

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]; International PEN Writers in Prison Committee [PEN, London]; Scholars at Risk [SAR, New York]; World University Service [WUS, Amsterdam]; 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.

GENERAL

Among the 45 recipients of the 1997 HRW Hellman/Hammett grants (a program for writers who have been victims of political persecution and are in financial need) were the following:

- *China*: Su Xiaokang, living in exile in the United States, author of works on the history of the Great Leap Forward (1958-60) and co-author of *Heshang (River Elegy)*, a controversial but very popular 1988 television documentary series in which the Chinese cultural traditions were criticised; former history student Wang Dan, imprisoned (see NCH #5); Zhang Xianliang, veteran human rights campaigner living in exile in the United States, after having served a sentence for attempting to organise a commemoration of the June 1989 events in June 1993.

- *South Africa*: Gertrude Fester, poet and short story writer, who spent two years in prison for African National Congress (ANC) activities under the *apartheid* regime and who was writing a history of the South African women's movement within the ANC.

- *Turkey*: Aysenur Zarakolu (see NCH #5); Ahmet Altan, a journalist dismissed in April 1995, charged with 'inciting racial hatred' and given a twenty-month suspended sentence, because he had written a satirical article suggesting that the Turkish war of independence that followed the First World War had

been led by Kurds rather than Turks.

- *Vietnam*: Nguyen Dinh Huy, a high school history teacher, journalist, and editor, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for his involvement in the *Movement to Unite the People and Build Democracy*, a non-violent political group which advocated political change and attempted to organise a conference on economic development and democracy in November [1994].

[Source: HRW, *Ifex Alert: 45 Writers from 16 Countries Receive Hellman/Hammett Grants* (7 July 1997)].

ARGENTINA

In July 1996, eleven young people were arrested in Buenos Aires and allegedly beaten in a police station. Some were held incommunicado for 17 hours and interrogated about their attendance at a public meeting organised by *Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia contra el Olvido y el Silencio* (*Children for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence*), a group formed by children of the 'disappeared'.

[AI Report 1997 (London 1997) 75.]

AUSTRALIA

In a speech on 23 September 1996, the prime minister, John Howard, said that his government would lift 'the pall of censorship' created by the previous government's adherence to 'political correctness'. Shortly after this speech the British revisionist historian David Irving (see NCH #5 under USA) announced that he would apply for a visa to enter the country. David Irving has been denied entry since 1992, because of his denial of the Holocaust. On 8 November 1996, Federal Government decided to deny entry to him, as he failed to meet the good character requirement under the Immigration Act.

[Source: IOC 6/96: 167, 1/97: 104.]

At the end of October 1996, Federal Parliament decided to ban photographs of the 1991 Dili massacre in East Timor from an exhibition about the island to be held at Parliament House because they were 'offensive'.

[Source: IOC 1/97: 103.]

AZERBAIJAN

On 18 February 1995, a historian, Movsum Aliyev, was released (see NCH #2).

[Source: AI Country Report, *Azerbaijan: Allegations of Ill-Treatment in Detention* (document EUR 55/01/96; London 1996: 4).]

BELARUS

In early 1996, the printing of the third volume of the official *Encyclopedia of Belarussian History* was brought to a halt, reportedly to be purged of all material which represented a 'negative' attitude to the USSR and Tsarist rule. Belarussian historians were considering a boycott of all future volumes of the *Encyclopedia*.

[Source: IOC 3/96: 102.]

During a march on 26 April 1996 commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, more than 200 of the close to 50,000 marchers were arrested and, after summary trials usually held inside their prison cells, given administrative sentences of three to fifteen days. Many demonstrators and passers-by were beaten, and two members of the opposition Belarussian Popular Front, which had sponsored the march, were arrested and charged with organising a mass disturbance.

[Sources: IOC 4/96: 93; HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 202.]

On 7 May 1997, President Lukashenka reportedly criticised the institutes of history and economics for destabilising the country.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 105.]

In 1997, Belarus's official independence day was moved from 27 to 3 July by President Lukashenka to coincide with the Soviet expulsion of the Germans during World War II. Demonstrators celebrating independence on 27 July were detained.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 165.]

