

air

amnesty international review



**A Quarterly Review
of news and comment
on international
human rights**

**Number 30
February 1970
One shilling**

From a Released Prisoner

Dear Friends,

It is with great satisfaction that I write to give you some very good news.

I have just come out of prison. Yes, friends, finally after being deprived of my freedom and having been far from my family, I have been given conditional freedom. It is still not total freedom, as I must abstain for five years from political activities. It does permit me, however, to go back to my dear ones and start working again to earn my own living and help my parents as far as possible. I will thank you, my dear friends, for all the material help you gave me and my family during these years. This helped us to pass these years of hardship.

I must also thank you for the great contribution you made towards my freedom, because in my opinion, which I know is also the opinion of the Portuguese political prisoners, my home-coming—as well as that of a few more friends who have also now been released, is mostly due to the efforts and the pleadings made by our friends of Amnesty International as well as by our families. Also the work of the Portuguese Democratic forces was of great importance. They made and still make innumerable efforts in order to have a large amnesty declared for all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. I tell you this to warn you against an idea that one could get, that these releases are due to a liberalisation of the regime in my country and that therefore efforts for amnesty should no longer be necessary. It would be a mistake to have this idea because, as long as all the political prisoners are not free, as long as the security measures which allow people to be kept in jail after having completed their sentences are not abolished, the work for their abolition cannot stop and the movement for amnesty cannot stop. Therefore I pray you, my friends, that you do not stop sending petitions for the freedom of all the political prisoners.

For my part, I will once more thank you and I thank the whole of Amnesty International. It was for me a great joy and it contributed quite a lot to help me stand with courage the hardships of imprisonment to know that in spite of all I was not

alone and that friendly hands reached over frontiers to give me their solidarity.

It is really moving to know that in this world we have friends who do not forget us and this strengthens our hope for a better world in which we will all be truly brothers and in which there will be true freedom.

Finally I want to thank you on behalf of my parents and the rest of my family, who all send you their greetings.

I send to you a friendly "abracó" from your friend, who is always at your disposal.

Israel

DURING the past few months there has been some public discussion over the activities of Amnesty International in connection with Israel.

The chronology of events is as follows:

December 1968: Sir Osmond Williams attended a Human Rights Conference in Lebanon and visited Jordan taking statements from individuals who claimed to have been mistreated by Israeli authorities before being deported or escaping.

February 1969: Returning from a visit to Africa, the Secretary General of Amnesty International met Sir Osmond Williams in Israel, where they were invited to visit a few prisons. They found conditions in civilian prisons satisfactory, although this did not affect allegations of ill-treatment and torture of prisoners in detention centres or police stations and during interrogation before trial. The Secretary General consequently wrote to the Commissioner of Prisons stating that he was favourably impressed by what he saw in Israel.

February-September 1969: A report was compiled at Amnesty Headquarters including detailed cases of ill-treatment and torture of Arab prisoners. The cases cited were well substantiated and documented by photographs and medical reports, but not—without further inquiry—capable of proof. In April Amnesty sent its report to the Israeli Government, requesting a formal inquiry into the allegations: a suggestion which the Israeli authorities did not take up. Nor did they ask for the evidence to be submitted. In September Amnesty International was invited to give evidence before the Expert Group of the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

5th September 1969: The Secretary General wrote to the Consul General at the Embassy of Israel, stating: "As an organisation with a consultative status with the United Nations, it will be difficult for us to decline to give evidence before a United Nations body if we have information which is relevant to the subject of their inquiry. We were naturally disappointed in the apparently negative response of the Israeli Government to the recommendations in the report. As you know, we have not sought to give publicity to our report as we hoped that the Israeli Government would itself wish to examine the information . . ."

