



COUNTRY  
DOSSIER

SECTION  
6

ACT 71/03/85  
June 1985



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND WOMEN

AI material for the women's conference in Nairobi : July 1985

## CHILE: Secret Detention Centre in Viña del Mar

Ana María Pazo Flores, a student Spanish teacher, was arrested on 27 October 1983. According to her testimony, she was held at a secret detention centre used by the Central Nacional de Informaciones (CNI, Secret Police), for five days.

*"...Generally speaking, they never stopped pressurizing us psychologically, playing the radio very loudly, opening the cell doors violently, shouting at us, taking us to the toilet and staying there while we urinated, watching us while we showered, altering the routine so that we lost all sense of time ..."*

*One day they took me from one place to another for a whole afternoon: they took me upstairs to a room where they made me listen to a cassette with Allende's last words and songs of Victor Jara. Then they took me down to the underground room and left me in a cabin there; the doctor arrived and started to talk about my physical debility. They took me upstairs again saying that they did not have a room for me; they took me down, up, down, and finally up again and put me in the room where they left me for the rest of the time ..."*

Jeanette Jofré Waghorn, a secondary education graduate remanded in custody at the same time, testified:

*"...Naked, I was struck and fondled and obscene remarks were made to me; this immediately produces a feeling of total defencelessness and violated dignity which succeeds in destroying for a while one's sense of worth, especially in a woman..."*



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## Reinalda del Carmen Pereira Plaza, CHILE

Reinalda del Carmen Pereira Plaza, a medical laboratory technologist and a trade union leader, was arrested in December 1976 when she was five months pregnant. According to witnesses, she was arrested on 15 December when she was returning home after a medical visit in connection with her pregnancy. A car stopped beside her and a man got out. He grabbed her from behind and when she began to scream, another man got out of the car and the two forced her into the vehicle. In the process, she hit her head against the door frame. She was then pushed to the car floor, screaming for help. The car then drove off, followed by another car.

Reinalda del Carmen Pereira Plaza was one of thirteen members of the Chilean Community Party who "disappeared" after being arrested in December 1976. Following action taken before the courts by relatives, lawyers and others, a special judge, Sr. Aldo Guastavino, was appointed in February 1977 by the Santiago Appeals Court to investigate the cases of eight of the 13 people who "disappeared". However, the investigations were closed within a week, after the government had given the judge information denying their arrest and alleging that they had left the country and travelled to Argentina. Certificates purporting to reveal the dates when each of them crossed the border and the alleged crossing places were presented to the judge, and on the basis of such information he decided that there were no grounds to pursue the case. The certificate for Reinalda del Carmen Pereira Plaza stated that she had left Chile at the Paso Los Libertadores on 21 December 1976.

An appeal was submitted against the decision to close the cases on the grounds that investigations had not been thoroughly carried out. Lawyers and relatives succeeded in gathering evidence which showed that the documents used to show that the victims had left the country had been tampered with. They also discovered other irregularities. It had been alleged that some of the victims had entered Argentina in a vehicle with the registration number HG-19, a Santiago number. When further enquiries were made with the Santiago municipality, it was discovered that although the registration number existed it had not yet been sold. All this evidence was presented to the judge for further investigation.

The investigations proceeded extremely slowly, and have been closed and reopened at least three times since the judge was appointed in 1977. Each time lawyers have appealed against the decision to stop the proceedings. In early 1982, the original investigating judge retired and judge Carlos Cerda was appointed to continue the work. The following September, nearly seven years after Reinalda was arrested and "disappeared", a police border official at the time she was supposed to have left the country was arrested and charged with falsifying a public document - in this case the hoja de ruta (a record sheet filled in for each car and its passengers crossing the border) used to show that she had travelled to Argentina. A few days later a second police official who had also been working on the border at that time was charged with falsifying a public document used to show that another of the 13 had left the country. Both have since been released on bail. Lawyers have said that even though the two men may not have directly participated in the arrests and "disappearances" they had become accomplices by falsifying documents related to the case.



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Lawyers say that it is the first time that police arrested in connection with a "disappearance" have been charged but not immediately amnestied.

In May 1985 seventeen more plainclothes policemen were ordered to appear before judge Carlos Cerda to establish whether they were involved in falsifying travel permits to show that the thirteen had left Chile. No further details are available at the time of writing, and no other progress has been made towards establishing the present whereabouts of Reinalda Pereira Plaza or the other 12 members of the Communist Party.

*Please send letters requesting information about the whereabouts of Reinalda Pereira del Carmen Plaza and urging the government to continue their investigation into her case and to publish the results, to:*

Sr, Ricardo García Rodríguez  
Ministro del Interior  
Ministerio del Interior  
Palacio de La Moneda  
Santiago  
Chile