

INTRODUCTION

The Network of Concerned Historians (NCH) forwards to its participants news about the domain where history and human rights intersect, as reported by the American Association for the Advancement of Science [AAAS, Washington]; Amnesty International [AI, London]; Article 19 [A19, London]; Human Rights Watch [HRW, Washington/New York]; Index on Censorship [IOC, London]; the Network of Education and Academic Rights [NEAR, London]; International PEN Writers in Prison Committee [PEN, London]; Scholars at Risk [SAR, New York]; and other sources. The fact that NCH presents this news does not imply that it shares the views and beliefs of the historians and others mentioned in it.

AFGHANISTAN

The public library of Pol-I-Khomri, which contained 55,000 books and old manuscripts, was burned to the ground by Taliban militia.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 503.]

ARGENTINA

In 1999 investigations and judicial proceedings concerning cases of human rights violations committed during the period of the military government (1976-83) were initiated in Spain, Italy and Germany. Investigations into cases of “disappeared” children continued in Argentina. Investigations by the Federal Court of La Plata, Buenos Aires Province, into past “disappearances” continued in proceedings known as *Juicio por la Verdad* (the Truth Trial).

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (London 2000) 34-35, 140-41.]

In April 1999, journalist Eduardo Krimel received a suspended one-year prison sentence and a fine in connection with his book *The Massacre of San Patricio* - about the 1976 murder of five priests and seminarians - after a former judge sued him for slander over statements about the latter’s role as

investigating judge in the case.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 103.]

On 30 August 1999, the Supreme Court upheld a lower court decision that former junta member Admiral Emilio Massera must pay compensation of \$120,000 in a civil lawsuit brought by Daniel Tarnapolsky regarding the 1976 disappearance of his parents and two brothers during the dictatorship (1976-83). The court also ordered the state to pay \$1,000,000 to Tarnapolsky.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 103.]

In November 1999 in the Lapacó case (*see NCH #14*), the government acknowledged and guaranteed the right to the truth as a right unaffected by statutes of limitations.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 35.]

AUSTRIA

In May 2000 a Vienna court found political science professor Anton Pelinka (1941-) of Innsbruck University guilty of “defaming the character” of Jörg Haider, former leader of the far-right Freedom Party, because in an interview in May 1999 he had declared that Haider trivialized Nazism. Pelinka was fined. Haider’s former lawyer, Dieter Böhmendorfer, who had initiated the case, was serving as Austria’s Minister of Justice at the time of the court’s ruling. In another case (about statements Pelinka had made to Cable News Network (CNN) in the spring of 1999 comparing the link Haider made between Austria’s level of unemployment with the number of foreigners in the country to the way the Nazis linked high unemployment rates to the size of the Jewish population), the court dismissed the defamation charge in October.

[Sources include: AAAS, Human Rights Action Network Case AU0003.pel, 17 July 2000; IOC 4/00: 86.]

BELARUS

On 27-28 February 1998, the Belarusian Helsinki Committee (BHC) held a conference on “Political Repression in Belarus in the Twentieth Century” in Minsk. Among the historians attending were Nina Stuzhinskaya, Igor Kuznetsov, V. Karbalevich, and possibly A. Zalessky, chair of the Belarusian Republican Association “Historical Knowledge”. They also wrote articles later published by the BHC in a collection entitled “*Political Repression in Belarus in the Twentieth Century: Materials from the*

Conference". In October 1998 the state newspaper *Slavyansky Nabat* (The Slavic Alarm Bell) published an article encouraging criminal charges against the conference organizers and the authors of the book because they were "guilty of humiliating the honor and dignity of the President". Despite their repeated attempts, the accused academics were denied the opportunity to respond to the article in the state newspapers.

[Source: HRW, *Republic of Belarus: Violations of Academic Freedom* (1999) 14.]

In March 1998, the publication of the first issue of the newspaper of the Belarusian Association of Students contained an article on the front page about the uprising in Kalinovsky in April 1863, in which students seized power in the town. In April 1998, one of the students responsible for the publication was questioned by, among others, a KGB (secret police) officer.

[Source: HRW, *Republic of Belarus: Violations of Academic Freedom* (1999) 26-27.]

