

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

September, 1965

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

12, Crane Court, London, E.C.4.

The past month has brought great signs of life from our Kit scheme. We can now report that active Kit holders can be located in the Netherlands, Ghana, France, Brazil, England, and, of course, the U.S.A. and Canada.

The cards which you sent to Senor Manuel Fraga Iribarne have in many cases been answered. Fr. Gabicagogeascoa has, as those who have received replies will know, been granted conditional liberty pending his appeal, which, according to Senor Fraga, is not due to be heard for another year or more. This lapse could well provide the Spanish Government with an excellent opportunity to let the whole matter drop, without losing face.

Mrs. Stella Moyo has, to our knowledge, written to one American member, living in Illinois, U.S.A. In this letter she says that because of the lack of funds for postage, she is quite unable to reply to all the kind letters and cards she has received from well-wishers.

This month's prisoners are from Guinea, U.S.S.R. and Mozambique.

May we stress with particular reference to the Russian prisoner, that you should not write aggressive or abusive letters to the authorities, which are only likely to antagonize and add to the poor man's plight. You will be of much more help if you merely state that as members of an international movement which is dedicated to freedom of opinion, both political and religious, you feel it your duty to protest at the imprisonment of M. Starikov; you should add that if he is not to be properly tried, he should be released immediately, but that if a trial is scheduled to take place, that this should be held as speedily as possible and Mr. Starikov be given a fair and just hearing, and an opportunity to defend himself.

Mamadou Moumini Sow, Republic of Guinea.

Sow is about 34 years of age and followed his secondary studies at the College Moderne in Conakry. He has the Baccalaureat in Secondary Education, and subsequently became a house-master and later a lecturer at the Lycee de Conakry. He is a Trade Unionist and was chosen to be the Secretary of one of the sections of the National Union of Guinean Teachers. He protested against the detention of some of his colleagues who had protested against the education system, and he was arrested himself in November, 1961. They were all accused of a 'trade unionist plot'. He has appeared before a tribunal, but as yet has not been tried or sentenced. He is being detained in secret in a concentration camp in Conakry. Since his arrest not even his family have been able to communicate with him. Prison conditions are said to be very bad in Guinea. The real reason for the arrest of the teachers seems to have been that the S.N.E.G. (National Union of Guinean Teachers) tried to circulate a memorandum criticising a decree promulgated by the Government on national education.

Yours cards or letters (in French if possible) should go to:-

Son Excellence Ahmed Sekou Toure,
President de la Republique,
Bureau de la Presidence,
Conakry,
Guinee.

Mr. M. Starikov, U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).

He was arrested together with a man named Martynov and charged with clandestine printing of religious Orthodox prayer books and pious pictures. It is claimed that the printing was done on State machinery and that it was known to officials. The arrests took place in August, 1965, and are probably the result of a drive to stamp out religion as being a hindrance to Marxist-Leninist atheistic teaching.

Your cards should go to:- (In English or Russian)

The Council for Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church,
10, Ostrovsky Street,
MOSCOW,
U.S.S.R.

Luis Bernardo Honwana - Mozambique:

He is a writer and has had a book of short stories published both in Portugal and Mozambique. He is also a journalist and has worked on 'Tribuna' and 'Diario' de Mozambique' which was the progressive paper in Lourenco Marques. He was arrested in December, 1964, while at a meeting in a township. No reasons were given for his arrest. He was also working at a Lourenco Marques Club which was also a political meeting place for students and was called the Centro Associatino dos Negros de Mozambique (CANM). Most of the people who were arrested at the same time as Honwana were also members of the Club. At the time of his arrest he was working, too, for 'Noticias' the newspaper with the largest circulation in Mozambique, as a reporter. He was born in Lourenco Marques on the 12th November, 1942. He has not as yet been tried. Although you do not have a background to Mozambique in your kit, it is a colony of Portugal, and you should approach the Portuguese authorities. It is considered to be a little piece of Portugal overseas and the same secret political police operate there as in the "mother country".

Your cards (In English or Portuguese) should go to:-

Presidente da Republica,
Almirante Americo Tomas,
Palacio Nacional de Belem,
Lisbon,
Portugal.