



AMERICAS WATCH

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MEMORANDUM ON AMERICAS WATCH TRIP TO CHILE: MARCH 24 - 28, 1987

The purpose of the trip, made by Aryeh Neier, Vice-chairman, and Cynthia Brown, Associate Director, was two-fold: to focus on the government's assault on the Vicaria de la Solidaridad -- the human rights office of the Catholic Church -- and lend support to the Vicaria; and to further document the credible allegations of torture of detainees in a group of controversial political cases all managed by the same military prosecutor. Our concern for the Vicaria reflected our commitment to the free functioning of human rights organizations and our deep respect for the Vicaria as one of the finest, most professional human rights organizations in the world. Our concern relating to torture was made more urgent by the nature of the allegations in these cases, which indicated the use of more extensive, more brutal torture than has been common even in Chile for several years.

Our activities in Chile included numerous meetings with human rights organizations (their executives and lawyers on their staffs), with judges, with relatives of detainees who have denounced extreme forms of torture, with some of the victims themselves, and with government officials who are normally inaccessible to human rights groups and lawyers in Chile or from abroad. The human rights organizations with whom we met and with whose lawyers we consulted were the Vicaria, the Chilean Human Rights Commission and CODEPU; the judges with whom we had interviews were the president of the Supreme Court, Rafael Retamal, and the appeals court judge Carlos Cerda, the latter being the investigative judge who has pursued the most extensive inquiry into disappearances; the officials with whom we met were the ad hoc military prosecutor Col. Fernando Torres Silva -- the man in charge of the recent cases in which the detainees have denounced extreme forms of torture, as well as the government's case against the Vicaria -- and Gen. Hugo Salas, director of the CNI (the secret police), whose personnel are denounced as responsible for the most

savage torture in Chile. A meeting scheduled and confirmed with Interior Minister Ricardo Garcia did not take place; we arrived at the appointed hour to be informed that the minister had expected us an hour previously and that he could no longer meet with us; we can only assume he changed his mind at the last minute. In addition, we visited two prisons: the Capuchinos annexe, a relatively tolerable prison where visits to detainees are unrestricted --there we met with Drs. Ramiro Olivares and Juan Macaya, whose detention is part of the "Vicaria case" (see below); and the Santiago Penitentiary, an overcrowded facility containing both common criminals and persons held on political charges, where conditions are much poorer, where political detainees in the cases we were investigating had only restricted visits and where those detainees were all on an indefinite hunger strike --there we interviewed two detainees concerning their treatment by CNI and by prosecutor Torres. We had dinners with political figures from the opposition spectrum and with women victims of repression, including relatives of victims of torture and the widows of the degollados (three members of the Communist Party, including a human rights worker, who were murdered and their throats slit in March 1985). We spent part of our final day in two poblaciones in center-western Santiago. We also met with representatives of the opposition and independent press, both print and radio, and with the president of the National Civilian Assembly, Dr. Juan Luis Gonzalez.

THE VICARIA CASE

(1) Background: On April 28, 1986 a wounded man, Hugo Gomez Pena, appeared at the Vicaria headquarters (located next to the Santiago cathedral) asking for medical attention. He was known to Vicaria staff because he had denounced threats against him before; in this case, he stated he had received his bullet wounds accidentally, as bystander to a shootout. He was taken for emergency treatment to a private clinic to which the Vicaria has frequently referred patients -- the Chiloe Clinic. This was morning; in the afternoon, the director of the Vicaria's legal program learned through news media that a man, wounded and at large, was being sought as a political suspect in relation to the attempted robbery of a bakery that morning, and that a policeman had been killed in the course of the robbery attempt -- making the wounded man liable to charges of terrorism. A Vicaria lawyer, Gustavo Villalobos, and the head of the Vicaria medical program, Dr. Ramiro Olivares, were dispatched to the Chiloe Clinic to interview Gomez Pena; the wounded man repeated his story, however. After providing him with clothes to enable him to visit his home, and eliciting a promise that he would go to the Vicaria to make a formal declaration, the two staff members left him. Gomez Pena instead went missing for some ten days, appearing then at

about midnight on the doorstep of a private physician, Juan Macaya, who treated him that night (curfew made it impossible to transfer him elsewhere), then reported him to police next day, as required in the Chilean penal code for all persons with bullet wounds. As a result, Villalobos, Olivares, Macaya, and two doctors of the Chiloe Clinic -- as well as other clinic staff -- were arrested and charged, under the Arms Control Law, for allegedly having aided the flight of the wounded man and for failure to report his wounds to the authorities.

