New Soviet Decrees Free Forty-Six Scientists

The Soviet government released approximately 46 scientists, health professionals, and engineers, after the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued special decrees in early February which, according to Izvestia (14 February 1987), pardon prisoners convicted under Articles 70 (anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda), and 190-1 (defamation of the Soviet state). Also, the Soviet government will review cases of prisoners convicted under Article 64, which includes illegally crossing the Soviet border; and Article 72, which prohibits participation in anti-Soviet organizations. By 16 April 1987, at least 70 Soviet scientists remain imprisoned for political reasons, as defined by most human rights organizations in the West.

The releases appear to be connected to the Soviet government’s openness (glasnost) domestic campaign and a foreign policy posture aimed at favorably impressing the West. Yuri Kashlev, head of the new Department of Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, said that the Soviet government reviewed the cases because they had been “causes of some discomfort for us in the past, and caused tensions in our relations with other countries” (The New York Times, 17 January 1987).

The decrees followed the release in 1986 of eight scientists before the expiration of their terms. Among those released were well-known prisoners such as computer scientist Natan (Anatoly) Shcharansky, physicist Yuri Orlov, physician Yelena Bonner, physicist Irina Ratushinskaya, and cardiologist Vladimir Brodsky. Academician Andrei Sakharov, who was never tried or sentenced, was released from internal exile in Gorky along with his wife Bonner on 23 December 1987. In addition, approximately eight scientists completed their terms in the last five months and were permitted to leave rather than face possible rearrest and another sentence in camp (a device sometimes used in the past by Soviet authorities to prolong incarceration of political prisoners).

Gennadi Gerasimov, spokesman for the Soviet foreign ministry, announced on 10 February 1987 that the government released a total of 140 prisoners, and planned to review another 140 cases. However, by 3 April 1987 less than 130 releases were reported by organizations monitoring the situation.

Requirements for Release

One factor delaying the release process is the Soviet government’s demand that the pardoned prisoners sign a document disavowing future illegal activities against the Soviet state.

Since the political prisoners believe that they were never guilty of illegal activities and were arrested in violation of international law, many, including some scientists, are refusing to sign the required document. Reportedly, some prison authorities have permitted dissidents to alter the statement by allowing them to sign disavowals of future activities against the Soviet people (rather than “government”); or have allowed the prisoners to compose their own statement, such as “I have not and will not commit any crimes against the state.” According to USSR News Briefs, Soviet officials released geologist Vladimir Skvirskiy after he wrote his own document stating that “he did not object if the amnesty was applied to him.” Mathematician Yosif Begun, psychiatrist Anatoly Koryagin, and other political prisoners left prison without signing any statement.

John Finerty, Professional Staff Assistant at the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), says that prison authorities in certain areas such as Lithuania and Georgia are taking a tough stance and requiring strong confessions from prisoners before release.

In some cases, Soviet officials transferred prisoners from labor camps to KGB investigation prisons in their hometowns, a signal of impending release; but after the prisoners refused to sign, the officials reportedly sent them back to the labor camps.

Categories Unaffected by Decrees

In the last five months, the Soviet government has released less than 30 of the 390 prisoners convicted for religious activities under Articles 227, 142, and others, as documented by Keston College in England. Approximately 15 scientists were convicted under these charges.
Finerty is less optimistic about an amnesty of this category of prisoners because their release does not fit squarely into the openness campaign. He says that the concerns of the religious prisoners are spiritual and not specifically oriented toward improvement of the Soviet system. In contrast, most of the Article 70 and 190-1 prisoners had spoken out on some of the same issues that General Secretary Gorbachev now wants discussed in the press in order to enhance the national reconstruction drive. Several months ago, the Soviet leader introduced the reconstruction drive to advance innovative changes in the government and industrial bureaucracies.