BULGARIA

On 30 July 1997, Parliament approved a bill permitting secret police files to be opened. The new law meant the exposure to public scrutiny of all those who may once have collaborated with the Communist intelligence services. On 8 August 1997, opposition parties appealed to the Constitutional Court to

block the law, saying it would jeopardise the normal functioning of the state.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 166.]

CHINA/TIBET/HONG KONG

See GENERAL: Su Xiaokang, Wang Dan, Zhang Xianliang.

On 25 October 1996, Ngawang Tharchin, a monk, was administratively sentenced to three years' 're-education through labour', because he had interrupted a lecture by a well-known Tibetan historian (name unknown) during a re-education campaign at the Drepung monastery, near Lhasa, and contradicted the claim that Tibet had been an integral part of China since the thirteenth century.

[Sources: IOC 5/96: 104-105, 1/97: 69, 124; HRW, *Ifex Action Alert*, 15 January 1997: 3; *AI Report 1997* (London 1997) 119.]

It was reported that *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* (New York 1991), a bestselling memoir written against the background of Chinese history (1909-1978) by Jung Chang (b. 1952), is currently banned.

[Source: IOC 1/97: 76.]

Under the new regulations governing control of society and media in Hong Kong, revealed by China in October 1996, anti-China activities such as the annual Tiananmen massacre demonstrations were prohibited, and institutions were forbidden to organise events advocating 'two Chinas'. Restrictions imposed on the media included a ban on references to 'Taiwan's independence' or 'self-determination for Hong Kong'.

[Source: IOC 1/97: 114.]

On 10 March 1997, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen suggested that Hong Kong schoolbooks that 'do not accord with history or reality' and 'contradict the spirit of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law' should be revised after 1 July 1997.

[Source: IOC 3/97: 121.]

On 20 May 1997, Hong Kong's Urban Council rejected the request of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Democratic Movement in China to display a statue commemorating the 4 June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in a local park from June to September. In early June 1997, posters commemorating the massacre were banned from a Kowloon technical institute. On 14 June 1997, Tung

Chee-wa, Hong Kong's new chief executive, said that protest rallies similar to the annual 4 June demonstration would still be tolerated, but had to be more subdued.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 7, 114.]

On 11 July 1997, a guidebook on seventeenth-century Tibetan history was officially banned at the start of a new literature campaign.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 185.]

COLOMBIA

On 24 June 1997, files and archives of the Association of Relatives of the Detained and Disappeared in Medellín were destroyed in a bomb attack, just as key cases, in which members of the armed forces and paramilitary organisations were implicated, reached the courts.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 168.]

CROATIA

On 26 September 1996, Victor Ivancic, chief editor of the satirical weekly *Feral Tribune*, and commentator Marinko Culic (see NCH #5) were acquitted, but, on 10 October, the state prosecutor appealed against the acquittals.

[Source: IOC 6/96: 172.]

On 7 December 1996, the historian Ivo Banac (b. 1947), a former professor of history and Master of Pierson College at Yale University, a corresponding member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and a member of the human rights organisation Croatian Helsinki Committee, was reportedly labeled an 'internal enemy' by President and historian Franjo Tudjman. In the autumn of 1993 he wrote an open letter to Tudjman in the journal *Erasmus*, together with five other Croatian intellectuals, including the historian Krsto Cviic, an editor for the BBC World Service (1964-69), a journalist for *The Economist* (1969-90) and an editor of the periodical *The World Today* (1984-). In the letter, Tudjman was criticised for his policies and asked to resign.

[Source: HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 213.]

CUBA

In August 1996, the Cuban government refused to renew the visa of Robin Diane Meyers, the United States Interests Section human rights officer, complaining, *inter alia*, that she had distributed 'anti-government literature', including writings about José Martí. Martí, the independence leader, could reportedly not be criticised either in Cuba or among Miami exiles.

[Sources: HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 95; International PEN Writers in Prison Committee, "*Dangerous Writers*": *Freedom of Expression in Cuba* (London 1997) 16.]