CAMBODIA

In March 1999, a United Nations (UN) Group of Experts produced a report recommending the formation of a special international tribunal to bring to justice those suspected of responsibility for gross human rights violations during the Khmer Rouge period (1975-79). The Cambodian authorities rejected the report and stated their intention to hold trials in Cambodia under domestic law. Several Cambodians, however, expressed concern about standards of fairness and judicial independence in Cambodia. In August, the UN sent a second group of experts to Cambodia to assess options for bringing the Khmer Rouge leadership to justice through a tribunal that met international standards.

[Sources: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 64-65; HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) xxii-xxiii, 163.]

CANADA

On 15 September 1999, 3,000 Quebec orphans who were sexually and physically abused in church-run institutions in the 1940s and 1950s were told that they would receive no apology from the Roman Catholic church on the grounds that to do so would "constitute a denial of the historic work accomplished under difficult conditions by the religious communities involved".

[Source: IOC 6/99: 235.]

CHAD

On 3 February 2000, former President Hissene Habré was indicted for torture. Much of the evidence was supplied by Senegalese journalist Daniel Bekoutou, who began to receive death threats and fled to Paris. He wrote an account about his experience, *Hunting the Dictator*.

[Source: IOC 3/00: 89.]

CHILE

In 1999, the case against General Augusto Pinochet, the first international prosecution of a former head of state since Nuremberg, went ahead (*see NCH #14*). On 8 October 1999, a magistrate ordered Pinochet's extradition for thirty-five cases of torture or conspiracy to torture committed after 8 December 1988, and on cases of torture resulting from 1,198 "disappearances". He ruled that Pinochet's conduct before 1988 could be examined when finding evidence for the cases. The Chilean government maintained that only Chilean courts had the right to try Pinochet (justifying its endeavours in the name of national sovereignty, the right of Chileans to deal with their own past, and national reconciliation). Judge Juan Guzmán Tapia was investigating forty lawsuits filed in Chilean courts against Pinochet and other members of the military junta (1973-90). On 20 July 1999, the Chilean Supreme Court had upheld the doctrine underlying Guzmán's decision, namely that "disappearance" is a permanent crime until the victim's death is legally certified. On 2 March 2000, Pinochet returned to Chile after he was released on humanitarian grounds.

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) xiii, xx, xxiv, 93, 96, 99-100, 110-13, 479-80; AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 14-17, 70-71.]

Also see: United States.

CHINA

In June 1992, Wang Wanxing was arrested on Tiananmen Square, Beijing, for unfurling a banner commemorating the 4 June 1989 massacre. In July 1992, he was confined to a psychiatric hospital and forcibly given drugs. After a brief period of release in 1999, he was confined to the hospital again in November 1999.

[Sources: AI, *Report 1993* (1993) 94; IOC 1/00: 91-92.]

In 1998, Tohti, a Uighur scholar who had been a visiting scholar in Japan, was reportedly arrested when

returning to China to visit his relatives. Prior to visiting Japan, he had worked at the Minorities Institute in Beijing. After his arrest, he was reportedly tried and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for publishing a Chinese-language book on Uighur history while in Japan.

[Source: AI, *China: Gross Violations of Human Rights in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region* (WWW-text of ASA 17/18/99; 1999).]

In 1999, police in several cities prevented those wishing to publicly commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 4 June 1989 crackdown from laying wreaths or visiting cemeteries. Jian Qisheng, a student leader in 1989, was formally arrested for calling on people to remember the crackdown with a candlelight vigil. In June an estimated 60,000 people joined the annual vigil. Exiled history student and former student leader Wang Dan did not receive a visa for Hong Kong to attend a commemorative conference there in May (for Wang, see *NCH #4, #5, #6, #10*). In June 2000, Huang Qi, founder of a website with information on the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, was arrested on charges of subversion. Ding Zilin (?1937-) issued a letter signed by 108 families of victims of the massacre. From 1991 Ding had campaigned for an independent investigation into the killings. She compiled a list of those killed and wounded (220 names in March 1999), wrote *The Factual Account of a Search for the June Fourth Victims* (1994), and tried to persuade the government to reverse its opinion that the 1989 demonstrations were counter-revolutionary. She was frequently harassed by the police.

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 182; AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 73, 75; IOC 4/00: 91-92, 5/00: 92.]