Another category of political prisoners not affected by the decrees are the approximately 50 people, including 18 scientists and physicians, confined to psychiatric institutions for political reasons. So far, Soviet authorities have released only a handful from this group. Lithuanian psychiatrist Algirdas Stratkevicius was the only scientist reportedly released from a psychiatric facility. Finerty says this category is "one area where Western pressure could really play a good part." He believes that Soviet psychiatrists are anxious to be readmitted into the World Psychiatric Association (WPA). The Soviet All-Union Society of Neurologists and Psychiatrists preempted expulsion by the WPA on the issue of confining political dissenters to psychiatric hospitals by officially withdrawing from the organization in 1983.

Psychiatrist Anatoly Koryagin, incarcerated from June 1981 until 18 February 1987 for exposing Soviet psychiatric abuse, also believes that the Soviet leadership may want to change its public image on this issue. Koryagin proposed a special commission in March to review the cases of people confined to psychiatric institutions under questionable circumstances (The New York Times, 17 March 1987).

In the meantime, the Soviet press has published articles recently denouncing corruption in Soviet psychiatric hospitals, specifically acceptance of bribes by psychiatrists who may authorize confinement in psychiatric hospitals rather than prison for persons under arrest. According to Radio Liberty Research, Dr. Edward Babayan, who led the Soviet delegation to the 1977 WPA conference and spoke in defense of Soviet psychiatric practices at the meeting, was reportedly implicated in one such bribery scandal in February 1987. He subsequently lost his position as head of the Administration for the Introduction of New Drugs and Medical Equipment of the USSR Ministry of Health.

**Criminal Code Review**

The Soviet reconstruction and openness campaigns also involve exposure of judicial abuse and a revamping of the Russian criminal code. Professor V. Kudryavtsev, Director of the Institute of State and Law of the Soviet Academy of Sciences has called for official recognition of the principle of "presumption of innocence" for arrested suspects. Kudryavtsev, who is officially reviewing the code, including Articles 70 and 190-1, has said, "It is possible that there have been mistakes in this area, and now they are being corrected. Let's take, for example, criticism of the government. Of course, no one should be sent to prison for that."

**Lists of Detained and Released**

Listed below in Section One are the names of 70 scientists, health professionals, and engineers who remain confined in Soviet prisons, labor camps, psychiatric hospitals, or internal exile.

The majority of the prisoners listed were convicted under Articles 70 and 190-1. All of these names appear in Cronid Lubarsky's List of Political Prisoners in the USSR (30 October 1986), a reliable source of human rights violations in the Soviet Union.

Section Two lists names of 60 scientists released since 1 November 1986 either because they completed their sentence, were permitted to leave before the conclusion of their sentence, or were released under the February decrees.

The Clearinghouse on Science and Human Rights submitted information on the 70 scientists who remain in prison, psychiatric hospitals, or internal exile to Ambassador Yuri Kashlev, head of the Soviet delegation at the Helsinki Review Conference convening this year in Vienna. This information, which includes the date of arrest, article of conviction, and place of confinement of each scientist still incarcerated, is based principally on Lubarsky's documentation. If readers would like a copy of the AAAS report, please write to the AAAS Clearinghouse on Science and Human Rights.
We request that our readers write politely worded letters before 1 July 1987, appealing for the uncondition-

*Conditionally released; subject to compulsory recruitment for labor

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Medicolegal Investigations Continue, Despite Limit on Argentine Rights Cases

President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina signed a decree on 28 August 1986 establishing a national commission and laboratory for the medicolegal investigation of the circumstances surrounding the deaths of thousands of persons who "disappeared" during military rule in the 1970s. Most of the "disappeared" were abducted by police and military units, killed, and later buried in unmarked graves throughout the country.

Four months later, on 26 December 1986, the Argentine Congress approved a controversial bill designed to end trials of armed forces and other security personnel for past human rights abuses. Under the terms of the bill, known locally as the punta final ("full stop"), court prosecutors and human rights lawyers were given a 60-day deadline for any additional indictments of retired or active security personnel. After the deadline, any of the accused not cited were freed from any further action through the courts. By the end of 1986 sixty members of the Argentine security forces were indicted for human rights offenses. By 22 February 1987, the deadline specified under the punta final, a further 180 military and police personnel had been charged with similar offenses; of these, 30 were on active military service.

