrument of the Western state's foreign policy.

On the other hand, if these transnational activities and efforts at generating publicity result in increased pressure within a Western country urging the government to take action, then the government's freedom of action may be constrained and a tension is produced. Since stronger actions may result in retaliatory actions by the accused government, a Western government may be reluctant to take such measures, fearing other foreign policy goals may be jeopardized. When the United States announced in 1977 the suspension of aid to Ethiopia because of human rights violations, that government responded by ordering most of the American military and diplomatic personnel out of the country.

When a human rights organization's submissions to an intergovernmental organization result in some action being taken against an offending government, there is a duality in the effect produced. The government that is the subject of a censuring resolution because of human rights violations usually suffers a loss in prestige. Those countries that voted for the resolution find their influence maximized,

which might not have been possible if unilateral action was attempted.

When Amnesty International or an intergovernmental organization accuses a government of violating human rights, the offending government is generally fearful lest this result in a diminution of its prestige; it acts accordingly. Most tend to take actions that will offset the allegations and enhance their prestige. To the extent that the allegations interrupt the country's normal political, economic, and cultural relations, a certain decrease in control may be the result. In an extreme case, loss of control may be total; that is, the government may be overthrown. In one such example, Amnesty International's charges that some 100 schoolchildren in the Central African Empire were killed by government forces led to the creation of a five-nation commission of inquiry and eventual armed intervention by the French Government, which resulted in the Emperor's ouster.⁵ In general, a diminution of control is most likely with respect to those governments that are also vulnerable on other levels. In the case of less vulnerable regimes, only their freedom of action may be affected.

The third question to be considered deals with the elements underlying the influence of a transnational nongovernmental human rights organization. Throughout this study there are examples of the influence of Amnesty International. In the discussion on Amnesty International's effectiveness and limitation it was noted that the Organization had more of an impact (within the issue area of human rights) than many small powers. This influence was operative primarily within the Western realm of international politics and subject to various limitations. However, within this sphere, several factors, among others, determined the

Organization's potential influence. The primary factors were:

1. The perception by officials of some governments that the actions of Amnesty International could damage their countries' prestige as well as the structure of their international relations.
2. Amnesty International's links with Western democratic nations.
3. Amnesty International's diffuse organization and membership.

The governments accused of violating human rights (as described in the earlier chapters) invariably viewed the international campaigns against their countries as slanderous. That is, each country saw its reputation and prestige as being under attack. A loss of prestige was considered to be potentially damaging to the country's efforts in other areas of international relations. As Hans Morgenthau has noted, "Prestige has become particularly important as a political weapon in an age in which the struggle for power is fought not only with the traditional methods of political pressure, but in large measure as a struggle for the minds of men."⁶ The great lengths to which the officials of these countries went to counter the international campaigns attests to the importance they placed on the concept of prestige.

If we consider why Amnesty International was able to elicit these perceptions by government officials that their countries' prestige could be damaged, we find several underlying factors. The main factors were Amnesty International's links with the Western democratic nations and its diffuse organization and membership. Within the Western sphere of

international politics the Organization had a potential for effectiveness which in turn influenced the perceptions of governments. As a special interest group operating in various Western democratic countries Amnesty International, with its active membership, its ability to generate publicity, its elite ties, and its effectiveness in other areas, was in a position to influence the foreign policies of these countries. The important point here is not the actual impact the Organization had on these policies, but the perceptions by those governments accused of violating human rights that the potential existed for this influence to be effective. That is, accused governments responded to latent, rather than actualized, influence. If Amnesty International's membership existed primarily in countries where interest groups were not able to influence government policy, the Organization's influence would have been perceived as having less potential impact.

The other factor that enhances Amnesty International's influence is its diffuse organization and membership. As a multinational organization Amnesty International is less vulnerable to retaliation than would be an organization based in only one country. Indirect pressure by a target country directed through the Organization's host government is not likely to have much impact. Even if, for example, in the remote possibility that pressure could be applied successfully to Great Britain, the host country to Amnesty International's International Secretariat, the Organization could simply move its headquarters to another country.

