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**URUGUAY:  
THE CASES OF FOURTEEN  
PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE**

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## INTRODUCTION

Since mid-June 1973, when the Armed Forces of Uruguay took over control of the Government and the elected Parliament was dissolved, international human rights commissions and non-governmental organizations, including Amnesty International, have received hundreds of detailed complaints of the arrest and detention of persons on the basis of their peacefully held political beliefs. Their continuing detention is a violation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Amnesty International considers these persons to be prisoners of conscience and is campaigning for their immediate release.

The Uruguayan Constitution of 1967 claims to guarantee the basic individual and legal rights of its citizens, but these rights have been gradually invalidated by official acts, laws and decrees enacted by the present Uruguayan Government. For example, in June 1973, the President of Uruguay, while invoking the Prompt Security Measures (*Medidas Prontas de Seguridad*), decreed that the constitutional right of assembly of a political nature in public or private places cannot be exercised without prior authorization. In the same month, the President decreed the dissolution of the national trade union movement - the *Convención Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT)* - which comprises over 90% of the work force, declared it an "illicit association", closed its offices and ordered the arrest and trial of its leaders.

On 28 November 1973, the President dissolved and declared as "illicit associations" fourteen political parties and groups. Under this decree, activity involving a banned political party or group is designated a crime of "subversive association" or "assistance to subversive association". Furthermore, under the decree, political parties which have not been banned are declared "in recess", which means that there is a total prohibition on political activity in the country. The same decree prohibits the publication of any material having a "marxist-socialist" orientation.

In the past eight years, twenty-six national newspapers and five local newspapers, as well as numerous trade union publications, have been closed by the Government. Anyone who voices criticism of government policies is liable to the charge of "attack on the moral strength of the Armed Forces".

Despite these initiatives and the high number of political prisoners, the Uruguayan authorities have categorically denied that any human rights violations have occurred and that its citizens are persecuted solely for their political beliefs. On numerous occasions, the Uruguayan Government has dismissed charges of human rights violations made by the international community, governmental and non-governmental bodies alike, as an "organized and systematic international campaign by marxist-leninists to discredit the country".

The cases of the fourteen prisoners of conscience presented in this report are representative of many other Uruguayan political prisoners who have been imprisoned for their non-violent political views. Their cases also illustrate Amnesty International's concern about several aspects of political imprisonment in Uruguay: lack of legal safeguards at the time of arrest; long periods of *incomunicado* detention; maltreatment, "disappearance" and torture; military jurisdiction over civilians; and poor prison conditions.

Didaskó PEREZ BACCINO

Didaskó Perez Baccino, aged 42, a primary school teacher and audio visual specialist, was detained on 21 March 1975 during a raid on the offices of the *Federación de Enseñanza Secundaria*. At the time of the raid on the offices, Sr. Perez was Secretary General of the *Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio* (Primary School Teachers' Federation). The authorities claimed that this organization had been providing financial support for other members of the teaching profession who had been dismissed for political reasons and trade union activities. The authorities also claimed to have found literature belonging to banned organizations at the offices. On 18 April 1975, the *Federación de Profesores de Enseñanza Secundaria* was closed down by the authorities for alleged links with illegal marxist organizations and the Federation's funds were confiscated.



During the months prior to 1 May 1975, numerous arrests of teachers, trade unionists, students and other opponents of the Uruguayan Government took place in an attempt to prevent May Day celebrations. A similar wave of arrests had taken place prior to May Day the previous year.

It is reported that at the time of Sr. Perez's arrest he was severely beaten and several shots were fired by the arresting police officers. He was first taken to *Dirección Nacional de Información e Inteligencia No 2*, where he was subjected to long periods of enforced standing (*plantón*) and was not given food for thirty hours.

On 2 April 1975, Sr. Perez was placed at the disposition of the *Juzgado Militar del 6 Turno* (military magistrate) and transferred to *El Cilindro*, a sports stadium which was used as a detention centre at the time. The military magistrate ordered his release on 7 June 1975 but he remained in detention for a further 20 days and he was not released until 27 June 1975.