The arrests occurred in early May 1986; although some medical personnel were set free relatively quickly, lawyer Villalobos and Dr. Olivares were held for three months, with several petitions for bail refused, and were released conditionally only on August 7. Dr. Macaya was not released at all; at the time of our visit he had been in prison for ten and a half months.

On December 12, Dr. Olivares was re-arrested at his home under additional charges: under Art. 8 of the 1984 Anti-Terrorism Law, he was charged with being an accomplice after the fact (encubridor) to an act of terrorism, i.e. the killing of the policeman. This charge permits no bail; it carries a potential sentence of five years and one day to fifteen years, plus loss of the right to practice medicine; and previous experience suggests that he is likely to wait for two years or more before trial, which will be before the military courts where due process is notoriously unavailable.

Orders of detention under the new charges were also issued against Villalobos, the Vicaria lawyer, and against a Chiloe Clinic physician, Dr. Ramon Rojas. Rojas went into hiding and has not yet appeared; he is believed to be outside Chile. Villalobos appealed to the Supreme Court to void the new indictment, and the Court ruled in his favor in late January; he did not spend time in prison on the higher charge. Dr. Macaya, who had never been released, had been indicted on the higher charge in October, and the Supreme Court ruled against him, as against Olivares, so they remained in prison, where we interviewed them. On March 26, responding to a further petition to void the new indictments against Olivares and Macaya, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Macaya, who thus became eligible for release, but ruled against Olivares. This latest ruling makes even clearer that the target of the government's case is Olivares and, by extension, the Vicaria itself.

(2) The legal case: Chile's Anti-Terrorism Law is very broad in its definition of what constitutes terrorism, but it is necessary even under this law to prove guilty intent. Thus, when we spoke with the military prosecutor, Col. Torres, he posited that Ramiro Olivares, using his position

as head of the Vicaria medical program, had shown a pattern of conduct proving his guilty intent to cover up for terrorists. Torres said he had evidence of seven cases in which Olivares had acted with such intent. He also stated that Olivares had to have known, when he and Villalobos dealt with the wounded man, that he was a terrorist. The Vicaria lawyer in charge of this case pointed out to us, however, that, though Torres has asserted a pattern of accomplice conduct by Dr. Olivares, he (the prosecutor) has not charged any of those six other former patients with terrorism -- because in fact he has no evidence to show that those patients were engaged in violent political activity. The Vicaria lawyers, and the head of the legal program, assert categorically that Olivares and they did not have knowledge of the crime beyond the sketchy details emitted by the officialist press, details which provoked the special visit to the clinic in the afternoon of April 28. That visit would tend to show attentiveness to the issue of possible armed involvement by the wounded man, and concern about the implications of that possibility, rather than prior knowledge or any intent to cover up for him.

In addition, there is a legal/ethical point which goes to the core of the case: under ordinary Chilean law (the penal code), the failure to report a patient's wound is something less than a crime; it is punishable by a fine or, if the fine is unpaid, by a short time in jail. On the other hand, under the same penal code, a doctor's violation of the confidentiality of his relations with a patient is a crime and punishable much more harshly. Ethically, of course, the violation of confidentiality is impermissible. The Vicaria bases its defence of Dr. Olivares -- and of lawyer Villalobos on the lesser but by no means minor charges -- on these legal norms and ethical principles.

The military prosecutor, Col. Torres, has sought access to Vicaria files since the middle of last year when the case first began. At one stage, he demanded a declaration before him by the Vicar of Santiago, Msgr. Valech, one of the two principal advisors to Cardinal Juan Francisco Fresno, and thus sought to involve the Church hierarchy directly in the case as part of his attempt to breach the confidentiality of Vicaria files. Currently he is demanding the release of all files pertaining to the medical program -- files which contain extensive legal information, names of victims and relatives, and much other information which could place Vicaria clients at risk if revealed to the government. The Church has solidly supported the Vicaria in its refusal to turn over even one file; clearly even the smallest breach of confidentiality would constitute betrayal of a trust and would destroy people's faith in the Vicaria as a sanctuary.