CZECH REPUBLIC

On 1 June 1997, new regulations came into force allowing Czech citizens to examine any files kept on them by the *StB*, the former secret police. Names of any third parties mentioned in the files will be deleted before the documents are released.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 110, 112.]

EGYPT

In the beginning of April 1996, thirteen members of the Muslim Brothers, including dr Gamal 'Abd al-Hadi, a lecturer in Islamic history at the University of al-Azhar, were arrested, tried by a military court in June and charged with membership of an illegal organisation (the Muslim Brothers) which 'aims to overthrow the regime'. Eight of them were sentenced to three years' imprisonment, but dr Gamal 'Abd al-Hadi was acquitted.

[Source: *AI News Release* (document MDE/12/96; London, 20 August 1996).]

In March 1993, Nasr Hamid Abu-Zeid (b. 1943), a professor of Arabic Literature at the University of Cairo, was denied a promotion to full professor after a member of the review committee, Abd el-Sabour Shahin, called his writings an insult to Islam. Despite protests of the department professors, this minority report was endorsed by the university. In a mosque on 2 April 1993, he publicly accused Abu-Zeid of apostasy. In May 1993, seven Islamist lawyers accused Abu-Zeid of apostasy under the *Hisbah* rule (Islamic personal status law allowing Muslims to file suits against those alleged to have violated religious law) because he had called for an historical interpretation and recontextualisation of the Koran in his writings, in particular in *Naqd Al-Khitab Al-Diny* (1992, 1996, *Criticism of Islamic Discourse*), a semantic study of Islamic texts (in which he also repeated a 1988 attack against Islamic investment companies on behalf of one of which Shahin had acted as a religious adviser before its collapse). On 27

January 1994, the Giza Family Court ruled the case inadmissible, but, on 14 June 1995, the Cairo Court of Appeals overturned the decision, declared Abu-Zeid an apostate, and ordered the divorce from his wife. On 5 August 1996, this was confirmed by the Court of Cassation. After the 1995 verdict, the militant Islamist group *Al Jihad* issued a death threat against Abu-Zeid, and, in September 1995, he and his wife subsequently went into exile in Spain, and then the Netherlands to teach at Leiden University. On 25 September 1996, the Giza Court of Urgent Cases suspended implementation of the divorce order (this was confirmed in December 1996).

[Sources: Letter from HRW Committee for International Academic Freedom to the President of Cairo University, 1 July 1993; Writers in Prison Committee, International PEN, *Ifex Action Alert*, 20 June 1995 and 6 August 1996; *AI Report 1996* (London 1996) 143, *1997* (London 1997) 143; HRW, *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 267, 279, 353; IOC 7/93: 33, 36, 4/96: 30-39 (written by Nasr Hamid Abu-Zeid), 43, 157; 5/96: 88; *Article 19 Bulletin*, October/November 1996: 6.]

FRANCE

The 17 October 1996 issue of the Algerian daily *Liberté* was seized by the French police. No official reason was given, but the seizure was thought to be associated with an article, entitled ‘When the Seine Rolled With Corpses’, commemorating the 35th anniversary of a demonstration by Algerians in Paris, and indicating that there may have been as many as 200 deaths instead of the official three deaths and 64 injured.

[Source: IOC 1/97: 113.]

GERMANY

Simon Wiesenthal criticised plans to close the Central Agency, Ludwigsburg, Germany’s main institution for investigating crimes committed under the Nazi regime. Some of Germany’s states wanted the storage of hundreds of thousands of files and 1.5 million index cards moved to the federal archives as a cost-cutting measure. The Agency’s director, Willi Dressen, expressed concern that many of the files it held would fall apart, and endanger the task of reminding younger Germans about the Third Reich.

[Source: IOC 1/97: 113.]

On 17 August 1997, the Federal Constitutional Court upheld a ban on a rally commemorating the death of Rudolf Hess.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 170.]

GUATEMALA

In early September 1996, former military commissioners threatened with mass killings on 15 September, the day that a group of widows planned to commemorate the massacres of their husbands by the army and civil patrols in the Rabinal area in the early 1980s.

[Source: HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 102.]

In [October 1996], several students from the School of Anthropology and History Association were threatened and intimidated.