On 2 October 1975, the same magistrate ordered that Sr. Perez be brought to trial on the charge of "assisting a subversive association" under Article 60 (VI) of the military penal code, in spite of the fact that the magistrate had previously found that there was insufficient evidence for prosecution. Although Sr. Perez has already been in detention for over three years, he has not been sentenced. He is held in the *Establecimiento Penitenciario de Punta Carretas* in Montevideo.

Didaskó Perez is married with two children. He is a qualified audio-visual expert and was responsible for the creation of the *Centro de Experimentación Audiovisual*, an audio-visual experimental centre which aimed to extend the use of modern technology more widely in the field of education.

Alfonso Avelino FERNANDEZ CABRELLI

Alfonso Avelino Fernández Cabrelli, aged 60, a well-known municipal lawyer, historian and journalist, has been held by the Uruguayan authorities since 1976, charged under Article 58 of the military penal code with "offences that affect the morale of the Armed Forces".

Sr. Fernández Cabrelli, who has been detained in the *Cárcel Central* of the Police Headquarters in Montevideo, has not been sentenced. In an official communiqué dated 9 September 1976, the authorities charged that Fernández Cabrelli had attempted in his book *Los Orientales* (published in 1971) to "influence the reader's subconscious" by distorting historical events in Uruguay and drawing parallels between the 19th century hero of Uruguayan independence General Artigas, Camilo Torres, and "Che" Guevara. The authorities further stated that the book contains numerous passages which "strongly criticize the measures taken by the Uruguayan Government to preserve our national values and to protect against marxist penetration".

Fernández Cabrelli was the director of the monthly magazine *Para Todos* (For Everyone) which published 19 issues from February 1971 until November 1972, when it was banned by the authorities. He was also the director of the series *Grito de Ascencio* which included several political and historical publications, among them "*Torturas Uruguay 70*", "*Artigas*", "*Militares y Pueblo*" and "*Citas del Prócer*". Since June 1973, twenty-six national newspapers and five local newspapers, as well as numerous magazines and trade union publications, have been closed by the Uruguayan Government.

Anselmo FERNANDEZ OXLEY

Anselmo Fernández Oxley, aged 40, a test engineer at the *Administración Nacional de Telecomunicaciones*, the State telephone/telecommunications company, was arrested on 16 December 1975 at his home in Montevideo. For two months, his family was unable to discover his place of detention and they were not allowed to visit him until August 1976, eight months after his arrest. Sr. Fernández's arrest in late 1975 coincided with a massive wave of arrests of members and alleged members of the Communist Party of Uruguay.



According to the Uruguayan authorities, Anselmo Fernández was brought before the *Juez de Instrucción del Segundo Turno* (military examining magistrate) on the date of his arrest; thus his detention was officially recognized. He has been sentenced to seven years imprisonment charged with "subversive association" under Article 60 (V) of the military penal code in relation to Article 132, para. 6, and Article 137 of the civil penal code. "Subversive association" is the most common charge brought against persons who have belonged to or supported any of the political parties or groups banned in 1973.

Anselmo Fernández was first detained in the barracks of the 5th Artillery Regiment in Montevideo. It is common in Uruguay for detainees to be taken to a military barracks following arrest for interrogation purposes, often accompanied by maltreatment and torture. He is now held in the military high security prison, the *Establecimiento Militar de Reclusión No 1*.

It is unclear whether the charges against Anselmo Fernández are related to his trade union activities or his possible membership of the Communist Party of Uruguay. Sr. Fernández had been dismissed from his job at the State telephone/telecommunications company in 1969 after being called up to serve in the armed forces. At this time, the Uruguayan authorities had tried to put an end to strike action by conscripting strikers into the armed forces. Anselmo Fernández was subsequently reinstated in his job in February 1974 by an Administrative Tribunal.

Eugenio Salvador BERNAL PEREZ

Eugenio Salvador Bernal Pérez, aged 56, a Spanish national and professional photographer, was detained on 5 July 1977 at his photography studio in Montevideo. Shortly after his detention, his wife was instructed by the authorities to take clothing and personal articles to the former military secondary school. Military personnel collected the articles, but gave no information to the wife on the whereabouts of her husband. It was later reported that Sr. Bernal was first held in the 6th Cavalry Regiment, where he was severely tortured, and eventually transferred to the main military prison for men, *Penal de Libertad (E.M.R. No 1)*.