The legislation, which was introduced by President Alfonsin's Radical Party, has enraged several leading human rights advocates who say that the measure violates an article of the Constitution that states that all people are equal before the legal system. Emilio Mignone, president of the Center for Legal and Social Studies in Buenos Aires, said, "One sector of society —
the military — is given a privilege totally unacceptable in a democratic society founded in equality.” Guillermo Ledesma, the presiding judge of the Federal Appeals Court which was responsible for convicting five former ruling junta members, including two former presidents, resigned after Alfonsin proposed the new law in early December.

The national commission decreed by Alfonsin will give priority to medicolegal cases involved in the prosecution of the 240 military and police officers accused of human rights violations. A team of forensic scientists, assembled by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, suggested the formation of such a commission when they first traveled to Argentina in 1984 to assist the newly elected civilian government and human rights groups in their investigations of past abuses.

Established under the auspices of the Ministry of Interior’s human rights secretariat, the commission’s director is Dr. Guillermo D. Berman, a forensic pathologist who testified in the 1985 trial of the four military juntas which ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. Commission staff members include a physical anthropologist, a forensic odontologist, and a legal advisor.

It is expected that the commission will use the services of the Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense (the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team), a team of six graduate students in anthropology and medicine who have already participated in the exhumation and scientific examination of the remains of 35 “disappeared” persons since judicial investigations began three years ago (see Clearinghouse Report, September 1985). Several team members, along with Oklahoma forensic anthropologist Clyde Snow and other international forensic experts, spent two weeks last December in the Philippines training Filipino scientists and medical professionals how to exhume the graves and identify the remains of political dissidents who “disappeared” during the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos (See Clearinghouse Report, Winter 1986/1987).

In March 1987, the commission began its first investigation by exhuminng the remains of 16 presumed “disappeared” buried in the town cemetery of Monte Grande, 10 miles outside of Buenos Aires. The 16 cases are linked to the prosecution of former General Guillermo Suárez-Mason, a former Argentine Army Chief of Staff and commander of the First Army Group, who former prisoners, including the journalist Jacobo Timerman, have accused of being a major architect of the military’s program of imprisoning, torturing, and killing political dissidents in the 1970s.

Suárez-Mason, who is believed to have fled Argentina and come to the United States in 1985, was arrested in a San Francisco suburb on 24 January 1987 by the United States Marshals Service. The Argentine government is seeking the former general’s extradition based on two indictments for charges of unlawful detention, theft, and torture resulting in death.

—Eric Stover

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**RELEASES**

Taiwanese biochemist Chen Ming-chong was granted a medical parole on 9 March 1987. He had been imprisoned for over ten years of his fifteen year sentence on charges of sedition. Chen suffered from severe health problems and had been the subject of numerous appeals by medical groups. Although he was reunited with his family, Chen is still subject to some restrictions.

Dr. Carlos Filizzola, a Paraguayan physician, was arrested three times in 1986. At the time of his last arrest on 29 November he was held by the police until 23 December. Filizzola is president of the physicians’ association at the Hospital de Clínicas in Asunción where he has campaigned for higher wages for the hospital staff.

Elsa Mereles, a Paraguayan nurse at the same hospital, was arrested on 5 December and held incommunicado. She was released on 23 December 1986.

In Tunisia, sociology lecturer and secretary general of the Union of Higher Education and Scientific Research Mounir Ben Sliman was granted an early release from prison in late November-early December 1986. Arrested on 16 May 1986 and later convicted of defamation of public order and public institutions for protesting the violent response of the police who attempted to stop a student demonstration in April, Sliman was sentenced to one year in prison.

Amnesty International reports that in Togo, Emmanual Yema Gu-Konu, professor of geography, and Dr. Ati Randolph, veterinary surgeon, were released from prison on 12 January 1987 by order of President Gnassingbe Eyadema on the occasion of Eyadema’s 20th anniversary as president. Gu-Konu and Randolph were the subjects of a Clearinghouse appeal in the September 1986 issue of the Clearinghouse Report.