On 7 August 1999, Song Yongyi (1949-), a Chinese-born librarian and historian working at Dickinson College, PA, United States, since 1989 and specialized in contemporary Chinese history, was detained when he was in Beijing to collect published documents on the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). He was confined and on 24 December officially charged with "the purchase and illegal provision of intelligence to foreign people" and arrested. On 28 January 2000, he was released. One source suggested that he was arrested because his research seemed to indicate that former Premier Zhou Enlai - admired by Premier Li Peng - had played a more ruthless role in the Cultural Revolution than was generally accepted. During the Cultural Revolution, Song had to interrupt his education and became a dockworker. From 1971 to 1976, he was imprisoned for organizing a book club with others interested in discussing political ideas. After the Cultural Revolution, he was cleared of all criminal charges (see *NCH #16*).

[Sources include: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 180.]

On 23 July 2000, it was reported that *Devils on the Doorstep*, a tragi-comic film by Jiang Wen (winner of the 2000 Grand Prix Jury Prize at Cannes, France) about villagers capturing and collaborating with Japanese soldiers during the Sino-Japanese war (1931-45), had been banned by the Film Censorship

Committee of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, allegedly because it “severely distorted history” and depicted the Chinese as “ignorant” and “not hating the Japanese troops as they should”.

[Source: IOC 5/00: 92-94.]

Also see: Japan.

COLOMBIA

On 2 September 1999, the remains of historian Darío Betancourt Echeverry were found in a rural area outside the capital Bogotá. He had been abducted by gunmen on 30 April 1999. A specialist on political violence, Betancourt had headed the social sciences department at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (National University of Educational Sciences), Bogotá. Military intelligence files reportedly linked his name to armed opposition groups. In 1998, the Twentieth Brigade of the Colombian army, responsible for military intelligence, was disbanded after it was implicated in human rights violations against people on whom they had filed false information. The government repeatedly stated that it was committed to revising military intelligence archives in order to prevent further human rights violations, but such revisions had not taken place.

[Sources: AI, *Urgent Action 103/99* (11 May & 15 September 1999); AAAS, Case CO9908.Bet, 23 June 1999, 8 October 1999; HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) xxvii, 458.]

CONGO

On 26 July 2000, BBC television producer Caroline Parr was detained in Kinshasa by the security services, along with her assistant Pierre Mombele and Jonas Munkamba, whom she was interviewing about the 1961 assassination of former Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba (1925-61).

[Source: IOC 5/00: 96.]

CROATIA

In October 1999, a court found Nazi-era concentration camp commander Dinko Sakic guilty of crimes against humanity.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 262.]

The contents of the documents in possession of former President and historian Franjo Tudjman (1922-1999) were to be made public by the new President Stipe Mesic, who said on 14 March 2000 that only documents containing military secrets would remain classified.

[Source: IOC 3/00: 92].

CUBA

On 14 January 1999, about a dozen people were reportedly detained, allegedly to stop them from participating in a march to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of United States civil rights activist Martin Luther King.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 88.]

CZECH REPUBLIC

In October 1999, the European Union pressured the government to declare obsolete the 1945 “Benes decrees”, which revoked the citizenship and property rights of Germans and Hungarians in Czechoslovakia and expelled most Germans from Sudetenland.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 267.]

The classified police file from the Communist era on Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Kavan was leaked and made into a book.

[Source : IOC 4/00: 93.]

EGYPT

Among the books banned in 1999 at the American University of Cairo at the request of government censors was *The Prophet and Pharaoh: Muslim Extremism in Egypt* (originally French 1984; London 1985), a history of the Muslim Brotherhood by Giles Kepel.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 325, 347.]

ETHIOPIA

In 1999 the prosecution case against forty-six members of the former military government (known as *Dergue*, ruled 1974-91) for genocide and other crimes against humanity, which started in 1994, continued. There were international demands for former President Mengistu Haile-Mariam to be tried. He lived in exile in Zimbabwe.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 102.]

On 23 December 1999, Abera Wogi, chief editor of the weekly *Maebe*, was sentenced to a year's imprisonment on charges of defamation and "fabrication and dissemination of false information" in connection with an article on a General exiled in Sudan, who accused Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of having killed eighty people with cyanide when he fought the government of former President Mengistu.

[Source: IOC 2/00: 99.]

On 28 April 2000, Gamachu Malka Fufa (?1957-) (pen name: Moti Biya) was unexpectedly released on bail (*see NCH #10, #12*). He had been held since October 1997.