The fourth question to be considered deals with the implications for the study of international politics. As has been shown, Amnesty International, a transnational nongovernmental organization operated in

an area that has traditionally been considered to be the purview of nation-states. That is, it interacted with nation-states, often in conflict situations, and was able to do so with considerable influence -- even if its primary objectives were not always achieved. Rather than postulating that a nongovernmental human rights organization can operate on an equal footing with nation-states or that the state-centric view of international politics is obsolete, it is argued here that a process is involved whereby influence is transmitted from nation-states to nongovernmental organizations. That is, the influence of nation-states flows through these nongovernmental organizations and thereby affects other nation-states. The extent to which this occurs depends upon several factors. Primary among these factors are the skill of the nongovernmental organization in maximizing its influence with supportive governments and its ability to foster the impression that this influence will prompt these governments to take action against a country accused of violating human rights. Certainly, as the previous discussion demonstrates, there are inherent limitations in this process.

In the study of international politics states cannot be categorized simply according to whether they are super powers, major powers, middle powers, small powers, or ministates. Power and influence are not distributed proportionally across all issue areas. Within issue areas nongovernmental organizations may enhance the influence of some nation-states and diminish that of others. And through the process outlined above, some nongovernmental organizations acquire a degree of influence beyond that of many nation-states. How this process actually works

requires additional research. Nongovernmental organizations involved in other issue areas may use different methods to acquire influence.

Recommendations

In undertaking this study the primary focus was on Amnesty International's interactions with those governments selected by the Organization as targets. Those areas which deal with the internal functions of the Organization and the process involved in developing support among private groups and governments were generally peripheral to the central focus of this study. We have noted that the Organization was generally successful in mobilizing support for victims of human rights abuses. Therefore, this Organization as well as other human rights groups should continue to develop those activities related to:

- Publicizing human rights violations.
- Enlarging the human rights constituency.
- Developing ties with domestic human rights groups.
- Increasing cooperation among international human rights organizations.
- The implementation of international human rights law.
- The expansion of memberships to other areas of the world.

However, with respect to those areas where limitations are imposed on nongovernmental human rights organizations, perhaps new approaches are needed.

In discussing the limitations imposed on Amnesty International it was noted that these limitations resulted from the Organization's place

within the international political system, the low priority given to human rights in the foreign policies of Western nations, the absence of enforcement machinery which could compel sovereign nations to take steps to improve their human rights performance, and the conflict between the perceived requirements of internal security and order and efforts to gain and protect human rights. These limitations are imposed on Amnesty International as well as other nongovernmental human rights organizations. It appears, therefore, that the primary task of nongovernmental human rights organizations is to further understand these limitations and explore methods to overcome them -- on the whole, not an easy task.

Some of the problems involved appear to be intractable. The limitations imposed on nongovernmental human rights organizations will exist for some time. For example, it is doubtful that in the near future sovereign nations will allow the establishment of an international body to enforce the implementation of human rights standards. It is also highly improbable that Western nations will upgrade the position of human rights in their foreign policies to the point where nongovernmental organizations can expect them to take prompt action when violations occur in other countries. (Nongovernmental organizations should, of course, continue to press governments in this regard.) Even if Western states did upgrade human rights factors, the probability that Eastern or third world states would do so is remote. Therefore, the only remaining area in which to seek improvement concerns the apparent conflict between a country's needs to maintain internal security and order and the protection of human rights.

As we have seen, all of the countries singled out in this study

equated efforts to gain or protect human rights with threats to their internal security. Attempts by nongovernmental organizations to convince governments that the protection of human rights is not compatible with internal security might also seem to be a fruitless endeavor. However, since governments have the capacity to both violate and protect human rights, further efforts should be made to enlist government officials in cooperative, rather than conflictive, ventures.