Two members of the Cuban Committee for Human Rights who had been detained without charge since September 1986 were released from the State Security headquarters on 6 February 1987. They are Enrique Ladislao Hernandez Mendez, a former professor of mathematics and economics at the University of Havana and Adolfo Rivero Caro, a lawyer and translator. (See Winter 1986/1987 Clearinghouse Report.) Elizardo Sanchez, a former professor of philosophy, was transferred from State Security to a military hospital for surgery. Ricardo Bolfil, president of the Committee for Human Rights and former professor of philosophy, voluntarily left the
French Embassy in Havana on 31 January 1987 where he had sought asylum on 28 August 1986.

In Yugoslavia, Dr. Ivan Zografski, a retired physician of Bulgarian nationality, was released from prison in July 1986, two years and nine months before his sentence of five and one-half years expired. Zografski had been sentenced on charges of "hostile propaganda" and "damaging the reputation of the state" based on statements he allegedly made in private conversations.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

AAAS Annual Meeting

At the AAAS annual meeting in Chicago last February, the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility hosted several events to publicize its human rights concerns. At an evening forum on 16 February, the Committee recognized the work of forensic anthropologist Clyde C. Snow in the area of human rights. Snow has spent the last year in Argentina advising a technical team in the techniques of exhumation and identification of skeletal remains of the "disappeared." Snow traveled to the Philippines in late November 1986 to lead a two-week workshop in the application of the forensic sciences to human rights investigations.

On 17 February at a symposium entitled "Scientific Exchanges, Human Rights, and the Soviet Union," speakers discussed Soviet human rights violations and the variety of positions of U.S. and international scientific societies on scientific exchanges with the Soviets. Individual American scientists traveling to the Soviet Union were advised on how to raise their human rights concerns with Soviet officials. They were encouraged to visit refusenik scientists who have been cut off from their professional colleagues and work. Speakers also highlighted the imprisonment of specific Soviet scientists for their scientific work or their peacefully-held beliefs.

The Committee of Concerned Scientists circulated a petition at the AAAS annual meeting on behalf of Inna and Igor Uspenskii, Soviet entomologists who have been refused permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union since they applied for exit visas in 1979. Within two years, the Uspenskii were dismissed from their positions at the Martsinovsky Institute of Medical Parasitology and Tropical Medicine. They are barred from working in their field and other scientists are forbidden to quote from their works. The petition, which was signed by approximately five hundred scientists, called upon the Soviet Union to live up to its obligations under the Helsinki Final Act and to allow the Uspenskii to leave the Soviet Union.

Committee and Staff Changes

The AAAS Clearinghouse on Science and Human Rights would like to express its gratitude to Thomas Eisner, who completed his term as a member of the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Human Rights in February. Dr. Eisner served as chair of the Subcommittee on Science and Human Rights for six years. We thank him for his dedication, inspiration, and hard work. Joining the subcommittee is Robert Kirchner, Deputy Medical Examiner for Cook County, IL. Dr. Kirchner has participated in the past in a number of human rights activities and missions sponsored by the Committee. We look forward to his contributions to the work of the Subcommittee on Science and Human Rights.

The Committee would also like to wish Kathie McCleskey, a former Clearinghouse staff member, the best of luck in her future endeavors. Kathie resigned her position from the Committee in November 1986 after working here for over six years.

New AAAS Publications

The AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility has published the first two reports of a four country survey on health professionals and human rights in Chile, the Philippines, South Africa, and Uruguay: Health Professionals and Human Rights in the Philippines and Uruguay's Military Physicians are available from the Committee office.
Intellectual Freedom Curtailed in People’s Republic of China

In the wake of student demonstrations for a liberalization of Chinese society in December 1986, the Chinese government has clamped down on intellectuals and instituted measures to control publishing. Affecting the scientific community were the dismissals of the president and vice president of the University of Science and Technology in Hefei and the abrupt retirement of the top two leaders of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In addition, the creation of a new state agency on publishing will limit dissemination of material which previously appeared in independent journals.