On 31 August 1977, Sr. Bernal was charged with "assisting a subversive association" under Article 60 (VI) of the military penal code.

On 14 February 1978, his case went before the *Juzgado Militar del 2 Turno* (military magistrate). According to the Uruguayan authorities, Sr. Bernal is in detention for developing photographs for the banned Communist Party of Uruguay. Reliable sources outside of Uruguay report that the photographer may have developed some photographs taken by an Army official of torture methods practiced by the Armed Forces of Uruguay.

Sr. Bernal, one of thirteen or more Spanish nationals detained in Uruguay, was visited by the Spanish Consul on 16 September 1977. His wife and son have been forced to close down the photography studio in Montevideo.

General Liber SEREGNI

General Liber Seregni, aged 62, was the presidential candidate for the *Frente Amplio*, a left-of-centre coalition which took part in the last parliamentary elections in Uruguay, held in 1971.

In the course of a brilliant military career, General Seregni held leading posts in several military institutions in Uruguay (e.g. the Military Institute of Superior Studies (IMES) and the General Inspectorate of the Army). In 1963 he reached the rank of general at the age of only 47 and he was made commander of the Second Military Region. This region includes the provinces of Soriano, Flores, Colonia and San José. He was later made commander of the most important military region in Uruguay (No. 1), which covers the province of Canelones and the capital city, Montevideo. He resigned from this post in 1969 over a disagreement with the government regarding the social and political situation within the country.



General Seregni was first arrested on 9 July 1973 following the massive peaceful demonstration which took place in Montevideo in protest against the dissolution of Parliament (27 June 1973). He was held *incomunicado* until the end of December in the barracks of the infantry batallion at the town of Minas. He was not formally charged until February 1974. His request to go into exile, to which he was legally entitled until he was charged, was denied. The original charges brought against him were "conspiracy to conceal an attack on the Constitution" and "instigation to commit crimes". The defence argued that these were not crimes which fell under military justice and subsequently a new charge was brought against General Seregni: "lack of respect towards a superior officer". This charge was based on his electoral campaign speeches in 1971. He was released on bail in November 1974 and placed under strict house arrest. A *Tribunal de Honor* stripped him of his rank.

Following several explosions in January 1976 at the seaside resort of Punta del Este, General Seregni was re-arrested. The explosions, to which there is no reference in the trial dossier, have never been satisfactorily explained by the Uruguayan authorities. The General had moved to his summer house at Punta del Este with the permission of the judge. Liber Seregni was then accused of having broken his house arrest and his bail of 1,000 new pesos was confiscated. He was taken to the regimental barracks at Maldonado where he was subjected to maltreatment: blows; *plantón* (prolonged standing); hooding; deprivation of sleep.

A new indictment was then prepared and was added to the earlier one. The charges refer to disrespect towards superiors (based on his electoral speeches); instigation to disobey laws; usurpation of functions (referring to the civic activities of the *Frente Amplio* in cleaning the beaches and building bus shelters); and an attack on the Constitution (based on the allegation that he had knowledge of the

"Plan Contragolpe"\*. A charge relating to the possession of a firearm was dropped after irrefutable evidence came to light that General Seregni had been officially given the weapon for self-defence prior to the elections. The new charges led the prosecution to ask for a sentence of 10 years instead of the original three years.

In April 1978 General Seregni was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment. The practice of increasing the sentence request by the prosecution (*ultrapetita*) has gradually become a common feature of Uruguayan military justice in recent years.

General Seregni is married with two daughters and two granddaughters. At present he is being held in the *Cárcel Central* of Police Headquarters in Montevideo. He is allowed a radio and books but no newspapers. All correspondence (except from his family) is intercepted. A one hour visit by his family and lawyer is permitted each week.