[Source: *Centre to Centre: Newsletter of the Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN*, 3/2000: 6.]

GERMANY

On 5 November 1999, it was reported that a controversial exhibition detailing crimes committed by the German army (*Wehrmacht*) during World War II was to be closed for about three months following accusations by independent historians that some photographs in the exhibition were labelled incorrectly, attributing murders committed by Soviet forces to the *Wehrmacht*. The exhibition provoked demonstrations among those incensed at its implicit rejection of the popularly held belief that the *Wehrmacht* fought a honourable war while the SS (Schutzstaffel, Defense Corps; special NSDAP security force) retained sole responsibility for war crimes and the Holocaust.

[Source: IOC 1/00: 95.]

In 2000, historian Ernst Nolte receive the Konrad Adenauer Prize, a fact that many German historians found controversial because since the mid-1980s Nolte had been suggesting that National Socialism was a response to and an imitation of Bolshevism, a thesis that sparked the so-called Historikerstreit (Historians' Battle).

[Source: IOC 4/00: 13.]

Also see: Czech Republic, United States.

GUATEMALA

In December 1999, Nobel Peace Prize winner (1992) Rigoberta Menchú filed charges against eight former Guatemalan officers, for genocide, state terrorism, torture and extrajudicial executions, carried out while they were in office. They included former President General Efraín Ríos Montt, who was elected to Congress in the 1999 elections and served as its President. The charges were filed in Spain.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 115.]

The Juan Gerardi case (*see NCH #10, 13, 14*) remained unresolved. Four people were arrested at various points in connection with the murder of Gerardi, but none remained in custody at the end of 1999. A number of people involved in the case fled abroad after death threats; they included members of the Archbishop's Human Rights Office; two former judges; a prosecutor who had asked for DNA blood tests of twelve military officers and five others to be compared with tests on blood samples found at the murder scene; a witness; and a member of the Presidential High Command who had accused some of his colleagues of involvement in the murder.

[Sources: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 115; AI, *News*, January 2000.]

HAITI

On 10 September 1999, four Haitians who had been imprisoned and tortured in the 1970s filed complaints in a Paris court against former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier for crimes against humanity. They received the support of the Committee to Bring Duvalier to Justice.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 135.]

Also see: United States.

INDIA

In December 1999 (or earlier), the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) allegedly decided to order Oxford University Press to suspend publication of two volumes in its *Towards Freedom* series (a documentation project on the 1938-47 period) by social historians Sumit Sarkar, Delhi University, and

K.N. Panikkar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and return them to the ICHR for review. The volumes, about the years 1940 and 1946, had been submitted in 1995 and 1996 and already in press. The authors and general series editor Sarvepalli Gopal (1923-) were informed of the suspension by the ICHR on 11 February 2000. On [15] February dozens of historians and academics from the four New Delhi universities protested in front of the ICHR office. A statement signed by over thirty academics, including three former ICHR chairpersons (Ram Sharan Sharma, Irfan Habib, and Ravinder Kumar), denounced the withdrawal of the volumes as “the grossest form of censorship”. Panikkar declared that the volumes were withheld because the militant Hindu organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, close to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (ruling since 1998), claimed a prominent place in the freedom movement for themselves by emphasizing that Sangh leaders like (Prime Minister) Atal Vajpayee and organizations like Hindu Mahasabha played an important role in the freedom struggle. On 3 March the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) discussed the affair.

[Sources include: IOC 3/00: 95.]

IRAN

After his release in December 1998 (*see NCH #10, #14*), hojatoleslam Sayed Mohsen Saidzadeh’s status as a clergyman was rescinded. In October 1998, the Culture and Islamic Guidance Ministry refused to allow publication of his new book, *Freedom of Women During the Time of Muhammad*, charging that the book showed disrespect to the Prophet.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 504.]

A plan of documentary maker Rob Gardner to film a history of Islam met with the support of the Iranian government, which offered a permit without inspection of the script. In the United States, the venture was initially rejected because of economic sanctions imposed following the 1979 occupation of the United States embassy in Tehran, but an exemption was found.

[Source: IOC 1/00: 12-13.]