In 1979 a conference of representatives of human rights organizations met in Bellagio, Italy to consider recommendations dealing with strategies for protecting human rights. The conference's specific recommendations dealt with the following areas:

Information exchange

Expansion of human rights organizations

Joint activities

Publications

Casework referral

Joint strategies at the United Nations

Helsinki monitoring groups

Joint strategies relating to the European Convention
on Human Rights ⁷

The fundamental problem of dealing with the critical actors involved -- the governments of those countries in which human rights are violated -- was not directly addressed. It would seem, therefore, if the primary aim of a human rights organization is to safeguard the lives and to insure the well being of victims of human rights violations, then methods must be found to gain the confidence of the governments in power; working

relationships and agencies to deal with these governments must be established. This would, however, first require a recognition by nongovernmental organizations of the reality of the power relationships within a given society. For an NGO to opt not to deal with a government in power automatically places the organization into the camp of the opposition. In many countries there is no legal opposition; to oppose the government is considered a punishable offense. For a democrat, an obvious dilemma exists. There is the inevitable reluctance to deal with repressive governments which do not allow opposition elements to operate, do not allow free expression, and restrict other rights. Not infrequently, the victims of human rights violations -- for whom the human rights organization is working -- come from those opposition elements. By its activities the human rights organization is thrown into a conflict situation with the government. Although members of a human rights organization may derive some visceral satisfaction by opposing governments such as those headed by Idi Amin, Emperor Bokassa, or even Leonid Brezhnev, this opposition, coupled with the realities of the power relationships within a particular country and the reluctance of other governments to intervene, places the organization in a vulnerable position. While the appearance of opposition to repressive governments may engender support for the organization's activities among private groups and bolster its moral stance, it also risks losing the potential support of those members of the government who are in a position to alleviate the plight of victims of human rights violations.

Part of the problem seems to stem from the methods used by nongovernmental organizations to mobilize support. While these methods

are effective to some degree within the Western democracies, they are less likely to influence governments in other countries. In some countries the infrastructure for mobilizing and transmitting protests may not exist and, as noted above, such opposition may simply not be tolerated.

In addition to gaining the confidence of governments, appropriate methods must be found to protect human rights. Obviously, different situations will require different responses. One situation which seems to cry out for solutions is that which occurs in the aftermath of military takeovers. In the Latin American countries discussed in this study thousands of persons were arbitrarily rounded up and imprisoned in the wake of the military takeovers. In the Chilean situation we have seen how the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration was able to relocate thousands of persons who might have suffered a different fate. In contrast, in Argentina, thousands of persons simply disappeared. The work of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration might serve as a model for similar international agencies. Nongovernmental organizations could assist in the process of establishing the need for, and in determining the possible functions of, such agencies. Perhaps regional agencies could be established, operating in conjunction with existing intergovernmental organizations such as the OAS, OAU, or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The aim of such organizations would be to remove victims of human rights violations from the jurisdiction of their governments; this could be accomplished by migration, by temporary asylum, or by placing these persons under the protection of some international agency (e.g., the

International Committee of the Red Cross) within the country.

Other situations may require other approaches specifically tailored to meet the particular set of problems involved. Obviously, protests are not enough. In the short run, it seems that little is to be gained by attempts to convince governments that the protection of human rights is not incompatible with preserving internal security and order. In the long run, governments may come to realize that the best way to insure internal security and order is by protecting human rights. But before that epoch is reached, more direct means must be found.

Footnotes

¹Nigel S. Rodney, "Monitoring Human Rights in the 1980s," in Jorge Dominguez, et al., Enhancing Global Human Rights (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company), p. 34.

²Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and Robert O. Keohane, "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction," in Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (eds.), Transnational Relations and World Politics (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. xi.

³Kjell Skjelsbaek, "The Growth of International Nongovernmental Organization in the Twentieth Century," in Keohane and Nye, op. cit., p. 85.

⁴Karl W. Deutsch, "External Influences on the Internal Behavior of States," in R. Barry Farrell, Approaches to Comparative and International Politics.

⁵See the account of these events in Jonathan Power, Amnesty International: The Human Rights Story (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981), pp. 82-89.

⁶Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Peace and Power (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1978), p. 86.

⁷See Report of the Conference on Strategies for Strengthening the Implementation of Human Rights: The Role of the National and International NGOs. Sponsored by The International League of Human Rights and the Federation Internationale Des Droits de L'Homme. October, 1979.

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