In early December, student demonstrations for democratization started in Hefei and spread to other universities around the country, including the prestigious science and technology universities of Jiaotong University in Shanghai and Qinghua University in Beijing. After a period of tolerance, the Chinese government ordered an end to the demonstrations and began a purge of leading intellectuals from the Chinese Communist Party for promoting “bourgeois liberalism,” i.e., being too fond of Western values and capitalism.

One of the first to be affected was Hu Yaobang, General Secretary of the party, who was removed from his position in mid-January. Minister of Propaganda for the party, Zhu Houze, considered a proponent of liberalization and a protégé of Hu Yaobang, was also removed from his post. Soon after, a prominent reporter for the People’s Daily and vice chairman of the Chinese Writers’ Association, Liu Binyan, was expelled from the party.

Prominent Astrophysicist Fired

In a purge affecting the scientific community, Communist Party leaders expelled Guan Weiyun, president of the University of Science and Technology in Hefei, and astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, vice president at that university, from the party and fired them from their positions at the university. Fang is now at the Beijing Observatory.

Chinese officials reportedly perceived that Fang was inspiring the student demonstrations with his calls for greater academic freedom and his support for student demands for greater participation in the electoral process in China. Fang has on occasion been referred to as China’s “Sakharov.”

A month before his dismissal, Fang gave an interview to the Guangming Ribao, a Chinese newspaper for intellectuals, in which he called for increased academic freedom, scientific “morality,” and reform aimed at modernizing Chinese educational methods. One statement from this interview, which was later reprinted in The Beijing Review, a Chinese English language weekly, appeared to anger the Chinese leadership, particularly China’s top leader Deng Xiaoping. “In the university environment,” Fang was quoted as saying, “there should be nothing that can only be upheld and that allows no questioning of why it must be upheld. There should be no doctrine that can hold a leading or guiding position in an a priori way.” Observers say that this statement opposes the Four Basic Principles Deng elaborated in 1979 which claim the permanence of the people’s dictatorship, the primacy of the Communist Party, China’s adherence to socialism, and the dominance of Marxism and Maoism in political life.

Academy of Sciences Top Leaders Ousted

The Chinese Academy of Sciences was particularly hard hit by the government crackdown. The Hefei Science and Technology University, which lost its top leadership in the purge, is affiliated with the academy. In addition, president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences Lu Jiaxi, a structural scientist, and vice president Yan Dongsheng, a ceramic chemist, were removed from their posts on 22 January 1987. The Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress appointed Zhou Guangzhao, a theoretical physicist, as the new president of the academy. Zhou has been a vice president of the academy since 1984. Teng Teng, an engineer who had just been appointed to succeed Guan Weiyun as the new president of the University of Science and Technology, was named as a vice president of the academy. The government appointments annulled the precedent set in 1982 when the academy elected Lu as president in the first democratic elections ever held in the academy. The Academy of Sciences is made up of some 100 institutes and 40,000 scientists.

In a development which may have a debilitating effect on freedom of expression in the People’s Republic of China, the government created a new state agency to control all publications in the country. The agency reportedly is charged with “draft laws, regulations and policies governing the operations of the information outlets and publications, and oversee the publication of news. It will also be responsible for approving the establishment of new publishing houses, newspapers, and journals, and will control the selling of their printed matter.” All printing supplies will be controlled by the agency as well.

Conservative Trend Foreseen

What lies ahead for the intellectual community in the People’s Republic of China is unclear. The Chinese leadership claims that the campaign against “bourgeois liberalism” is only aimed at cleaning the party ranks of members who deviate from the Four Basic Principles. They report that all of the scientists dismissed from their
posts have been employed elsewhere and are pursuing their scientific interests, as in the case of Fang Lizhi. Furthermore, The Beijing Review has pointedly published articles on the research of Lu Jiaxi and Yan Dongsheng, now that they no longer have administrative responsibilities at the Academy of Sciences. Scientists of equally high caliber have replaced those scientists removed from their posts. Nevertheless, some observers believe that the campaign will have a chilling effect on China's intellectual community. In 1983, when Party conservatives led an attack on ‘‘spiritual pollution’’ and “pernicious influences from the West,” only writers and artists were in jeopardy. Now, scientists appear at risk as well.