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\* Within some sectors of the Armed Forces, it became known that a coup was being prepared in case the *Frente Amplio* won the elections. Certain officers reportedly held meetings with other sectors in Uruguayan society to discuss measures to prevent such a coup. They pledged themselves to defend the Constitution and the victorious party in the 1971 elections. For this reason they are often known as the *Constitucionalistas*.

Arrested at the same time as General Seregni were two other military officers and members of the board of the *Frente Amplio*: General Victor Licandro and Colonel Carlos Zufriategui.

General Victor LICANDRO

General Victor Licandro is a former Director of the Military Academy (*Escuela Militar*). He was arrested on 9 July 1973 but unlike his colleagues, Seregni and Zufriategui, he was never released pending the outcome of his trial, despite various requests to this effect by his defence lawyer.

Following his arrest, a *Tribunal de Honor* stripped General Licandro of his rank and forbade him to wear his uniform. He was charged with *asonada* (rioting) under Article 145 of the civil penal code, as well as Article 58 - "attack on the reputation of the army" - and Article 60 (VI) - "assisting a subversive association" - under the military penal code. He has been sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. According to Uruguayan law, General Licandro is now eligible for release, having served half his sentence (*libertad anticipada*).

General Licandro was first held at the *Escuela de Armas y Servicios* and later transferred to the *Cárcel Central* at Police Headquarters in Montevideo. He is under the same prison regulations as General Seregni and receives the same treatment.

General Licandro is reported to be in a poor state of health: in winter he suffers from bronchial spasms and congestions and he is reported to have an oxygen cylinder in his cell. Dr. Szizin, the police doctor, has stated that it is not possible to give General Licandro adequate medical treatment while he is in prison.

Colonel Carlos ZUFRIATEGUI



Colonel Zufriategui and General Seregni  
photographed with the late President of  
Chile, Salvador Allende

Colonel Carlos Zufriategui was interim head of the Army Staff (*Estado Mayor del Ejército*) from 1968 to 1969. He attended courses in the United States and gave lectures at the Inter-American Defence College.

He was first arrested on 9 July 1973 with Seregni and Licandro. The first indictment charged him retroactively for his joint responsibility for the *Frente Amplio* communiqué issued shortly after the military coup d'état of 27 June 1973. He was granted provisional liberty on 14 February 1975 but was re-arrested on 2 February 1976 and taken to a house in Punta Gorda which had originally belonged to a member of the guerilla movement MLN-Tupamaros, but which had been confiscated by the Armed Forces. The house, which is reportedly under the command of a notorious torturer, had been turned into a torture centre. Colonel Zufriategui was hung by the wrists and made to

believe that he would be executed immediately. He was pressed to accuse General Seregni of having participated in the meetings of the "*Plan Contragolpe*" or at least of having knowledge of the meetings. He was charged with making an "attack on the Constitution" by the military *juez de instrucción* (examining magistrate).

The prosecution asked that a sentence of eight years be passed against Zufriategui, but in July 1978 he was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment.

Colonel Zufriategui is an elderly man. He is married and has a son. He has reportedly been subjected to various forms of torture: electric shock torture; *submarino* (submersion, often in filthy water or excrement until nearly drowned); *plantón* (prolonged standing in a fixed position); beatings. On two occasions he has been interned in the Military Hospital with severe bruising and leg paralysis. At various stages during his imprisonment he has been held in the Regimental Barracks at Minas, and at the *Cárcel Central* at Police Headquarters. He is at present imprisoned in a special section of the common prison, the *Penal de Punta Carretas*.

#### Gerardo CUESTA VILLA

Gerardo Cuesta Villa, aged 61, a former member of Parliament and a highly qualified machine operator, is one of the founders of the metal workers' union and a leader of the banned national trade union central - *Convención Nacional de Trabajadores del Uruguay (CNT)*. It is reported that he was detained on 21 January 1976 and held in incommunicado detention until 7 May 1976. It is alleged that during this period he was severely tortured.