October: In October, during a visit of the Secretary General to New York, there were discussions with the Israeli delegation to the United Nations and on 6th October the Secretary General wrote to the Israeli Ambassador to the U.N. This letter pointed out that it was not after all possible for Amnesty to give oral evidence to the United Nations because of the timetable of the Expert Group and set out another proposal to the effect that Amnesty should send a further, more formal, mission to Israel. The team of inquiry would include a reputable Israeli jurist, and it was understood that this proposal—if acceptable to the International Executive Committee of Amnesty International—would probably be acceptable also to the Israeli authorities.

31st October: The Times newspaper (London) printed a letter from the Israeli Embassy which quoted from a letter written by the Secretary General of Amnesty International to the Israeli Commissioner of Prisons. The Secretary General was quoted as congratulating the Commissioner on the "exemplary fashion in which the prisons are organised". The quotation, however, was from a brief "thank you" letter to the Commissioner and its substance in no way related to the allegations awaiting inquiry.

November 18th: A letter was received from the Israeli Embassy in London stating that there was no confirmation that the proposed Amnesty Inquiry would be per-

mitted by the Israeli Government.

November 29th/30th: The Executive Committee of Amnesty International, meeting in London, discussed the situation and decided to issue a press statement.

December 1st: A press statement was issued by Amnesty stating: "The International Executive Committee of Amnesty International has now reviewed the situation regarding the Amnesty report on the treatment of Arab prisoners by the Israeli authorities. Its Inquiry carried out earlier this year revealed serious and substantiated evidence of ill-treatment of prisoners in detention or under interrogation, and the Committee considers that the reply from the Israeli authorities to the report submitted in April leaves many questions unanswered. The International Executive Committee has also studied the exchange of correspondence between the Secretary General of Amnesty International and the Israeli authorities with regard to pursuing further inquiries in Israel. It has been decided to send representatives to the Middle East to obtain further information and evidence to bring the report up to date; and the Committee has instructed its Secretary General to report to it again in January 1970."

December 8th: A press statement was issued from the Israeli Foreign Ministry attacking the Amnesty report and accusing Amnesty of being influenced by Arab propaganda. It dismissed the Amnesty report as not containing "the bare minimum of data which would permit investigation". It also said that, earlier, Amnesty had expressed general satisfaction with the conditions for the detention of Arab prisoners. Following this press statement, the Secretary General was interviewed on television and radio, and in the press, and explained how the publication of his letter to the Commissioner of Prisons had given rise to misunderstandings. He reiterated that the letter referred only to prisons where prisoners were detained after trial and not to police stations and detention centres or to interrogation, for which the Commissioner of Prisons is not responsible.

January 1970: A further Amnesty Mission left for the Middle East consisting of Sir Osmond Williams, Mr. Arne Haaland (member of the International Executive Committee and Norwegian Section), and Mr. Richie Ryan, an Irish lawyer, a member of the Dail and a member of the Irish section.

The International Executive Committee has called for a report for publication at an early date in 1970.

We hope that the above outline answers the questions that have been raised. Among other points, we have been asked repeatedly why Amnesty did not publish its report in the beginning and why, if there was no published report, did we raise the issue publicly. As seen from the above, it was not Amnesty but the Israeli authorities who made the matter public. On the question of publishing the report, it is perhaps necessary to explain that Amnesty has made it a policy not to publish automatically the findings of its missions. Amnesty International is principally concerned with the interests of the prisoners themselves, and there are numerous unpublished mission reports.

South Africa

GROUPS with adopted African prisoners in South Africa may like to know the daily diet with which these prisoners are supplied. Amnesty has had this diet analysed by a professional dietician and we give, below, her comments as well as the diet scale.

Prisoners in South Africa get different food according to their race: white prisoners get, milk, jam and twice as much meat as do Africans: Indians get a substitute for rice, called "mealie-rice". Urbanised Africans—like Nelson Mandela—who have eaten bread all their lives, get no bread but are given mealie pap because this is supposed to be the staple diet of Africans. African hard-labour prisoners employed on rock-breaking get less meat than white female prisoners employed in sewing.

