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INR WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
OF DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS

No. 37, December 29, 1977

SOVIET UNION
and
EASTERN EUROPE

The EA items on Ind. Phil. & Korea have been put in PD's book.

~~TRANSFERRED TO OTHER AGENCY~~
~~CONCURRENCE REQUESTED - CIA~~

USSR/Poland/Czechoslovakia

INR Review and Analysis

Soviet Workers "Complaint" Group Adopts Rights Dissent Tactic. Unusual expressions of workers', as opposed to intellectuals', grievances are causing Soviet authorities obvious concern and may bring stronger measures to curb internal criticism. The press conference with Western newsmen held by a small unofficial workers "complaint" group early this month is one of the few instances in which workers have sought Western publicity for their cause. The move also confirms that although the workers have not espoused the broader goals of the human rights movement, they have at least established practical links with the intellectuals, and have, to some extent, adopted their tactics. Such a collaboration must seem potentially ominous to the Kremlin.

The arrest and psychiatric confinement of the leader of the group reflects this concern. Although the workers' complaints were non-ideological and confined to labor grievances, the official reaction was, in addition, in keeping with the policy of clamping down on all forms of internal criticism.

Surge of Polish Rights Activism. Rights activism increased in the pre-holiday season. Police rounded up students distributing leaflets endorsing President Carter's human rights stand in Warsaw's main shopping center. Thirteen persons were reportedly detained in five Polish cities for distributing leaflets and collecting signatures on a petition to the State Council calling for publication of the text of the UN Human Rights Convention ratified by Poland

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dominant Pakistan People's Party (PPP), under house arrest for two weeks from December 27 to January 10. Mrs. Bhutto was to have led a "Day of Democracy" agitation on January 5 (her husband's birthday) to demand his release and a return to civilian government. She has also threatened street violence unless the government immediately calls for elections. The Bhuttos' 24-year old daughter, along with prominent PPP leaders in the Punjab, was arrested on December 20 in the wake of a pro/anti-PPP riot stirred up by the two Bhutto women at a cricket match in Lahore.

INR Comment: Mrs. Bhutto's house arrest carries out a threat General Zia ul-Haq made on December 19 when he learned of the cricket match fracas. According to a reliable source, he has become more impatient with Mrs. Bhutto's provocative political behavior and evidently feels that the planned January 5 demonstration would have posed a significant threat to public order. All outdoor political activity has been banned since Zia postponed the elections in October.

General Zia has been observing some of the niceties of due process. Miss Bhutto was given the right to challenge her house arrest in court; other provincial courts are full of cases brought by PPP sympathizers challenging the legality of Mr. Bhutto's detention. A Supreme Court ruling in November upheld the legality of the present martial law regime, but also held that the regime is answerable to the law and the constitution for its actions. (UNCLASSIFIED, Reuter 1337, December 27; SECRET, Islamabad 12306, December 18)

LATIN AMERICA

Chile

Chile Now Less of an Issue in UN. USUN reports that the majority of the non-aligned nations are losing interest in the human rights issue in Chile because

- US policy towards Chile has defused efforts by certain delegations (e.g., Cuba) to use condemnation of the Chilean Government as a rallying point for non-aligned anti-Americanism; and
- there is general recognition that the Chilean human rights situation has improved.

The "tired and frustrated" Working Group (WG) on Chile also recognizes that human rights progress has been made, and hopes to find a way to make a quiet exit from the scene

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while making it appear that the UN has won a victory. Members of the WG believe that this aim could be achieved if the Chilean Government would invite it for a visit, thereby enabling them to write a report finding that although some problems remain, there has been substantial improvement. The WG could then recommend that its mandate calling for vigorous oversight of Chile should be replaced by a much milder directive. However, negotiations over a possible visit remain stalemated over Chile's insistence on conditions unacceptable to the Working Group. (CONFIDENTIAL, USUN 5718, December 17)

Guatemala

Officials See US Rights Policy Through Belize Dispute Lens.

(25)(x1) [REDACTED] that President Laugerud, Foreign Minister Molina, and other high officials believe that the US--because of its "alliance" with the UK on the Belize issue--is using allegations of human rights violations as an excuse to deny arms purchases by Guatemala.

