

### **CASSIDY ATTACKS PINOCHET (*The Independent, Oct, 1998*)**

Dr Sheila Cassidy, now 61, was speaking at Derriford hospital, Plymouth, where she works with cancer patients.

"I would certainly be prepared to give evidence. I have already given evidence to tribunals in Helsinki and at the United Nations, so it would be no problem."

Dr Cassidy, who was 38 when she was seized by Pinochet's men while working at a hospital in the Chilean capital, Santiago, said it was important that he was brought to justice. "I think it is particularly important for the families of those who have died, and who have been tortured.

"I think there are a lot of unhappy people who think to let Pinochet go would be monstrous - and they are the people for whom it matters. I think imprisonment for the rest of his life would be appropriate," she said. "I know he is an old man and he is fragile. But then so were the pregnant women who were raped and tortured."

"Dictatorships pay no attention to age or femininity or fragility. I think Pinochet should be humanely detained for the rest of his life,"

Dr Cassidy was held in Chile after treating a man who was on the run from Pinochet, but someone betrayed her. She was stripped naked, tied to a metal bunk frame, given repeated electric-shock torture and held in solitary confinement for three weeks. She was later released as a result of protests from the British government.

### **US POLICE UNDER FIRE (*HRW - Shielded from Justice, June, 1998*)**

A recent Human Rights Watch report, examining policing in 14 of America's biggest cities, contains some shocking statistics. Following 11,000 civil rights complaints against the police last year, only 29 police officers were punished. Crime in New York has halved since 1993, but complaints about police abuse are up by 50%. In one case, a suspect was choked to death when arrested by a police officer in 1994. The officer was cleared of manslaughter, but the case exposed the police to widespread criticism.

### **FRANCE GUILTY OF TORTURE (*New York Times, July, 1999*)**

France has been found guilty of torture by the European Court of Human Rights - the first European Union country to be condemned on such grounds. The Strasbourg court described the treatment of drug dealer Ahmed Selmouni at the hands of five police officers as being 'of a particularly cruel and serious nature' making it 'torture' under the European Convention on Human Rights. The court, established in 1959, found that Selmouni, 57, had suffered "repeated and sustained assaults" by the police in an effort to obtain more information about his suppliers in November 1991. France thus joined Turkey as the only two of the 41 member countries of the Council of Europe to be found guilty of torture by a court sitting on French territory in Strasbourg, an embarrassment that Justice Minister Elisabeth Guigou suffered in silence when asked for reaction by journalists.