Discrimination in diet on a racial basis is contrary to the Standard Minimum Rules for the treatment of prisoners, although the South African Government states publicly that it adheres to the principles of these rules.

The diet scales are approved by the Department of Health in South Africa, but prisoners complain bitterly about the food when given an opportunity.

The daily diet for African prisoners on Robben Island is:

Mealiemeal	...	...	...	...	12	ounces
Maize—samp	...	...	...	...	8	ounces
Sugar	...	...	...	...	1½	ounces
Coffee/tea	...	...	...	...	2	pints
Meat	...	...	...	...	5	ounces
Beans	...	...	...	...	4	ounces
Vegetables	...	...	...	...	8	ounces
Protone sauces	...	...	...	...	4/5	ounces
Puzamandhla	...	...	...	...	1 7/8	ounces

(from IRC Report)

Comments:

Caloric contents—3,139. Recommended allowance for male worker in U.K. is 4,220. The prisoner's allowance should be increased during winter months in view of the climatic conditions of Robben Island.

Carbohydrates—adequate; fat, far too low, especially in winter; vitamin A, Niacin and calcium, low; protein—the prisoners receive half the recommended allowance.

Fresh fruit and fresh milk should be included to give a balanced diet and prevent deficiency diseases.

Recommended reading on South Africa: Objective: Justice, January 1970, Vol. 2, No. 1. Special issue on apartheid. Issued by the United Nations Office of Public Information Sales Section, United Nations, N.Y., Room LX 2332. This issue contains articles on Chief Albert Luthuli, Sharpeville, the banned and the banished, biographical notes on South African prisoners, and illustrations of apartheid in practice.

Missions

Iran: In January 1969 an Amnesty delegate attended the trial by court martial of fourteen civilian intellectuals in Iran. They were charged with forming a communist group, with conspiracy and with subversion. All were convicted and sentences were passed ranging from three to fifteen years. One of the accused, however, was acquitted on appeal.

Despite the nature of the charges, the delegate's report recommended that all be adopted by Amnesty as prisoners of conscience on the grounds that the Prosecution case would not have been acceptable in a normally constituted court of law. In view of allegations of torture and forced confession, and the criticisms of the conduct of the case, the delegate proposed two specific reforms to provide minimal safeguards for prisoners charged with political offences:

1. During the pre-trial period there should be frequent and regular visits to prisoners by civilian magistrates.

2. As already allowed by Article 268 of the Military Penal and Procedural Code, cases heard by courts martial should be reviewed by civilian lawyers through appeal to the Supreme Court.

Both proposals have been the subject of discussion between Amnesty and the Iranian Government in the last year and the Amnesty delegate was well-received in Iran.

Latin America: Mr. Kjell A. Johansson, a Swedish journalist, went to Latin America on behalf of Amnesty in October. He visited Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru and Brazil, and attended the Inter-American Specialised Conference on Human Rights held in Costa Rica. Mr. Johansson spent his time in Latin America making contacts, giving information about Amnesty International and encouraging the establishment of new sections. He spoke on television in Buenos Aires and his trip aroused considerable publicity, particularly in Brazil and Uruguay.

South Korea: Professor Ivan Morris, from the University of Columbia, visited Seoul at the beginning of December to discuss subjects of general interest to Amnesty with the South Korean Government and others concerned with questions of human rights. He held valuable discussions with Government officials and made useful personal contacts.

Earlier Missions: Other missions during 1969—covered in previous editions of AIR—were to Indonesia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Israel, Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. In addition, the Secretary General has travelled extensively throughout Europe making new contacts for the widening of Amnesty's work, and has also visited the United States.

Petitions

THE AUGUST 1969 edition of AIR carried the text of an appeal to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations signed by fifty-two Soviet citizens.