In mid-1976, the International Labour Organization forwarded to the Uruguayan Government various complaints the organization had received regarding the detention of Gerardo Cuesta Villa. In April the International Union of Metal Workers and the World Federation of Trade Unions reported his detention and allegations that he had been tortured. In a letter of 15 April 1976, the WFTU reported that Gerardo Cuesta had been summoned by the Uruguayan authorities in an official communiqué for having given information to a representative of the International Labour Organization during his mission to Uruguay. On 10 May 1976, the WFTU reported that Sr. Cuesta was detained in the air force base of Boisso Lanza.

In communiqués of 14 May and 6 October 1976, the Uruguayan Government answered the ILO: Sr. Gerardo Cuesta was detained on 7 May 1976 for his participation in the "logistic and health apparatus" of the banned Communist Party of Uruguay. The authorities thus refused to acknowledge that he had been detained from January 1976 onwards. The authorities denied that his detention was related to contacts with an ILO representative or for having given him information. He was charged on 10 August 1976 with "subversive association" and "attack upon the Constitution at the level of conspiracy followed by preparatory acts" under the military penal code. On 28 August 1978 he was sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment.

Gerardo Cuesta Villa is presently serving his sentence in the military high security prison for men, the *Establecimiento Militar de Reclusión No 1*. His case has been taken up by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Labour Organization.

Héctor Pío RODRIGUEZ da SILVA

Héctor Pío Rodríguez da Silva, aged 60, a prominent Uruguayan politician, journalist and trade unionist, was detained on 31 October 1973 at his home in Montevideo. In March 1974, nearly four months after his arrest, he was charged with "subversive association" and on 23 August 1977 he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.



Sr. Rodríguez and 23 other leading members of the *Grupos de Acción Unificadora* (Groups for Unifying Action - *GAU*), a political group which Héctor Rodríguez helped to organize, were arrested in late October 1973, allegedly in connection with a bomb explosion on 27 October 1973 in the engineering faculty of the University of Montevideo. The explosion killed one student who was alleged by the authorities to have belonged to a group affiliated to the *GAU* and to be responsible for the bomb.

No evidence has been established to link the student with the bomb, nor has the prosecution been able to advance proof of the *GAU* leaders' responsibility for the explosion. Some of the defendants were arrested before the explosion, which makes the allegations against them even more dubious.

Sr. Rodríguez was a deputy of the Uruguayan Congress from 1947 to 1952. At that time he was one of the youngest Congressional deputies in Latin America. As a trade unionist he played a major role from 1940 to 1970 in the creation of the national trade union movement, *Convención Nacional de Trabajadores*, as well as creating the *Congreso Obrero Textil* (Textile Workers' Congress) which united all the Uruguayan textile unions into one organization in 1955. Sr. Rodríguez attended many international conferences as a trade union representative and, in 1963,

was appointed labour delegate to the International Labour Organization by the Uruguayan Government.

Sr. Rodríguez has served half his ten year sentence and should be eligible for *libertad anticipada* under Uruguayan law. He is held in Punta Carretas prison, where he is allowed visits by his wife and two children. He has been granted a visa by the Luxembourg Government.

Ana María SALVO SANCHEZ de ESPIGA

Ana María Salvo Sanchez de Espiga, aged 24, a nurse, was detained by members of the Armed Forces of Uruguay on 3 November 1978 at her home in Montevideo, where she was living with her parents and two small children. Despite the family's efforts to locate her, no official statement has been made about her place of detention or the reason for her arrest.



In 1974, Ana María Salvo took up legal residence in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where she worked as a nurse at the Pirovana Hospital. On 13 July 1976 she was abducted at her home by members of the Uruguayan and Argentinian Security Forces. Ana María Salvo was one of twenty-two Uruguayans abducted on 13 and 14 July 1976 in the area of Buenos Aires; fourteen of the twenty-two Uruguayans were transferred to Uruguay and later recognized by the Government as in detention in that country.

Cases indicating that Uruguayan military and police personnel were operating in Argentina date back to 1974 and 1975. It is estimated that during 1976 over 70 Uruguayan refugees were abducted in Argentina, many of whom have since disappeared or eventually appeared in detention in Uruguay.

