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M. Schneider  
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INR WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS  
OF DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS

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SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE RELEASED IN FU

Soviet Union

Rights Update (INR Review and Analysis)

Georgian Trial Ends With Light Sentence. On September 7 the Georgian press reported the trial and conviction of Viktor Rtskhiladze, a founding member of the Tbilisi Helsinki Monitoring Group. According to a TASS account, the court took into account Rtskhiladze's admission of guilt and repentance in giving him an exceptionally light sentence of two and one-half years imprisonment (suspended) and two years of exile. Rtskhiladze was arrested last January and accused of working with fellow Helsinki Group members Gamsakhurdia and Kostava in duplicating and distributing anti-Soviet literature (the latter two were tried and sentenced in May). This trial apparently ends the recent series of trials in Georgia.

Soviets Respond to Senator Kennedy. Following his return from Moscow, Senator Kennedy announced in a September 11 press conference Soviet willingness to allow the emigration of some 18 families as a result of his intercession. Although most are cases involving reunification of Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, and Armenians with relatives in Massachusetts, the list also includes Jewish refuseniks, including famed scientist Veniamin Levich and the family Katz (whose daughter Jessica suffers from a rare disease)--and even some Jewish families for whom the senator reportedly had not interceded.

Refusenik Women to Lie Low. The refusenik women's group, which has staged several protest demonstrations during the past year, reportedly intends to scale down its future activities. While the group will remain in being, it considers the present situation to be unfavorable for militant actions.

Artists Demonstration Aborted. A demonstration planned by Leningrad artists on the anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia (August 21) was aborted by authorities, who learned of the plan and detained some members of the group for several days. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Poland/Czechoslovakia

Polish-Czechoslovak Dissident Cooperation. Polish Workers Defense Committee spokesman Jacek Kuron said on September 4 that

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leaders of Czechoslovakia's dissident Charter 77 movement had asked the Committee to publish a statement on alleged harassment of Chartists by Prague authorities. The Charter 77 statement called for maximum support for three dissidents recently jailed in Czechoslovakia. It also charged that Czechoslovak authorities are now particularly brutal to the supporters of the Charter 77 movement who are little known to the public.

In a related development, a signatory of the Charter 77 manifesto has told Embassy Prague that as many as 50 Chartists are thinking of emigrating because of incessant police surveillance and harassment. Among them is Marta Kubisova, who indicated several months ago that she would be stepping down as spokeswoman sometime this fall. (~~CONFIDENTIAL~~, Prague 2418, September 6; UNCLASSIFIED, Reuter, September 4)

INR Comment. Czechoslovak and Polish human rights groups met in early August to issue a statement marking the 10th anniversary of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia and the suppression of the "democratic movement" in Poland that same year. Recent reports indicate that the two groups planned to meet again this month in order to discuss ways of cooperation.

Since early 1977, the Czechoslovak regime has encouraged the emigration of selected Charter 77 movement activists as a means of weakening the movement. Thus far, only a few activists have decided to emigrate, despite regime pressures or inducements to do so. (~~CONFIDENTIAL~~)

#### EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

##### Philippines

Marcos' Birthday Pardons. Philippine press reports say that President Marcos granted pardons to 444 prisoners on September 10 as part of his birthday celebration. Six were given "conditional" pardons. They had been serving six year sentences after having pleaded guilty in February 1977 of participating in the alleged Lopez/Osmena plots to assassinate Marcos. The other 338 apparently were common criminals held in civilian jails. (UNCLASSIFIED, Manila 15886, September 11)

INR Comment. Presidential birthday pardons are a tradition under martial law. The conditional pardon of the remaining Lopez/Osmena plotters was expected. In June, eight others accused in the assassination case, but who had never pleaded guilty, were released as part of a Marcos amnesty program. Earlier, there had been speculation in Manila that Marcos

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opponent Benigno Aquino would get his long-rumored pardon during the birthday celebration. Like many other rumors heralding Aquino's imminent release, this one also proved unfounded.

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### South Korea

#### Rights Update

Former presidential candidate, KCIA kidnap victim, and "Myongdong" defendant Kim Dae-jung went on a hunger strike on September 5 in the Seoul National University hospital room where he is being held prisoner. At the request of Myongdong families and on doctor's advice, he ended the strike on September 12. A statement in Kim's name demanding his release was issued by released Myongdong prisoners.

Two South Korean human rights groups, the "Coalition for Human Rights Movement in Korea" and the "Korea Citizens Union for Democracy", issued a statement supporting Congressman Fraser's letter to President Carter which was strongly criticized in the pro-government press. The two groups, as well as many individual activists, anticipate widespread protest activity this fall prior to December's National Assembly election. Embassy Seoul reports that they look to the Carter administration for "cheerleading" moral support. (CONFIDENTIAL, Seoul 8152, 8077, 8074, 8033, 7958 ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~, September 13, 11, 11, 8, and 7, respectively)

INR Comment. Dissident plans to foment increased protests this fall are well known to the Seoul government. The government is trying now to defuse the situation by preemptive action. One such action--keeping Kim in a hospital instead of a jail cell--has effectively short-circuited many efforts by Kim's supporters to draw attention to his cause. Should the heat of the election campaign generate the sort of widespread protest the dissidents expect, the government can be expected to crack down sharply. (~~CONFIDENTIAL~~)

### LATIN AMERICA

#### Paraguay

Regime Misreads Aid Decisions. A recent US decision to recognize human rights improvements in Paraguay by approving a USAID education grant and voting positively on two Inter-American Development Bank loans serving basic human needs may be having an unintended impact in Paraguay, according to

Embassy Asuncion. Official actions and attitudes indicate that the Paraguayan government perceives the US action as a shift away from its firm human rights policy rather than as encouragement for future progress. Many government officials appear to have concluded that the US has finally "seen the light" and will discontinue pressure for an Inter-American Human Rights Commission on-site inspection.

A resurgence of the politics of intimidation characteristic of the Stroessner regime in years past suggests that officials believe that US concern about human rights compliance has slackened. Recent regime actions have included:

- warning one former political prisoner that he should leave the country within eight days and another that he might be expelled;
- detaining briefly and harassing opposition political leaders suspected of forming an anti-government coalition;
- threatening anti-Stroessner newspapers with closure; and
- a speech in which Stroessner personally encouraged the police to adopt a more vigilant attitude toward the opposition.

The continued release of political prisoners and the government's cautious attitude toward supporters of detainees currently conducting a hunger strike are more positive signs. Nonetheless, Embassy Asuncion concludes, strong efforts must be made to convince the Paraguayans that there has been no basic shift in US human rights policy. [REDACTED] (UNCLASSIFIED, Asuncion 3883, September 8)

#### NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

##### Iraq

Amnestied Students Can Resume Studies. Baghdad Radio reported on September 2 that the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) has issued a decree authorizing detained students amnestied two months ago to return to their schools. The broadcast noted that the RCC had earlier decreed that amnestied workers could return to their previous jobs. (UNCLASSIFIED, FBIS, September 2)

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INR Comment. The decree, issued on the eve of the autumn school sessions in Iraq, probably will induce many of the students who had been imprisoned by the authorities to continue their interrupted courses of study. The decree is further evidence of Baghdad's determination to complete action on the pardons announced during July's Baathist anniversary celebrations and is part of the regime's efforts to improve its human rights image domestically and abroad. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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