Prosecutor Torres has repeatedly abused his office in the

course of this investigation: for example, by revealing to the press selected portions of materials (such as referral slips on patients) which are part of the secret sumario or investigative stage of proceedings. Dr. Olivares told us that UN Rapporteur on Chile Fernando Volio, who had visited him the day before, had said that Torres discussed documentary evidence in the case with him (Volio), and from Volio's description of what Torres had said it was clear he had thoroughly misrepresented that evidence.

(3) The implications: Col. Torres is also prosecutor for the cases of the arms caches discovered in Chile's north last August and for the case of the assassination attempt against Pinochet last September, as well as smaller cases which the government links to those two. The Vicaria case, by virtue of being handled by the same government-appointed prosecutor, is evidently an attempt to portray the Vicaria as part of a terrorist conspiracy. While Col. Torres was careful, in his conversation with us, to distinguish between the Vicaria as an organization and Dr. Olivares as an individual within it, the head of the CNI was blunter: "He (Torres) is a diplomat," said Gen. Salas, and proceeded to state that the Vicaria "as an institution" is involved with terrorism. The government's intention is clearly to break the Vicaria as an institution -- to create so much pressure on the Church that the hierarchy will become cautious about supporting the Vicaria's work, and to create doubts in the public mind as to the objectivity and professionalism of the Vicaria and its staff.

Americas Watch is especially concerned about Dr. Olivares's legal situation, which at the moment seems to have no solution unless massive international pressure is brought to bear, and about the prosecutor's demand that the Vicaria render up files. We think it unlikely that the Vicaria offices will be raided and files stolen (as occurred with the Chiloe Clinic and Dr. Macaya's private practice), because the archdiocese of Santiago has located the Vicaria on Church property. But the pressure to release files could escalate; the prosecutor could, legally, imprison the Vicar of Solidarity, Msgr. Santiago Tapia, for non-compliance, or the Vicaria's legal director or executive secretary.

TORTURE

(1) Background: In August 1986, the Chilean army announced the discovery of a group of large arms caches in various sites in northern Chile and near Santiago. With enormous publicity, the government asserted that the arms were stockpiled by the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front, a leftist armed group which had been known primarily for sabotage operations and had been considered of marginal strength and of minor political importance, except insofar as

it offered the government a pretext for repression against peaceful dissenters. At the time of our visit there were 31 people in detention on charges of bringing arms into Chile; five of the detainees have freely and publicly admitted to doing so, as part of the Front's operations, although they contest the government's version of how the arms were brought in. (The government's version of the stockpiling process has been questioned in other quarters as well; there is some suspicion that, after discovering actual arms caches of the Front, the government may have added additional weapons to get greater political mileage out of their "discovery".)

In September, a group of about one dozen members of the Front attempted to assassinate Gen. Pinochet and failed, although five presidential bodyguards were killed and the general very slightly wounded. Five persons are in custody charged with direct participation in the attack, and some dozens more in connection with it (the exact number is hard to say because some persons originally arrested by virtue of alleged association with the Front have subsequently been charged with indirect participation in the atentado against Pinochet, and others originally arrested in connection with the atentado have now been released or are held on association charges; one lawyer told us the total number of persons held in relation to all of Torres's cases -- Vicaria, arsenals and atentado -- was currently 86.) Among those arrested in connection with the atentado are a group of nine, including three doctors and two nurses, who are charged with operating a "clandestine clinic" for the Front and, in particular, with having treated wounded members of the group that attacked Gen. Pinochet. This latter group is the most recent group of detainees, arrested in January 1987; further, individual arrests took place in February.

The arsenals detainees were arrested beginning in mid-August 1986, and their testimonies about torture, made in November, were the first indications of exceptional brutality against this group of detainees. The five alleged protagonists of the atentado have also charged severe torture, although their denunciations are somewhat less sensational, perhaps because these detainees, unlike those in the arsenals case, were interrogated by Investigaciones (the civil detective force) rather than CNI. In cases surrounding the atentado, two prisoners have made denunciations of, among other things, sexual abuse.

(2) Evidence of torture: Before going to Chile, Americas Watch was in possession of denunciations of torture filed before ordinary courts by detainees in the arsenals case and possessed as well details on several of the "clandestine clinic" detainees' treatment. All of these

detainees suffered very lengthy terms of incommunicado detention, first in the hands of the CNI (where the physical torture took place) and then immediately after being seen for the first time by prosecutor Torres. A lawyer of the Chilean Human Rights Commission, who handles 25 of the arsenals detainees, told us he saw most of his clients for the first time after 30-35 days of detention, and in at least one case after more than 40 days. In such circumstances, few of the detainees retained the marks of torture (although there were some notable exceptions). Nonetheless, a detailed review of key cases, and interviews with lawyers, relatives, victims, prosecutor Torres and CNI director Salas convinced Americas Watch that a pattern of extremely severe torture took place and that prosecutor Torres has obstructed the victims' efforts to seek redress through denunciations of the torture.