IRAQ

In early December 1998, Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, the leading Shi’a cleric in Iraq, reportedly called off a march to the shrine of Imam Hussein in Kerbala after the government massed security forces around the city to enforce its ban on the march. In February 1999, the Ayatollah was assassinated, probably because of his criticism of the government.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 358.]

IRELAND

On 7 March 2000, the Irish Censorship Board unbanned 420 books, including *Marriage Past, Present and Future: An Outline of the History and Development of Human Sexual Relationships* (London 1930), by Ralph De Pomerai, banned in 1931.

[Source: IOC 3/00: 15, 97.]

ISRAEL

Education Minister Yossi Sarid stepped up a controversial campaign to change the way in which modern history was taught in schools. He urged teachers to incorporate the 1956 Kafr al-Qassem massacre in the curriculum and to commemorate an event in which fifty Arab villagers were gunned down by troops.

[Source: IOC 6/99: 244.]

JAPAN

The Chinese government repeatedly expressed indignation to Japan for allowing a conference entitled “The Biggest Lie of the Twentieth Century: Documenting the Rape of Nanking” to proceed on 21 January in Osaka. Osaka officials refused to halt the conference “because it would infringe the constitutional right of free speech”. The government confirmed the fact that the massacre had taken place but said it was a matter for Osaka authorities to decide.

[Source: IOC 2/00: 104.]

KAZAKHSTAN

In April 1999, police in Almaty stopped members of the Union of Semirechie Cossacks from entering an Orthodox cathedral for Easter services, claiming that the traditional military uniforms worn by the Cossacks violated the ban on creating “military organisations with uniforms and insignia”.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 276.]

KENYA

In [February] 2000, the court charged reporter Johann Wandetto, among other things, with publishing false news in connection with an article in which he quoted a minister in President arap Moi's government who had called for the posthumous trial of Kenya's first President (1963-78) Jomo Kenyatta for alleged "crimes" committed during his presidency. The minister denied having called for such a trial. The court granted bail on this charge.

[Source: IOC 3/00: 99.]

KUWAIT

Political scientist Ahmad al-Baghdadi and historian Sulaiman al-Badr from Kuwait University were criticized by some clerics because in 1996 they had written in a student magazine that the Prophet Muhammad had failed to convert non-believers during his time in Mecca. Al-Badr publicly apologized but al-Baghdadi was found guilty of blaspheming Islam and given a suspended six-month sentence in May 1999. On appeal his sentence was reduced to one month. He was imprisoned on 5 October. The court had found him guilty of "spreading views that ridicule, scorn, or belittle religion." He went on hunger strike. After the Emir, Sheik Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, pardoned him, he was released on 18 October.

[Sources include: IOC 6/99: 245, 1/00: 99; HRW Academic Freedom Committee, *Letter to the Emir of Kuwait*, 13 October 1999; HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 276; AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 151.]

LEBANON

In October 1999, *A Civilized People*, a film about the civil war (1975-90) by Chahal Sabbag, was cut by fifty minutes by the government censor because of "inflammatory remarks" against Christ, the Virgin Mary, and Islam. None of Sabbag's previous films about the conflict were screened in Lebanon.

[Sources: IOC 1/00: 173, 2/00: 106.]

LIBERIA

On 15 December 1999, police arrested James Torh on charges of sedition after criticising the government in a talk to secondary-school students. Torh had a record of speaking out about human rights concerns in Liberia. In the weeks leading up to his arrest, he publicly clashed with President Charles Taylor about the need for a truth commission to be established in the country to investigate violations committed during the seven-year civil war (1990-97). He was released on bail after three days. He may face up to five years in prison.

[Sources: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 159; AI, *News*, May 2000.]

LIBYA

See: United Kingdom.

MOROCCO

The 4 March 2000 edition of the French daily *Le Figaro* was blocked from distribution for carrying an article based on the book *Secrets of the King's Friend*, written by the late King Hassan's personal doctor François Cleret. The article revealed that "[leader of the Moroccan Left] Mehdi Ben Barka's body was cut into pieces under orders of King Hasan and brought to Morocco in diplomatic suitcases".

[Source: IOC 3/00: 101.]

During a visit to Morocco from 3 to 9 June 2000, Joseph Tual, a journalist for France 3 television station, was continually harassed by security services because he had been reporting on the ongoing investigation into Ben Barka's assassination.

[Source: IOC 5/00: 102-03.]