[Source: IOC 1/97: 113.]

In 1997, it was reported that government officials obstructed efforts to exhume the bodies of victims of human rights violations buried in mass graves. Those conducting exhumations were also subjected to death threats and intimidation. In no case had exhumations led to the trial of those responsible for authorising, planning or carrying out the killings.

[Source: AI *Report 1997* (London 1997) 165; also see NCH #5.]

GUYANA

In June 1996, Gregory Smith, a former soldier in the Guyana Defence Force living in French Guiana was charged with the 1980 murder of historian Walter Rodney.

On 15 October 1968 Walter Rodney (1942-1980), a Guyanese Marxist history lecturer at the University of the West Indies in Kingston since January 1968, was refused re-entry in Jamaica, after having attended a Black Writers' Conference in Montreal, and was sent back to Canada. As a history lecturer he had organised many off-campus lectures for nonacademic audiences, including Rastafarians and the urban poor, in which he had discussed African history and the concept of Black Power. This was considered a security threat to the government, and after the vice-chancellor refused to terminate his contract, he was served with a banning order. In the wake of the ensuing student protests, serious rioting (known as The Rodney Riots) took place on 16 and 17 October 1968. The university was kept under a state of siege for over a week. In an emergency debate in the House of Representatives, broadcast live throughout Jamaica on radio and television, Prime Minister Hugh Shearer accused Rodney of Communist views. He returned to University College, Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), where he had already

been teaching from July 1966 to January 1968, and worked there until 1974. In 1974, he returned to Guyana because he was offered a history professorship by the Senate of the University of Guyana. However, the appointment was withdrawn by the Board of Governors as a result of political intervention by the government of President Forbes Burnham. At the same time, he and his wife were blocked from all employment. It was assumed that he had been denied the right to work because of his reputation as an activist. In 1975, he became a founder and leader of the left-wing opposition party Working People's Alliance (WPA) in Guyana, with a revolutionary and multiracial programme. On 11 July 1979, several WPA leaders, including Rodney, were arrested by the security forces and charged with arson and possession of arms. The day before an anti-government demonstration had taken place and, during the night, an explosion and fire had destroyed several government buildings and the headquarters of the ruling party. The trial was adjourned three times for lack of evidence and Rodney was released on bail. In April 1980, the authorities tried to prevent his presence at the Zimbabwe independence celebrations. On 13 June 1980 he was killed by a bomb concealed in a walkie-talkie in his brother's car in Georgetown. His brother Donald survived but was implicated in his death by the government. It was generally believed that the government itself was involved in the death. On 7 January 1981, the government terminated the state press agency's contract with a Barbados-based firm because its reporting of Rodney's death was deemed unsatisfactory. In the same year his book, *A History of the Guyanese Working People 1881-1905*, published posthumously, was banned. Four academics faced disciplinary charges as a result of remarks in their reports for the 1979-80 academic year in which they referred to Rodney's death. In October 1987, an inquest into his death was ordered by the government. In February 1988, the final verdict of the inquest was 'death by accident or misadventure'.

[Sources: 'Guyana: Suspicious Death of Leading Opposition Intellectual', *IOC Briefing Paper*, 26 June 1980; IOC 6/79: 66, 5/80: 32, 3/81: 75, 4/81: 46, 6/81: 26-30, 6/85: 52-54, 5/88: 127; *AI Report 1980*: 145, *1981*: 156, *1982*: 144, *1988*: 117, *1989*: 128, *1997*: 169.

HAITI

In October 1994, the US Government transferred 160,000 documents seized from Haitian army headquarters and from the offices of the paramilitary organisation *Front Pour l'Avancement et le Progrès d'Haiti* (FRAPH) to its embassy, reportedly after having removed the names of US nationals. They were believed to contain information relating to human rights violations committed by both the military and FRAPH under the military government, including the possible collusion of the US government in such activities. The US authorities agreed to hand over the documents to the Haitian Government on condition that the safety of any Haitian nationals mentioned in the documents was ensured. However, the Haitian Government refused to accept the documents unless they were returned

in their original form.

[Source: *AI Report 1997* (London 1997) 171-72.]