The types of torture denounced include: prolonged and repeated use of electric shock; severe beatings; prolonged maintenance in forced positions; sleep deprivation; blindfolding during the entire period of CNI detention; mock executions; Russian roulette; whipping; forced witnessing of the torture of others; forced ingestion of drugs causing disorientation and partial amnesia; blows to the ears ("telephone"); submersion of the head in tub of water and excrement ("submarine"); sexual abuse (of one female prisoner and of one male prisoner); and (on one prisoner) the insertion of ratas --large mice, which panic and seek escape into orifices --into the mouth and into trousers of which the exits had been sealed to encourage entry of the animal into the prisoner's anus. Some of these methods such as application of electricity are recognized as standard practice of the CNI, but were used in these cases for exceptional lengths of time and used, moreover, after confessions and other information had already been elicited, that is, used as forms of summary punishment. Other methods, such as sexual violation and the use of animals, have not been commonly reported in Chile since the early years of the Pinochet regime and thus represent a reversion to levels of bestiality that are exceptional even for CNI.

After leaving CNI hands, prisoners went before the military prosecutor, Col. Torres -- some on the same day as their last torture, others after some recuperative time. Torres's regular practice was to send them into incommunicado detention in prison. Such detention may legally last only five days; but Torres would lift the incommunication for a few hours, then renew it for another five days, and so on, repeatedly. The two prisoners whom we interviewed also emphasized that psychological pressure, from prosecutor Torres and other official representatives, was maintained during the post-CNI, incommunicado period; other detainees' denunciations echo this assertion. The incommunicado detentions themselves constitute a severe form of

psychological pressure, depriving prisoners of access to lawyers and relatives who could alleviate the psychological effects of physical torture, acting on their behalf and offering support at a time of suffering.

For detainees in these cases who were arrested after mid-October, there was some access to impartial attention in the early days of detention: the International Committee of the Red Cross reached an agreement with the Chilean government, effective mid-October 1986, which permits the ICRC access to political or security-related detainees held by CNI after five days; a similar agreement with Investigaciones permits access after 24 hours. All of the detainees in the Torres cases were seen by the ICRC at some time, but the vast majority -- those arrested in August and September -- did not benefit from the new agreement in that they were seen by ICRC only long after the initial period when physical torture took place. (One detainee we interviewed, Claudio Molina, estimated he saw the ICRC after about 50 days.) While the agreement with the ICRC is a positive step, it is early yet to evaluate whether the ICRC role may discourage torture in Chile.

When we discussed the denunciations of torture with prosecutor Torres, he was careful not to categorically deny that torture had taken place, saying only that it had not occurred after detainees were placed at his disposition by CNI. He said that certain detainees were medically certified to have "minor lesions" but that, after inquiring as to the origin of the lesions to the police services that had detained these prisoners, he was assured that the lesions were the result of prisoners' having resisted arrest. He also asserted that he ordered immediate medical examinations of some prisoners held originally outside Santiago (in the arsenals case).

We interviewed the mothers of two women detainees, Patricia Pena Diaz (arrested September 4) and Patricia Herrero Mediavilla (nurse, arrested December 18). These two prisoners had both been charged with terrorism, Pena with having a connection to the assassination attempt -- which occurred three days after her arrest -- and Herrero with running a clandestine clinic for the Front and aiding participants in the assassination attempt. Both have denounced severe torture. In Pena's case, she has denounced rape by a CNI interrogator; while in prison she became pregnant, and according to several accounts we heard, wanted to abort and suffered anguish over her treatment. Her mother described a pattern of ill-treatment of her daughter, in particular at the moment when she required medical attention for what became a miscarriage: once she was denied treatment at a medical facility and was forced to be returned to

prison; then later she was accepted for treatment in psychologically stressful conditions (surrounded by guards, otherwise alone, in pain, while her mother was not permitted to see her until a doctor assisted her in entering). An additional element in this case -- common to numerous of others handled by Torres -- is that the relatives were harassed as well: Pena's parents' home was raided, her father and 14-year-old brother beaten.