A second letter has since reached Amnesty, the text of which (translated by Michael Bourdeaux) is as follows:—

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

In May of this year we appealed to the Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations Organisation and made known the numerous violations of human rights in the Soviet Union. In the letter, and also in a supplement to it sent later, we discussed how in our country the principles set forth in several articles of the Declaration on Human Rights are being trampled on—above all, we spoke of the persecution of people for their convictions.

We have no information as to how the Commission on Human Rights reacted to our appeal. But in our country this appeal gave rise to repressions against its authors: in June Vladimir Borisov, a Leningrad worker, was forcibly interned in a psychiatric hospital; in July Genrikh Altunyan, a Kharkov engineer, was arrested; in September A. E. Krasnov (Levitin), a well-known religious writer and a former prisoner of Stalin's camps, and the worker, Mustafa Dzhemilev, a Crimean Tartar, were arrested; and Oleg Vorobiev was put in a psychiatric hospital.

Other authors of the letter are being called to the KGB (Committee for State Security) for interrogation concerning our appeal to the UNO; the KGB regard it as a particularly dangerous state crime.

Meanwhile, in various parts of the country repressions are continuing against people of independent opinions.

We ask you to use your great authority as Secretary General of UNO and your personal influence to speak out against the violations of human rights in our country, and also to help arrange for this question to be tabled for discussion by the UN Commission on Human Rights.

The silence of international legal organisations frees the hands of the instigators of further repressions.

We ask you to inform us of the steps you take about this.

This letter was signed by an action group of ten and by 36 supporters. Administrative measures have been taken against a number of them. Natalya Gorbanevskaya is reported to have been arrested on charges of "defaming the Soviet state and social system" and sent to a mental institution for pre-trial examination. Viktor Krasin was served with a five-year exile order by a Moscow court on December 23rd—apparently under the "parasite" laws, according to which anyone without a job can be exiled simply by a court order. Mr. Krasin lost his job at the Moscow Economics Institute in 1969 on account of his support of dissident Soviet citizens. Yuri Maltsev was reported by Le Monde of October 22nd, 1969, to have been detained in a mental institution and Ilya Gabai has been awaiting trial since last May on charges of spreading anti-Soviet lies. His signature on the appeal appeared on the instructions of his wife. In November it was reported that proceedings against Reshat Dzemilev, a Crimean Tartar, had been started on the same charges as those against Ilya Gabai.

UN Information Centres

In September Amnesty expressed concern about the United Nations' decision not to receive petitions through U.N. Information Centres. To ask victimised minorities to use the normal postal and telegraphic communications was clearly one more step in isolating them from the world community and diminishing even further any hope of assistance from outside their own countries.

A statement has now been submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights by the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations, Amnesty International being among the signatories. The statement says that "... after twenty-five years of the functioning of a Charter whose preamble begins with 'We, the People of the United Nations', there remains a broad gap in giving effect to petitions from 'the peoples' ". It points out that prior to 1967 there was no general machinery for the transmission of petitions concerning violations of individual and group rights. In 1967 the Economic and Social Council gave the Human Rights Commission and Sub-Commission authority to examine the thousands of petitions which reach the United Nations each year, but efforts to implement these new powers have been resisted. The statement goes on to say:—

"Precisely because the non-governmental community, representing broad sections of the world population, is so concerned with the need to strengthen the machinery existing in the field of human rights implementation, deep concern was felt when an accustomed channel for the mere transmittal of communications was suddenly blocked. We regret the decision of the Secretariat directing all UN Information Centres to discontinue the receipt and forwarding of communications on human rights to the UN, as published in Note No. 3572 of 28 October, 1969. This simple 'post office' practice had been followed over the years and had become an accepted procedure."

Urging reconsideration of the decision, the statement declares that isolated objections by one or two Governments should not provide the basis for a blanket rule.

Amnesty Notebook

Cuba: At the request of the Committee of Relatives of the 100, Amnesty sent the following telegram on 20th December: "To the Minister of the Exterior, Raul Roa, Havana, Cuba: As this decade ends we would be deeply grateful if as a gesture of humanity you would consider allowing exiled Cubans to visit their relatives imprisoned in Cuba."