(25)(x1) [REDACTED] the failure of the US to respond to Laugerud's request for F-5E aircraft, coupled with a continuing lack of US understanding of the human rights situation in Guatemala, has moved some advisors to urge Laugerud to seek trade and ties with other countries. Laugerud, however, continues to maintain that Guatemala's best long-term interests lie in close relations with the US. [REDACTED]

Venezuela

Anti-Guerrilla Rights Abuses Investigated.

(25)(x1) [REDACTED] that the head of the government security agency (DISIP), General (ret.) Raul Gimenez Gianza, has told President Perez that some of DISIP's agents in eastern Venezuela are being investigated on charges of stealing money and goods of citizens and mistreating suspects under interrogation. Gimenez also is reportedly requesting that his two principal deputies responsible for the anti-guerrilla effort in that part of the country be relieved.

The charges against the agents were originally brought by the military, which is engaged in a dispute with DISIP over control of the anti-guerrilla operations. A military judge reportedly told Gimenez that if he did not take

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(25)(x1)

action, charges would be brought against him as the responsible DISIP official. Gimenez then ordered an investigation and suspended 26 officers. [REDACTED]

(25)(x1)

INR Comment: [REDACTED] suggest that Perez is prepared to use harsh counterterrorist methods, including summary execution of guerrillas and their supporters. It seems likely, that DISIP and the military have been proceeding in a heavy-handed manner against the approximately 150-200 insurgents, who are more of an embarrassment than a threat to the government.

(25)(x1)

President Perez' basic inclination probably is to proceed against guerrillas with all available means. He is likely to be restrained by solicitude for his party's chances in the upcoming presidential election, however, as well as the need to preserve his own reputation as a human rights champion and the most outspoken regional supporter of the US rights policy. [REDACTED]

Argentina

Christmas Amnesty Affects 432 Prisoners. On December 23 the government announced an amnesty affecting 432 persons jailed by the executive branch under state of siege powers. Three hundred and eighty-nine prisoners were released from executive custody, and 43 more were expelled, permitted to leave the country, paroled, or placed under house arrest. This was the largest release of executive detainees under the current military government, although, as Embassy Buenos Aires notes, it fell far short of expectations entertained by some observers.

Release from executive detention means only that those named will not be charged under national security laws; an unknown number of the 389 named may continue in jail as a result of parallel and pending criminal charges.

The government also stated that there are now 3,607 persons being held under executive authority, and that a list of their names will be published "at an opportune time." There is no way to check the government's figures. (CONFIDENTIAL, Buenos Aires 9881, December 28)

INR Comment: Whether the 389 are physically freed or held for criminal proceedings, official acknowledgement of their detentions means that they can now expect normal

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prison treatment, and they no longer are candidates for the list of "disappeareds." The 17 protesters associated with the "Mothers of PLAVA DE MAYO" who disappeared in mid-December were not included in the amnesty, and no information has yet been received about them. (CONFIDENTIAL)

EAST ASIA and the PACIFIC

Indonesia

Massive Prisoner Release Goes Off on Schedule. The government announced the release on December 20 of 10,000 political prisoners. Official spokesmen said that while the detainees were being given "complete freedom," they would still be subject to government control and guidance "until their loyalty is assured." Those who could not find jobs, or who had no families to rejoin, would be offered voluntary resettlement outside of overcrowded Java. A house, two hectares of land, and temporary subsistence would be provided for each family.

During the release ceremonies the detainees took an oath of allegiance to Indonesia, agreed to be available to the authorities for further questioning on security matters, and pledged not to engage in actions to undermine political stability.

Embassy Jakarta officers who attended release ceremonies found the detainees generally in good health and spirits and saw no evidence of intimidation regarding resettlement. The government has promised foreign ambassadors and the International Committee of the Red Cross access to camps and resettlement areas. Amnesty International has called for the release of all remaining prisoners immediately and unconditionally, and says that it is unwilling to accept the December 20 release at its face value until the names, dates, and places of release are publicly made available. (UNCLASSIFIED, FBIS, December 20; UNCLASSIFIED, New York Times, December 20; CONFIDENTIAL, Medan 6498, December 20; LIMITED OFFICIAL USE, Jakarta 17054, December 20)

Six Boys Die in Cramped Cell. Reuter reports that the official Indonesian news agency issued a release on December 26 stating that six boys, between 10 and 16 years of age, had died in an eight-by-fourteen foot cell in South Sumatra, apparently because they could not get enough fresh air. They reportedly had been in prison since December 21, following their arrest for having put road blocks in front of a house. (UNCLASSIFIED, Reuter, December 26)

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