(3) Medical examinations and involvement of doctors in torture: For the bulk of these cases, in which ICRC did not have early access to detainees, there do exist medical records -- of examinations carried out by prison doctors at the time prosecutor Torres transferred detainees to prison. (Prosecutor Torres claimed to rely on these examinations for all his information as to the physical state of detainees passing out of CNI hands. He also promised to provide us with copies of such examination certificates; this was not done, however.)

In addition, detainees have stated that they were examined in CNI custody by persons they believe to be doctors: given a brief exam on entry, asked a few questions about their physical state (whether they had heart problems, and the like); in some cases examined by doctors during the period of interrogation/torture (one detainee we interviewed asserted that a doctor had passed him for further torture); these statements are consistent with the pattern already documented for torture practices in Chile.

The two detainees we interviewed both required special medical treatment as a result of torture: Claudio Molina told us that, as a result of being hung by the wrists for a day and a night, one of his arms was paralyzed and he was taken to the prison hospital for treatment. Jose Moya Toro told us that, when he appeared at the office of the military prosecutor, the secretary there ordered his immediate hospitalization; among other things, his testicles had been damaged and bloodied. Molina stated that he was finally able to obtain a medical examination at the Forensic Institute, a government office, where the examining physician said to him: "This is what happens when you get involved in stupid things" ("Esto es lo que pasa por meterte en huevadas"). Moya was examined by a Vicaria doctor who accompanied a judge to see him -- the only detainee to receive a truly independent professional medical exam -- and the doctor's statement was provided to us.

(3) Legal aspects: The prosecutor, Col. Torres, enjoys a wide range of powers -- he is effectively investigator, prosecutor and judge in that he can issue subpoenas, receive testimony, decide charges, levy additional penalties such as

renewed incommunicado detention or restricted visitation. Torres has exceeded his authority, however.

He is bound to maintain the secrecy of the information he receives during the investigative stage. However, prosecutor Torres has systematically violated his obligation to maintain the secrecy of sumario by publicizing detainees' confessions extracted under torture or portions of those confessions. When lawyers for the arsenals detainees filed a complaint on violation of sumario which went to the Supreme Court, there was no redress from that quarter.

Lawyers have filed denunciations of torture with ordinary courts. For example, for 25 arsenals detainees, a collective torture complaint was filed with the XX Criminal Court in Santiago (the court with jurisdiction over the Santiago area which includes the CNI center in Calle Borgono). The judge receiving the complaint, Rene Garcia, has attempted seriously to investigate it, but has been frustrated consistently, which violates Chilean law. When Judge Garcia sought to confirm the denunciation of torture with detainees, a military judge refused to allow him access; when Garcia attempted to ascertain the names of arresting officers in these cases, Torres refused to give the names. Then, in violation of the secrecy of sumario, Torres leaked to the press an auto de reo (description of formal charges) and in this document appeared the names of six CNI arresting officers in one case; when the civil registry was checked, it was discovered these people, as named, did not exist. A petition was presented by the lawyers to the Supreme Court asking the military justice system, including prosecutor Torres, to cooperate with Judge Garcia; two and a half months later, the Supreme Court ordered compliance with Garcia's request to see the detainees to confirm their intent to denounce torture -- an unjustifiably long time to render judgment on a matter of such urgency. Judge Garcia still does not know the names of the arresting officers in any case. Meanwhile, according to the lawyers, Torres has petitioned the ordinary courts to transfer to him all information gathered by Garcia in the course of his investigation; Garcia is expected to resist this and to call upon the Supreme Court to decide jurisdiction so that he may be able to continue with his investigation.

Some prisoners have stated that they denounced their torture to prosecutor Torres when they first appeared before him; Claudio Molina restated this in our interview. When a prosecutor receives such information, he is obligated to investigate the denunciation. Torres told us he had received only two complaints, and had not yet -- several months later -- completed his investigations in those cases.

The treatment of detainees who have refused to cooperate with

Torres -- initially five prisoners, later more -- is in violation of Chilean law, which provides that such a detainee should be informed that such conduct may influence the court's deliberations in his case but may not be otherwise punished. Torres's response in these cases was to place these people in renewed incommunicado detention.

According to lawyers, prisoners who had made confessions under torture and were called before military courts to ratify those confessions were threatened that if they did not ratify the confessions, they would be sent back to CNI; this is illegal.