Germany: The German Section of Amnesty International has issued a press statement appealing for changes in the law relating to demonstrations in Germany. It stated that there was some uncertainty as to the exact nature of the law regarding the rights of demonstrators and therefore requested the Bundestag: 1, Owing to the present uncertainty in the law, to grant impunity to all people who have been condemned or are being prosecuted in connection with demonstrations; 2, To recognise non-violent demonstrations as a political method similar to a strike, by quick constitutional reform of the law of demonstration.

Prisoner of Conscience Week, 1969: Events during Prisoner of Conscience Week showed that this is now an established and well-supported event throughout the world. Amnesty Sections filled the week with activities, publicity, fund-raising and membership campaigns. In Germany the President's wife, Frau Heinemann, opened an appeal for donations for the families of prisoners.

In Britain there were exhibitions, publicity campaigns and a vigil. The dramatisation of Amnesty's work by the caging of a man beside a lion in Birmingham Zoo, and the story of a wedding of one of Amnesty's adopted prisoners in a Spanish jail, were among events which created wide publicity. Two former prisoners of conscience now released—Nina Karsov and Jean Paul Chabert—travelled across Scandinavia to speak about Amnesty. The Victorian (Australia) Section held an exhibition under the title "In Search of Freedom" and, also in Australia, the New South Wales Section held a week of services, lectures and discussions on human rights. The campaigns across the world were too numerous for full coverage in AIR, and reports continue to come into the International Secretariat of increased membership and boosted funds. Prisoner of Conscience Week was an international event on a scale that shows ever-increasing enthusiasm and activity in the cause of political freedom, and a growing concern for prisoners of conscience and their families.

Prisoner of Conscience Week, 1970: Prisoner of Conscience Week will be held in 1970 between the 14th and 22nd November. The emphasis will be on trade unionists in prison, and research is now being carried out at the International Secretariat into the extent of persecution and repression of trade union activities.

International Council Meeting: The 1970 International Council Meeting will be held in Norway, from 25th to the 27th September. To allow more time for discussion than previously, the opening session will be held on the Friday evening, thus leaving two whole days for the business of the meeting.

Burundi: The following telegram was sent in December from the International Secretariat to President Michael Micombero: "Amnesty International asks your Excellency to exercise clemency towards Barnabe Kanyaruguru, Andre Kabura, Balthazar Ndereraho and 23 other people condemned to death on 17th December. To act in such a generous and humanitarian way could only serve to enrich the reputation of your country in the eyes of world opinion. The putting to death of political adversaries can only create political martyrs who are often more dangerous to the stability of a government than magnanimous treatment."

The Ten Commandments of Security

THE situation in Brazil, inevitably of concern to Amnesty, is a current subject of research. Any article on the subject would necessarily be long and complex. The following "rules", however—issued by the Government "in order to orientate the people better"—summarise events and convey the political atmosphere in ten paragraphs that require no comment.