According to official communiqués issued by the Uruguayan Armed Forces dated 28 and 29 October 1976, the fourteen Uruguayans who disappeared in July 1976 and later turned up in prisons in Uruguay had faked their disappearances in order to clandestinely travel to Uruguay to put into operation the aims of a new political party, the *Partido por la Victoria del Pueblo* (People's Victory Party).

The Uruguayan Government's claims that the fourteen refugees had fabricated their disappearances in order to clandestinely travel into Uruguay is contradicted by the numerous testimonies and eye-witness accounts of the abductions in Buenos Aires and *habeas corpus* writs filed immediately after the abductions, sometimes through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees - UNHCR. The UNHCR filed a writ of *habeas corpus* on behalf of Ana María Salvo immediately after her abduction.

On 29 November 1976, Ana María Salvo appeared in detention in the military prison for women at Punta de Rieles, Uruguay, and was later tried for "assisting a subversive association". On 29 December 1977 she was freed under *libertad vigilada* and took up residence in her parents' home in Montevideo. Under *libertad vigilada* the ex-prisoner was required to report to the military authorities every fifteen days and not permitted to leave Uruguay.

To date the Uruguayan authorities have made no official statement about the re-detention of Ana María Salvo on 3 November last year and she is still held incommunicado.

Rita IBARBURU de SUAREZ

Rita Ibarburú de Suarez, aged 63, a veteran Uruguayan journalist, was arrested in late October 1975, during a massive wave of arrests of members and alleged members of the Communist Party of Uruguay. She is charged with "subversive association" because of her political views expressed through her journalism and membership of the Communist Party of Uruguay, which was banned in 1973 after a long parliamentary tradition. Like most political prisoners in Uruguay, Rita Ibarburú is held under the Law of National Security 1972 which brings civilians under military justice.



It is reported that Rita Ibarburú was severely tortured during her initial incommunicado detention at the 5th Artillery Regiment in Montevideo. In mid-1976, she was transferred to the military prison for women, *Establecimiento Militar de Reclusión No 2* (also known as *Penal de Punta Rieles*), where she shared a cell with her sister, who had also been arrested in 1975. In June 1978 it was reported that Rita Ibarburú had suffered a heart attack due to the prison régime of forced physical labour. The authorities later denied that Rita Ibarburú had suffered a heart attack and claimed that she suffered from a congenital heart ailment and was receiving proper medical treatment. According to the prisoner's husband, who now lives in exile in Europe, Rita Ibarburú had never shown signs of heart trouble prior to her detention in 1975 and was denied family visits during her recuperation in prison.

The case of Rita Ibarburú resembles those of many other Uruguayan journalists who have been imprisoned for their political views. The Report of the Inter American Press Association Committee on Freedom of the Press and Information meeting in Cartagena, Spain, in March 1977, states: "There is no freedom of press (in Uruguay). Government authorities have established the mechanism for written censorship and

telephone warnings; they require copies of all press dispatches by foreign correspondents, some of whom have been arrested for short periods of time; they have prohibited the distribution of certain Argentine newspapers."

Rita Ibarburú is married and was former editor of the magazine "Nosotras" and editing secretary of the magazine "Estudios". She remains imprisoned in the *Penal de Punta Rieles*, where she is in poor health.

### Julio CASTRO

Julio Castro, aged 69, a well-known educationalist, UNESCO expert on literacy training, journalist and deputy editor of the weekly "Marcha". When arrested on 1 August 1977 he was suffering from a heart ailment, details of which his family gave to the police on the day of his disappearance. Since then there has been no trace of either Julio Castro or the van in which he left home on that day.



On 28 September 1977, the Uruguayan authorities published an official communiqué about his disappearance and urged the public to help establish his whereabouts. Shortly afterwards, the authorities gave the information that Julio Castro had travelled to Buenos Aires on 22 September by the State airline, Pluna. It appears strange that a well-known Uruguayan personality who had disappeared almost two months earlier could then leave the country unnoticed. Furthermore, the Argentinian Government stated, in reply to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) on 10 December 1977, that Julio Castro's name did appear on the passenger list but that he never boarded the plane at Montevideo Airport and that "in consequence, his entry into Argentina is not registered on that date, nor on any later date".