MYANMAR (BURMA)

U Ohn Myint (?1917-) (*see NCH #14, also NCH #8, #10*) was released in January 1999 following the visit of United States Congressman Tony Hall.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 170.]

NIGERIA

In May, President Olusegun Obasanjo announced the appointment of a seven-member judicial commission of inquiry to investigate “mysterious deaths”, assassinations and other human rights abuses under the military governments in office between 1984 and May 1999. In October 1999, the scope of the investigation was extended back to 1966, thus including the abuses of the Biafran war (1967-70). The commission received more than 11,000 submissions, many related to human rights violations in Ogoni-land in the mid-1990s. Hearings had not yet started by the end of 1999.

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 58-59; AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 182.]

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

During 1999, history student Wael Ali Farraj (*see NCH #9, #10, #14*) remained in prison.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 187.]

Among eleven academics and critics arrested on 28 November 1999 for signing a petition which accused the Palestinian political leadership of corruption and political mismanagement, was Abd al-Sattar Qassim (?1949-), professor of history or political science at An-Najah National University, Nablus. He was arrested by Palestinian General Security Services and held in Jericho. On 16 December, documents and papers were confiscated during a search of his house. On 6 January 2000, he was released without charge. On 18 February, he was rearrested. In 1995, Qassim had also been shot after writing an article criticising President Yasser Arafat (*see NCH #15*).

[Sources: AAAS Human Rights Action Network, *Case Number PA9915* (9 December 1999); AI, *Urgent Action 319/99* (London 15 and 20 December 1999, 10 January 2000), *50/00* (25 February 2000); IOC 1/00: 100, 2/00: 108, 3/00: 102-03.]

POLAND

According to Rafal Pankowski, editor of the anti-Fascist magazine *Nigdy Wiecej* (Never Again), Warsaw, historical revisionism was flourishing in Poland and incorporated the denial of the Holocaust, which was officially forbidden. David Irving’s work was translated and issued by Bellona, the Ministry of Defense publishing house, and in 1999 Dariusz Ratajczak, a research historian at the University of Opole, published a monograph questioning the existence of the gas chambers in Auschwitz extermination camp.

[Source: IOC 2/00: 148.]

Also see: United Kingdom.

ROMANIA

A law passed by the Chamber of Deputies in June 1999 allowed Romanians access to their secret police files and requires that the Romanian Information Service reveal if candidates for public office had been members of the Securitate.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 285.]

RWANDA

In 1999, at least 1,420 people were tried in Rwandese courts on charges of participation in the 1994 genocide. At least 180 people were sentenced to death. There were no judicial executions. The quality and conduct of trials varied. Tens of thousands of genocide suspects remained in detention without trial. Trials also continued at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania. By the end of 1999, 38 people were detained in Arusha.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 203-04.]

SENEGAL

See: Chad.

SIERRA LEONE

A Human Rights Manifesto for Sierra Leone adopted during a visit by the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights in June 1999, pledged UN support for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission which would examine human rights abuses committed during the civil war (1991-99). The UN did not recognize the general amnesty which provided impunity for human rights abuses.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 208, 210-11.]

SOUTH AFRICA

The National Director of Public Prosecutions established a unit to investigate possible prosecutions of perpetrators of past human rights violations who had failed to receive amnesty (more than 5000 by the end of 1999) or to cooperate with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (*see NCH #14*). In October 1999, survivors of past human rights violations publicly protested against the government's failure to implement the TRC's recommendations for financial and other reparations to thousands of victims.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 217.]

SOUTH KOREA

At his trial in September 1999, Suh Joon-sik (*see NCH #14*) was found guilty of violating the Security Surveillance Law and put on probation.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 474.]

SPAIN

See: Chile, Guatemala.

SRI LANKA

Official efforts continued to account for the tens of thousands of persons who "disappeared" at the hands of the security forces since the conflict between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam began in 1983 (*see NCH #14*). In January 1999, the Presidential Commission on Disappearances, set up in May 1998 to investigate complaints which three earlier presidential commissions of inquiry into involuntary removal and disappearances had not examined, submitted an interim report based on investigations since June 1998. The commission received more than ten thousand complaints. The report provided details on about one hundred court cases filed against perpetrators of "disappearances". More than 18,000 people applied for death certificates for "disappeared" relatives (a necessary prerequisite for obtaining government compensation). In June 1999, the exhumation of mass graves in Jaffna began. The remains of fifteen people who allegedly "disappeared" in mid-1996 were exhumed and investigations into the circumstances of their deaths continued. After

taking Jaffna in 1996, the army had allegedly killed Tamil civilians and buried them in some twenty-four graves.