1. Terrorists play on fear and panic. Only a prepared and courageous people can resist them. When you see an attack on someone in a suspicious attitude, do not be indifferent. Do not pretend that you did not see. Do not connive. Immediately inform the Police or the nearest military barracks. The authorities give you every guarantee, including respect for anonymity.
2. Before you form an opinion, verify several times that it is really yours and not simply the influence of "friends" around you. You can be a misguided fellow-traveller in a war which aims at destroying you, your family and everything you most love in life.
3. Learn to read newspapers, listen to the radio and look at television with a certain suspicion. Learn to pick up indirect messages and hidden intentions in all you see and hear. You will be very amused at the tricks of those who think that they are more intelligent than you and are trying to make a fool of you by playing on words.
4. If you are approached and someone tries to sound you out on matters that seem strange or suspicious, pretend to agree and cultivate the relationship with the person concerned, and inform the Police or the nearest military barracks.
5. Learn to observe and remember a few striking details of persons, vehicles and objects, in the streets, in the bars, cinemas, theatres, halls, buses, shopping and residential areas; in the markets, in the department stores, shops, hairdressers, banks, offices, private houses, railway stations, trains, airports, roads and places where there is a lot of movement or where there are crowds.
6. Do not receive strangers in your house—even if they come from the Police—without first asking them for their identity papers, and observe them until you have memorised a few details; the number of the identity paper, department or office of origin, clothes, personal features, special peculiarities, etc. A document can be false.
7. Never stop a car at the request of strangers, or give lifts. Always drive with the doors of your car locked from inside. When you leave your car at a parking place or petrol station, try to memorise a few details of the people about.
8. There are many crossed lines on the telephone. Whenever you get one, continue to listen and immediately inform the Police or the nearest military barracks. The authorities will give you all the guarantees, including respect for anonymity.
9. When a new resident moves into your house or your block, immediately tell the Police or the nearest military barracks.
10. Our disunity is the greatest strength of our enemy. If we manage to stay aware, cordial, informed, confident and united, nobody will conquer us.

Recent Additions to the Library

Books on this list may be reviewed at a later date.

THE DEMONSTRATION IN PUSHKIN SQUARE

By Pavel Litvinov, translated by Manya Harari

Harvill 30/-

CHRISTIAN APPEALS FROM RUSSIA

Edited by Rosemary Harris and Xenia Howard-Johnston Hodder & Stoughton 6/-

Book Review

MY TESTIMONY

By Anatoly Marchenko, translated by Manya Harari

Pall Mall 45/-

"Oh, where, oh where am I going? Who will I be meeting there?" Thus thought Yuli Daniel on the way to Mordovia. As all the political prisoners had been released a decade before, he would probably, along with perhaps a dozen Jews, be put in with the criminals. "Then in Ruzayevka, I was told about the thousands of political; they certainly know how to pull the wool over our eyes."

With the publication of "My Testimony", written by 31-year-old Anatoly Marchenko, who spent six years from 1960-1966 in the Potma camps, the blindfold has been viciously torn away—at least for those who live in the West. It is apparent, both from this book and from other sources, that political prisoners in the USSR can be counted in tens of thousands, imprisoned under conditions which flagrantly violate Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which proclaims that "No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

Marchenko tells of "re-education" by starvation and hunger. Whereas the diet in the "strict regime" camps for political yields about 2,400 calories per day, that of the "special regime" camps or prisons consists of only 1,300 calories. For the slightest offence the privileges of receiving parcels, of shopping or receiving visits are taken away.

Why do these prisoners not die like flies from disease and starvation? The old hands of Vorkuta and Kolyma—camps famous for their death rate in Stalin's time—give three reasons. Firstly, the work is less arduous; secondly, there are fewer in the camps and, therefore, more free people to give help; thirdly, the illicit smuggling of food.

Marchenko, himself, says: "One thing alone prevented me, one thing alone gave me the strength to live through that nightmare; the hope that I would eventually come out and tell the whole world what I had seen and suffered." This he has done and, as a result, is doomed to suffer again, as the KGB are not well-disposed towards him. He was re-arrested in August, 1968, on a trumped-up charge and sentenced to one year in the camps. This has been subsequently extended for a further two years following another trial in August of this year.

F. K.

Travel smooth with Dawson Brothers Travel Ltd.

Let us look after all your holiday and business travel.

*You will find our service quick,
efficient, and above all smooth.*

Pay us a visit or ring 01-353 4382 and leave the rest to us.

75-79 Farringdon St., London EC4

A Gordon & Gotch company

AIR is published by Amnesty International, Turnagain Lane, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4
(telephone: 01-236 0111/3) and printed by T. B. Russell, Rose and Crown Court, Foster Lane, E.C.2.