HONG KONG

See CHINA

HUNGARY

In early September 1996, Budapest's 137-year-old Great Synagogue, destroyed during World War II, was reopened.

[Source: IOC 6/96: 175.]

On 18 April 1997, the data protection commissioner said that documents relating to a Hungarian-Slovak dam dispute were not classified and that, therefore, the Foreign Ministry had acted illegally when it had denied access to the documents for thirty years.

[Source: IOC 3/97: 121.]

On 18 June 1997, the Municipal Court of Budapest banned *Mein Kampf* under the provisions of the press law. In November 1996, the prosecutor-general's office had suspended publication of the book and advised the courts to ban it.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 171.]

On 13 August 1997, it was announced that state security files would be opened from 1 September 1997 to researchers and Hungarian citizens who believed that they were under surveillance by the state during the Communist era. It was estimated that the security services had files on 160,000 people.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 171.]

INDIA

On 15 August 1997, Independence Day, the film *Train to Pakistan*, by Pamela Rook, was denied broadcasting permission, shortly before its scheduled showing. The story, based on a novel by Khushwant Singh, concerns communal tension in a Punjabi village during India's 1947 partition. The

Central Board of Film Certification asked the director to remove the word 'Muslim' (recurring throughout the screenplay) and all indirect references to Mahatma Gandhi.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 171.]

IRAN

In 1995, at least ten followers of the sociologist and historian 'Alî Sharî'atî (1933-1977), once called 'the Ideologue of the Iranian Revolution', were still serving long prison terms after unfair trials [see NCH #5].

[Source: *AI Report 1997* (London 1997) 185.]

JAPAN

In a 31 January 1997 article, the newspaper *Yomiuri-Shinbun* accused the Kanagawa Human Rights Centre of 'oppressing freedom of speech', because it had criticised local politicians' distorted statements on Korean comfort women and the Japanese colonisation of Korea, and it had protested against the invitation of one of them to address a local business community meeting.

[Source: IOC 2/97: 9.]

In early May 1997, it was reported that an elementary school history textbook was banned in the Miyagi prefecture, because of its presentation of the 1937 Nanking massacre and the Sino-Japanese war.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 116.]

KAZAKSTAN

Karasaev Khusein, who writes about the epic storytellers of Kazakstan, was imprisoned as a member of the Social Turan Party, a party which was reported not to exist.

[Source: *HRW World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 365.]

MEXICO

On 2 May 1996, Javier Elorriaga Berdegué, a historian and journalist who made video reports of the

1994 rebellion of the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN), was sentenced to thirteen years' imprisonment on the charge of terrorist activities because of his alleged EZLN membership. He was held in the Cerro Hueco prison in Tuxtla Gutierrez. The trial was widely believed to be unfair. On 6 June 1996, he was acquitted on appeal.

[Source: HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 111.]

MYANMAR (BURMA)

On 27 January 1996, six members of the opposition political party *National League for Democracy* were arrested for having written a poem to commemorate the 1991 death in detention of their colleague U Tin Maung Win.

[Source: HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 138.]

NEW ZEALAND

In late February 1997, *Salo - 120 Days of Sodom*, a film by Pier Paolo Pasolini about the wartime Fascist Republic of Salo in North Italy, and banned for more than twenty years, was seized at the Wellington customs.

[Source: IOC 3/97: 127-28.]

POLAND

In the spring of 1997, US publishers *Doubleday* claimed that the Polish version of a papal biography, *His Holiness*, by journalists Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, was doctored by its Polish partners, Amber Publishing, to avoid giving offence to Roman Catholics in Poland as well as to the (Polish) Pope. Controversial references to Polish history, particularly passages referring to the Auschwitz concentration camp, were reportedly removed.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 11.]

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

On 19 September 1996, the commission responsible for declassifying documents of the Central

Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union permitted the release of information about, *inter alia*, the origin of the Strategic Missile Troops, political censorship in the USSR, and the history of the Communist International.

[Source: IOC 6/96: 184.]

In early December 1996, it was announced that the Academy of Sciences and the Centre for Gender Studies were seeking damages for the publication in the Moscow edition of *Playboy* of provocative portraits of famous women from Russian history, such as Catherine the Great, 17th-century religious dissident Feodosiva Morozova and 19th-century mathematician Sofia Korvalevskaya.