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 213; AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 221.]

SWITZERLAND

On 10 April 2000, far-right editor and publisher Gaston-Armand Amaudruz (1921-) was imprisoned for one year for his denial of the Holocaust.

[Source: IOC 4/00: 109.]

TURKEY

On 5 February 2000, *The Chronological Album of the Kurds: 1900 to 2000*, a book distributed by the pro-Kurdish daily *Ozgur Bakis*, was banned on the grounds that it was “separatist propaganda”.

[Source: IOC 3/00: 109.]

UNITED KINGDOM

The new inquiry into the killings of thirteen unarmed people by the army on “Bloody Sunday” was delayed by arguments over whether security force witnesses would be allowed to remain anonymous (*see NCH #10, #14*). The inquiry judges continued to collect and process large amounts of evidence. The Independent Commission on Policing failed to recommend a mechanism to deal with the legacy of past human rights abuses.

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 250.]

In the autumn of 1996 Deborah Lipstadt (1947-), Dorot professor of modern Jewish and Holocaust studies, Emory University, Atlanta GA, and Penguin Books were sued for libel by the extreme right-wing historian David Irving because in her book *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (1993) she had characterized him as a Holocaust denier. During the trial (January-April 2000) Irving rejected the accusation although he did question the number of Jewish deaths and denied the systematic extermination of the Jews in concentration camps. He charged that the book had irrevocably damaged his reputation. He was forced to subpoena two witnesses, historians John Keegan and Donald C. Watt, who would not give evidence voluntarily. On 10 April 2000, the judge ruled that

Irving had “for his own ideological reasons persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence” and that he was “an active Holocaust denier”. He also said “that no objective, fair-minded historian would (...) doubt that there were gas chambers at Auschwitz and that they were operated on a substantial scale to kill hundreds of thousands of Jews.” Overall, he said, he said, Irving had “treated the historical evidence in a manner which fell far short of the standard to be expected of a conscientious historian”. Under British libel laws, the burden of proof falls on the defendant. Among the evidence submitted by the defence were the testimony by Holocaust historian Robert Jan van Pelt and a 700-page report on Irving’s historical methods written by Richard Evans, professor of modern history at Cambridge University. In 1996 Irving also sued *The Observer* and writer Gitta Sereny because, in a review of his Goebbels biography, she had accused him of deliberately falsifying history. In the course of the Lipstadt-Irving trial, the Israeli government released the complete memoirs of Adolf Eichmann, which were written in an Israeli prison cell.

[Sources include: IOC 2/00: 5, 32, 120, 128-29, 3/00: 98, 111.]

On 23 May 2000 it was revealed that MI5 (domestic security service) officers had destroyed a secret tape containing potentially vital evidence of a murder during an operation by the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Lurgan County, Armagh (Northern Ireland) in October 1982.

[Source: IOC 4/00: 88.]

On 21 August 2000, former MI5 officer David Shayler was arrested on his return to the United Kingdom and charged with breaching the Official Secrets Act. Shayler fled to mainland Europe after publicly revealing MI5’s mishandling of an investigation into IRA (Irish Republican Army) terrorist activity and alleging that the Secret Intelligence Service MI6 had played an instrumental part in a 1996 plot to assassinate Libyan leader Colonel Moammar Qaddafi. Shayler plans to confirm the veracity of his allegations in court. (*see NCH #10.*)

[Source: IOC 5/00: 90-91.]

Also see: Chile, Poland.

UNITED STATES

Washington continued to hold 160,000 documents seized from the Haitian military and the paramilitary group FRAPH during its 1994 intervention, maintaining that it wanted to hand them over to the Haitian government but only after blacking out the names of American citizens, a condition the Préval government rejected (*see NCH #6.*)

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 137; IOC 1/00: 95.]