In response to the grave situation, Chinese students in the U.S. and groups of U.S. professors and scholars conveyed their concerns about the dismissals by letters to Chinese officials in Washington and the People’s Republic of China.

—Kari Hannibal and Lisbeth A. Levey


Courts Rule on Chilean Physicians

On 21 January 1987, the Second Chamber of the Santiago Court of Appeals acquitted Chilean Medical Association president Dr. Juan Luis González and secretary general Dr. Francisco Rivas, and twelve other community leaders of violating the State Security Law.

Seven months earlier, the Chilean authorities arrested and detained the fourteen member board of the National Civic Assembly (NCA) for “inciting subversion” under the state security laws. As president and vice-president of the NCA, a coalition of professional, labor, and social organizations, González and Rivas had called for a nation-wide strike in early July 1986 to protest the Pinochet dictatorship. (See Clearinghouse Report, September 1986.) Following world-wide appeals from the scientific community and human rights organizations, the Chilean government released the NCA members on bail in August. The Chilean government reportedly plans to appeal the decision of the court.

Charges Upgraded Against Other Physicians

In another development, government authorities upgraded charges in late 1986 against three physicians who had provided medical care last spring to a patient allegedly wounded in an armed clash with security forces. In April 1986, Dr. Ramiro Olivares, medical director of the Archdiocesan Vicaria de la Solidaridad; Dr. Ramón Rojas of the private Chiloé Clinic; and Dr. Juan Macaya, a private physician, were initially arrested and detained for “aiding a terrorist” under the Arms Control Law. Rojas and Olivares spent over three months in prison and were released on bail in July and August 1986, respectively. Macaya was refused bail and remained in detention.

In late fall, Fernando Torres, the ad hoc military prosecutor who is also investigating the 4 September 1986 assassination attempt on President Augusto Pinochet, upgraded the charges against the three physicians to violations under the Anti-terrorism Law. Charges under this law call for a military court trial and carry a minimum of 5 years in prison upon conviction.

Government authorities rearrested and detained Olivares under the new charges on 12 December 1986. Rojas was not detained.

On 26 January 1987, the Chilean Supreme Court upheld the decision of the military court to indict the men under the Anti-terrorism Law. On 30 January, the attorneys for the physicians petitioned the Supreme Court to reconsider.

On 26 March 1987 the Supreme Court upheld the anti-terrorism charges against Olivares and Rojas and favorably ruled on Macaya’s petition for withdrawal of the upgraded charges. On 6 April the military refused Macaya’s release on bail. He has filed a complaint against this refusal with the Supreme Court. Macaya still faces charges on violations of the Arms Control Law.

In addition, prosecutor Torres now reportedly accuses Olivares of sending patients involved in armed confrontations with military agents to so-called “clandestine clinics” for treatment. The clandestine clinics refer to secret locations where physicians and nurses allegedly treat individuals who have been involved in armed clashes with the Chilean security forces.

Vicariate Defends Physicians

In response to the accusations against Olivares, Monsignor Tapia, the head of the vicariate, stated in a communiqué that “...neither Dr. Ramiro Olivares nor any other doctor of the vicariate has ever sent a patient to a clandestine clinic.” He also rebuked any attempts by the government to link vicariate staff, who are vocal advocates on behalf of human rights, with terrorist actions.

In a separate case, Amnesty International and other sources report that three physicians and two nurses were detained between December 1986 and January 1987 and subsequently tortured while held incomunicado by the Centro Nacional de Informaciones (CNI), Chile’s secret police. One of the physicians filed a formal complaint of torture, including sexual assault, by CNI personnel. Chilean authorities reportedly arrested the health workers because of their links with a clandestine clinic which allegedly treated assailants in the September attack on Pinochet. The government has since transferred the health workers from the CNI to prison where they are no longer held incomunicado.

—Carol O’Halloran
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affecting scientific freedom and responsibility.

The Clearinghouse collects and disseminates information about foreign scientists who are victims of government persecution. It is
designed to assist those who wish to bring effective aid to foreign scientists who are in serious trouble. The concerns of the Clearinghouse
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