As a means of protesting the legal irregularities in their cases, 14 of the Torres prisoners began a hunger strike on February 25; subsequently, others joined them, and as of the day we left Chile there were 348 political and security-related prisoners on hunger strike in prisons throughout Chile. (The total number of security-related prisoners at this moment is 515.) During our visit, one of the hunger strikers, Vassily Carrillo, who is charged with passing arms to those who carried out the atentado, was already hospitalized with renal damage (partially owing to his torture, we were told) and an intestinal hemorrhage. The demands of the hunger strikers are for a fair trial and recognition by the government of their status and rights as political prisoners. The strikers have declared an intention to fast until death if necessary. When we interviewed Claudio Molina, the effects of the hunger strike --which he joined on March 3 -- were evident; Jose Moya seemed comparatively energetic and alert. Carrillo, hospitalized on March 20, reaffirmed his intention to continue without food. Most are taking water with glucose and salt; thirty prisoners are refusing liquids as well, however, and run an even greater risk. Although we do not regard it as part of our mandate to take a position on such a hunger strike, we note that the legal irregularities in these cases appear sufficient to convince detainees that they lacked other means of obtaining redress of their grievances or of obtaining the attention necessary to create public pressure for such redress.

OTHER MATTERS:THE QUEMADOS CASE

This is the case of Rodrigo Rojas De-Negri, 19, and Carmen Gloria Quintana, 18, who on July 2, 1986 were burned alive by an army patrol in the street of a Santiago poblacion. Rojas died; Quintana, after several weeks near death, survived. Here we do not review the events in this case prior to September 1986, as we have reported those facts elsewhere (e.g. "Chile:News in Brief" and our March 1987 report, "Human Rights Concerns in Chile"). From September 1986 to January 1987 there were no significant developments. On January 4, a military court staged a reconstruction of the crime at the

site of the burnings, in the poblacion Los Nogales, in an evident attempt to lend support to the soldiers' version of how the burning occurred - that is, accidentally, as Carmen Gloria knocked over an incendiary device. By this time, most of the key witnesses had left the country. Other witnesses, neighborhood people who saw parts of the incident, were given two hours' notice of the reconstruction. The procedures were highly irregular: normally lawyers for both sides are present, but the Vicaria's lawyers, representing the victims' families, were thrown out; normally, lawyers from both sides are notified of an imminent reconstruction of the scene, but Vicaria lawyers learned of it only at the last minute from people in the neighborhood.

Subsequently, on January 28, a military judge reduced the charges against the sole defendant, army Lt. Fernandez Dittus, to negligence and the next day released him on the equivalent of \$25 bail.

The Vicaria's lawyers in this cases have asked that, in addition to the army lieutenant against whom minor charges are pending, 9 more soldiers be charged. Among these 9 are the 3 persons in civilian dress who were called in by the patrol before the burning and interrogated the victims; these 3 are believed to be army intelligence officers, and may have given the order to proceed with the burning.

In the intervening time, new evidence has come to light which fortifies the case against the soldiers: for example, the police found a sweater and remnants of burned hair in a hole near the site where the young people were dumped, in Quilicura; these had been partially hidden, and the soldiers' removal of these items from the original site of the burning is evidence of an intent to cover up the crime. This evidence had been in the possession of the military court since early on, and nothing had been done with it. The Vicaria lawyers had technical tests done, which showed the sweater/pullover to be Rodrigo's and the hair to be human. The military court also had in its possession the remains of Carmen Gloria's clothing, which Vicaria lawyers obtained when, in January, they obtained access to the sumario information; the clothing shows that the fire affected the left side of her body, as she has stated, and not the right side as the soldiers have stated in their version of the burning as accidental.

A corollary to the quemados case is a wider situation affecting children and young people. Students, including secondary-school students currently engaged in protesting massive dismissals of teachers and the economic restructuring of secondary education, make up an increasing proportion of those arrested and ill-treated. (On March 25, during peaceful protests called on the labor movement, the leader of Santiago's branch of the Federation of Secondary Students -

Juan Alfaro - was wounded in the leg and arrested, to be charged with "aggression against police" and placed before the military courts.) In addition, several of the persons we interviewed emphasized the spread of repression to children -- for example, abductions of young children of detainees in the Torres cases, and interrogations of those children about their parents; also the deaths of children shot during days of protest. We will be investigating this situation further.

NOTE: Since our trip, on April 3, the hunger strike was called off. The Church mediated between the government and the prisoners, and early reports indicate that the government showed some flexibility.