On 1 February 1999, the White House issued a directive ordering United States agencies to collect and review for release documents “that shed light on human rights abuses, terrorism, and other acts of political violence in Chile.” On 30 June 1999, the government declassified and made public an estimated 5,300 documents related to events during 1973-78, from agencies including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Department. Thousands more documents from the pre-coup period were promised later in 1999. Although heavily censored, the released documents confirmed the direct chain of command between General Augusto Pinochet and the head of the secret police DINA, Manuel Contreras. They also showed that United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had received detailed intelligence about the human rights violations.

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 115-16; AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 70.]

On 8 October 1999, it was reported that George Washington’s fob watch had to be censored from a nineteenth-century portrait in a school textbook because it risked being mistaken for his genitals. The watch, hanging down the president’s thigh, was painted out by hand from over two thousand copies of *The United States in Modern Times*.

[Source: IOC 6/99: 256.]

On 5 November 1999, Kansas teacher Stan Roth was dismissed after forty years’ service for calling the teaching of creationism “non-scientific crap”. The decision came a few weeks before the state board of education was due to remove the teaching of evolution from the compulsory curriculum.

[Source: IOC 1/00: 111.]

On 18 November 1999, it was reported that the mail order Internet company Amazon.com had been shipping huge numbers of copies of Adolf Hitler’s book *Mein Kampf* to customers in Germany. While it is illegal to publish or sell the book in Germany, ordering it by mail is legal and resulted in the book reaching Amazon’s top ten best-seller list for Germany during the summer. Following pressure from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, Amazon ceased shipping the book outside of the United States.

[Source: IOC 1/00: 112.]

A 25-feet-high ceramic mural by artist Mike Alewitz representing Harriet Tubman who, armed with a musket, leads slaves to liberation upset the Associated Black Charities Inc. that had planned to display it in Baltimore. The group, fearing that the piece could be interpreted as “racist and violent”, asked Alewitz to replace the musket with a staff, but he refused.

[Source: IOC 4/00: 10.]

On 12 May 2000, it was reported that Louis Farrakhan had admitted that his words could have contributed to the 1965 assassination of his rival Malcolm X. In December Farrakhan had written “Such a man is worthy of death”, after Malcolm X had criticized the Nation of Islam’s spiritual leader Elijah Muhammad.

[Source: IOC 4/00: 112.]

Also see: Chile, China, Cuba.

VATICAN

On 5 November 1999, it was announced that the beatification of Pope Pius XII would be delayed. According to some, the controversy over his role during World War II was responsible for the delay.

[Source: 1/00: 113.]

VIETNAM

Nguyen Dinh Huy (1932-), a high school teacher of history and English, journalist, and editor of *The Progressive* and *Human Rights*, continued to be detained in a prison camp. Around 13 November 1993, he had been arrested with eight others for planning to hold an “illegal” international conference on economic development and democracy in Ho Chi Minh City. After an unfair trial on 11-12 August 1995, he was found guilty of “acting to overthrow the people’s government” and sentenced to fifteen years’ imprisonment for his leadership of the “Movement to Unite the People and Build Democracy”, a non-violent political group advocating political change which had organized the conference. He was permitted only brief, infrequent family visits and his health was deteriorating rapidly. Nguyen Dinh Huy had previously been imprisoned in 1957-59 (under the Ngo Dinh Diem government) and in 1975-92 (under the Communist government) for his alleged “counter-revolutionary” political beliefs (*see NCH #6.*)

[Sources: HRW, *World Report 1996* (1995) 182-83; AI, *Report 1996* (1996) 323, 1998: 359, 1999: 360, 2000: 261; International PEN Writers in Prison Committee, *Half-Yearly Caselist* (London 1997) 41-42.]

In March 1999, six months after his release from prison (*see NCH# 10*), Buddhist scholar and author of several studies of Buddhist history Thich Quang Do was summoned for questioning and ordered to

return to Ho Chi Minh City after he had traveled to central Vietnam to visit the Supreme Patriarch of the unofficial Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam. On 6 August he was interrogated about his letter to European Union ambassadors in Hanoi calling for human rights and religious freedoms. On 13 August he was intimidated at his pagoda. In September 1999, he was again threatened with arrest.

[Source: HRW, *World Report 2000* (1999) 216-17.]

ZIMBABWE

In April 1999, two non-governmental organisations issued a summary of the report *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace*, about atrocities committed in Matabeleland during the armed conflict that followed Zimbabwe's independence (1980-88).

[Source: AI, *Report 2000* (2000) 269.]