

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
POSTCARDS FOR
PRISONERS CAMPAIGN

May 1970

First some news about prisoners who have been on this Campaign:

Henry Fahnbulleh, Liberia, (November 1969). Henry Fahnbulleh was charged with planning an escape from prison which involved a plot to murder the Director of the prison, a charge which carried the death penalty. (See Kit news January 1970). He has still not been brought to trial, no doubt because of the difficulty which would face the authorities in finding evidence for such a charge. Fahnbulleh has been held in solitary confinement for many months, and is not allowed to communicate in any way either with his family or with his lawyer, or with other prisoners. It is difficult to understand why a prisoner attempting escape would plan to murder the Director of the prison, since this is a political appointment in Liberia and the Director is only present in the prison for limited periods.

Peter Patrick Ooko, Kenya, May 1969. After being detained for four years without charge or trial, Ooko was released from prison during April 1969. His health is said to be poor and this may have been one of the reasons for his release. This is a prisoner on whose behalf Amnesty has been particularly active. He was included among the Trade Union prisoners on whose behalf a special campaign was mounted during International Trade Union Year.

Eli de Gortari, Mexico, (March 1970). Money is being sent to him as a result of an appeal to British academics in the field of philosophy.

Eleni Voulgari, Greece, (February 1967). Eleni Voulgari was married in Averoff Prison Church on February 18th to Charalambos Golemas, also a prisoner of conscience. Since the couple met there have been only a few months when both have been free. Charalambos Golemas was in prison when Eleni Voulgari first met him, on a visit to her brother. He was released in August 1966, together with Eleni Voulgari's brother, under a general amnesty for all remaining civil war prisoners held under Law 375. In November, however, Eleni herself was arrested under the same law and did not come under the amnesty because it applied only to those in jail at an earlier date. Since then Charalambos Golemas has been re-arrested, presumably on the grounds of nothing more than his previous record.

This month's prisoners:-

Dr. Caio PRADO JR. - BRAZIL

During the three consecutive military regimes since the coup in 1964 the political climate in Brazil has seriously deteriorated. Every new decree law seems to lessen the safeguards for the individual citizen. There are also continuous allegations of torture of political prisoners under interrogation.

Dr. Caio Prado Junior is Brazil's most outstanding Marxist historian and author of a number of books on the history and economy of Brazil. He was the leader of the Communist group in the State Assembly of Sao Paulo from 1946 to 1948 and has suffered imprisonment several times for being a member of the Communist Party. He is now 63 years old.

His present prison sentence is the result of an interview with Dr. Prado published in 1967 in a student publication of the University of Sao Paulo. Dr. Prado was sentenced to four and a half years for giving this interview and the editors to three years and four and a half years respectively for having published it.

The interview concerned Dr. Prado's latest book "The Brazilian Revolution", published in 1966 and for which he was given the title of "Intellectual of the Year". The charges of inciting to subversion of the political and social order are essentially based on one phrase: when asked about the means for establishing a socialist regime in Brazil, Caio Prado answered: "We should not discuss the methods of the struggle, but start struggling."

At the trial, held on 25th March 1970, the military tribunal considered that Caio Prado expressed personal ideas on marxism as applied to Brazilian reality "which would not be a crime". It also acknowledged that his answer about the struggle might very well not have meant armed struggle but a mere intellectual effort to obtain this purpose. The purpose, however, was the subversion of the prevailing political and social order. Because of his writings Caio Prado Jr. is in an indirect way being held responsible for the present opposition, in parts violent, in Brazil, although it was clearly stated at the trial that studying marxism was not against the law.

Some of Caio Prado's books are required reading at the University and have reached numerous editions. Some titles are: "Historia economica do Brasil," "Evolucao Politica do Brasil," "Notas introdutorias a Logica Dialectica". "Dialectica do Conhecimento", and "Farmacao do Brasil Contemporaneo". The last is available in English translation: "Colonial Background of Modern Brazil" (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press 1967; paperback edition 1969).

Cards pleading for Dr. Prado's release should be sent to:

EITHER

General Garrastazu Medici,
President of Brazil,
Brasilia,
Brazil.

OR

The Brazilian Embassy in your own country.

Rudolf BATTEK - CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Before his arrest on September 25th, 1969, Rudolf Battek was a member of the Czech National Council and Vice-President of KAN (the Club of Independent People - a movement independent of the Communist Party). After the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact countries he was active defending what remained of the democratic order which had been built up in the liberalisation period. The reason for his arrest is reported to be two documents, the first signed by himself and the other signed by him and twelve other liberals. The first document called on the Czech National Council to defend the legal order and to resist any proceedings that violated the Czechoslovak Constitution. The second document contained the same message, but was addressed to state and Communist Party institutions.

Battek has been in Ruzyne prison near Prague since last September and there is still no news of any trial. Under Czech law his detention without trial for such a length of time is illegal. According to our information, he will probably be charged with "subversion" which carries a penalty of between three and five years imprisonment.

Send your cards to ;

EITHER

Lubomir Strougal,
Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak
Socialist Republic,
Predsednictvo Vlady,
Praha - Mala Strana,
Nabrezi kpt. Jarose 4,
Czechoslovakia.

OR

Jan Nemeč,
Minister of Justice,
Praha - Nove Mesto,
Vysehradská 16,
Czechoslovakia.

Ashraf KHAN - SOUTH YEMEN

Mr. Ashraf Khan, a leading criminal lawyer in South Yemen, was arrested on 23rd January 1970. He is detained in prison in Aden and, so far, has not been charged or brought to trial. Many other South Yemenis were detained at the same time. Arrests included large numbers of individuals alleged to be Muslim Brothers (an extremist sect banned in most Arab countries). The Muslim Brotherhood in South Yemen is alleged by the Government to be linked with Saudi Arabia and the United States of America.

Mr. Khan is not a Muslim Brother and has never had any connection with the movement. His arrest followed a court case involving charges of official corruption in which he acted for the defence, after resisting pressure not to do so. He is said to be a rather arrogant man who had made a number of enemies in official circles.

Before Independence, when the country was a British Colony, Mr. Khan, who was a nationalist, was detained several times. He was abroad at the time of the revolution and immediately wrote to the National Liberation Front expressing sympathy with their

aims and offering his services to the new Government.

Ashraf Khan is 35. He obtained his legal training in Britain and is a highly educated and widely travelled man. His wife is German and they have two small sons.

Mr. Khan was originally held in solitary confinement and was well treated in prison and allowed daily visits from his wife. He has recently been moved to a communal cell and as a result the number of visits his family may make has been limited. It was at first thought that he would be released almost immediately, since there was no basis for any political charges against him, but it is now more than three months since he was first arrested and several of those detained at the same time have been released, as well as some who were arrested later.

The children have been allowed to join his wife's relatives in Germany, as the prospects for his release seem less certain, and the situation is causing great anxiety to the family. Seven political prisoners were executed recently.

Send your cards to:

EITHER

President Salem Robaya Ali,
Presidential Palace,
Aden,
Republic of South Yemen.

OR

His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Abdul Gader
Bafaqih,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
Embassy of the Republic of South Yemen,
95 Park Lane, London W.1.

(The South Yemen has very few embassies
abroad).