[Source: IOC 2/97: 95.]

SLOVAKIA

On 2 July 1997, the government announced that it would withdraw a controversial history textbook, *The History of Slovakia and the Slovaks*, by Catholic priest Milan Durica, following an outcry from, *inter alia*, Slovak historians, that it denied the persecution of Slovak Jews during World War II (less than 10,000 of 70,000 Jews survived). The textbook was written and published with funding from the European Union (EU), but its treatment of the wartime Fascist Slovak state persuaded EU external relations commissioner Hans van den Broek to press the government to ban it. Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar conceded that parts of the book were historically inaccurate, but initially he refused to ban it from the bookstores. Deputies from the ultra-right Slovak National Party, a partner in the governing coalition, condemned the EU's 'censorship order'.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 181.]

SOUTH AFRICA

See GENERAL: Gertrude Fester.

SPAIN

On 14 February 1996, Francisco Tomás y Valiente ([1933]-1996), former judge and president of the Constitutional Court (1986-92) and professor of legal history at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (1992-96), was murdered by an alleged member of the Basque separatist movement ETA.

[Source: *AI Report 1997* (London 1997) 290.]

In late March 1997, the Supreme Court ruled that secret military intelligence documents detailing the operation of covert government actions against the Basque separatist movement ETA (1983-87), when 28 suspected militants died, should be declassified.

[Source: IOC 3/97: 132.]

SWITZERLAND

In December 1996, amidst a large-scale controversy on dormant accounts of Holocaust victims, Christoph Meili, a night watchman of the *Union Bank of Switzerland* (UBS), discovered in its shredder room documents related to property sold by Jews in Germany under the Nazis. In April 1997, he went into exile with his wife and children in the United States, because he said he felt their lives were in danger. They were given permanent resident status there.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 126.]

On 23 July 1997, the Swiss Bankers Association released a list of dormant bank accounts dating back to World War II, in an attempt to trace the survivors of the Holocaust or their families. In response to an international outcry that banks had been blocking claims on these accounts, the Swiss government had lifted the secrecy laws, forcing the banks to allow their files to be searched.

[Source: IOC 5/97: 185.]

TURKEY

See GENERAL: Aysenur Zarakolu, Ahmet Altan.

On 22 August 1996, a trial against writer and Human Rights Association Deputy Secretary Erol Anar began. He was the author of *Insan Haklar Tarihi* (*The History of Human Rights*) and was charged with 'separatist propaganda' under the Anti-Terror Law for a four-page chapter in the book entitled *Kurt Sorunu* (*The Kurdish Question*), which discussed state relations with Turkey's Kurds in both the Ottoman and Republican periods.

[Source: HRW, *Ifex Action Alert*, 23 August 1996; HRW *World Report 1997* (New York 1996) 244-245.]

On 17 February 1997, the centre-left daily *Radikal* was seized because it reprinted an article from the French weekly *Figaro Magazine*, entitled ‘Turkey: Army Against the Islamists’ and written by Islamist intellectual Abdurrahman Dilipak. The article described Kemal Ataturk, Turkey’s first president, as an ‘authoritarian military ruler’.

[Source: IOC 2/97: 100.]

UNITED STATES

In 1997, George C. Herring, a historian at the University of Kentucky and a former member of the official CIA Historical Review Panel (1990-96), accused the CIA of not releasing records on its covert operations (including the 1953 Iranian coup, the 1954 Guatemalan coup, the 1961 invasion of Cuba), despite the policy of openness promised in 1984. CIA officials replied to this accusation that various files on the operations in the 1950s had been destroyed in the early 1960s, among others nearly 100 percent of the files on the Iranian coup. At the same time, they released 1,400 pages of documents on the Guatemalan coup (less than one percent of the CIA files on the incident). In August 1996, George Herring and two other historians were removed from the panel, possibly because of their criticism of the low levels of declassification of CIA materials.

[Source: IOC 4/97: 15.]

VIETNAM

See GENERAL: Nguyen Dinh Huy.