On 2 January 1978, the Argentinian Government changed their earlier statement to the IACHR and confirmed that Julio Castro did appear on the list of arrivals on the flight and date mentioned. They also explained that there is no other document to confirm his arrival, since Uruguayan citizens travelling from their country of origin do not need disembarkation cards.

It is generally believed that Julio Castro is still in secret detention in Uruguay or that he may have died in detention as a result of torture, although his body has not been returned to his family for burial.

#### Alberto ALTESOR

Alberto Altesor, aged 65, a former deputy in the Uruguayan Congress, was arrested on 21 October 1975 in Montevideo for his membership of the Communist Party and leadership of the Uruguayan Union of Railway Workers. Despite efforts by his wife to locate him, no official notification of his detention was given by the authorities until nearly two months later.



From people who were detained with him and later freed, his family gradually obtained details of his treatment and place of detention. He was first taken to a private house and later transferred to Infantry Battalion No. 13 (also known as *El Infierno* - Hell - because of the brutal tortures inflicted on detainees). While there he was subjected to beatings, electric shocks, and hours of enforced standing.

On 14 December 1975, he was transferred to Artillery Battalion No. 5 where he was held alone in a room, handcuffed and hooded. His food consisted of coffee with milk and two plates of soup a day. His

family was not permitted to bring him food until September 1976 and only then in limited quantities.

On 24 September 1976, nearly a year after his arrest, Alberto Altesor was charged under Article 60 (V) of the military penal code with "subversive association". These charges are connected with his trade union activities and membership of the Communist Party which was banned in 1973. On 31 May 1978 he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

Sr. Altesor had been in a critical state of health prior to his arrest. He suffers from a serious heart condition which, according to a specialist who examined him in 1974, requires permanent medical surveillance and a strict diet. On 16 July 1976, the same specialist sent a medical report to the Uruguayan authorities, who have publicly recognized that "his life is at risk due to his very weak condition". At the end of 1976, Sr. Altesor was taken from prison to the military hospital in Montevideo in a critical condition where he underwent treatment.

In January 1977, he was transferred to the Libertad Prison (*Establecimiento Militar de Reclusión No 1*) where his treatment has reportedly improved. His family and lawyer are permitted to visit him once a week and he is able to mix with other prisoners and take short walks in the prison grounds. His case has been taken up by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Dr. Raúl LOMBARDI ESCAYOLA

Dr. Raúl Lombardi Escayola, aged 36, a nephrologist (kidney specialist), was detained, along with his wife, on 15 June 1978 at his home in Montevideo by personnel from the naval unit *Fusileros Navales*. His wife was released shortly after their detention. Despite the



family's efforts to locate Dr. Lombardi after his detention, no news of his situation was made public by the Uruguayan authorities until 27 July 1978, when local radio stations and the press carried reports that Dr. Lombardi had been detained for his alleged involvement in 1973 with a clandestine medical group staffed by members of the *Hospital de Clínicas*, the largest hospital complex in Latin America, where Dr. Lombardi worked.

On 3 July 1978, Dr. Lombardi was charged with "subversive association" under Article 60 (V) of the military penal code, for acting as a "health officer" within the "armed faction" of the *Grupo de Accion Unificadora - GAU*, a political group whose support came from trade unionists and catholic students with Marxist sympathies. Subversive association is the most common charge brought against members and alleged members of political parties and groups banned by the present régime. Informed sources have stated that while the *GAU* opposed the present régime in Uruguay, it did not advocate violence and it did not have an armed faction.

At the time of his arrest Dr. Lombardi was working as a kidney specialist at the *Hospital Británico* in Montevideo, where he was also helping to organize the Intensive Care Unit. The present United Kingdom Ambassador to Uruguay, who is President of the British Hospital Council, has taken a close interest in the case and has visited Dr. Lombardi in prison. Dr. Lombardi studied in Buenos Aires and in Paris from 1973 till 1975.

Dr. Lombardi is married and has two children aged seven and three years. He has a visa for the United Kingdom and is believed to be held in the naval unit *Fusileros Navales*, which is located in the port of the capital, Montevideo.