MISSIONS

Northern Ireland: On 1 November, 1971, the International Executive Committee of Amnesty International informed the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of their decision to set up a small international commission to examine the allegations of ill-treatment of prisoners and internees detained under the Special Powers Act. It asked that this commission, which would also investigate conditions of detention and internment, be granted appropriate facilities. The request was declined by the British Government. The commission nevertheless began its work on 16 December in Belfast where it was based for five days. Members of the commission are Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, Chairman of the Swedish Section of Amnesty; Dr. Herman van Geuns, Chairman of the Dutch Section; and Mr. Gunnar Lind, a Norwegian lawyer and Public Prosecutor.

Portugal: Mr. Jan van Andel, a Dutch lawyer, went to Portugal on behalf of Amnesty to observe the trial of Daniel Cabrita and other trade unionists, scheduled to begin on 7 December. Everything appeared to be proceeding normally: family representatives, officials and two other observers were present at the court half an hour before the time announced for the opening of the trial. It was then announced that the trial was to be postponed until 25 January. The reason given was the illness of one of the lawyers, but the authorities were no doubt aware of the amount of publicity building up, and it is possible that the proceedings have been delayed to detract public attention from the case. Cabrita has been in detention since 30 June when he was arrested after signing a letter addressed to the ILO by a number of Portuguese trade unionists. He was held incommunicado for 80 days and for 22 days was kept without sleep. The postponement of the trial means an even longer period of imprisonment without trial for Cabrita and the four other defendants.

ORGANISATION

International Executive Committee: The next meeting of the International Executive Committee is to be held in London from 4 – 6 February. The draft agenda will be circulated to National Sections.

American Section: Dr. Amelia Augustus, Executive Director of the U.S. Section visited the International Secretariat during December to meet the staff and learn more about the functioning of the London office. She made arrangements for better lines of communication between the U.S. Section and the International Secretariat, met Amnesty members and attended an Amnesty group meeting in Southampton. The trip was especially useful now that the U.S. Section is concentrating on group formation: at present there are 14 groups.

Addresses of National Sections: The following new addresses should be noted for all future correspondence:- Austrian Section - Mrs. Irmgard Hutter, 1180 Wien, Krenngasse 1, Austria; Nigerian Section - c/o Samuel Ade Oyewole, 133 Abeokuta Street, Ebute-Metta, Lagos, Nigeria; Belgian Section - Miss Anne-Marie Rodeyns, 131 avenue General Medecin Derache, 1050 Bruxelles; French Section - Amnesty French Section, 54 Rue de Varenne, 75 Paris 70.

Background Papers: Background papers on Paraguay, Czechoslovakia, and the Ukraine, and situation reports have been sent to National Sections and concerned groups. Papers in preparation include: Greece, Iran, Spain, Northern Ireland, U.S.S.R., Jews in the U.S.S.R. and a report on torture.

Prisoner of Conscience Week, 1971: The International Secretariat is preparing a report on activities during Prisoner of Conscience Week for UNESCO. Would groups and National Sections please send their report, as soon as possible, to the International Secretariat: addressed to "Room 1".
COUNTRIES

Brazil: According to reports, General Emilio Garrastazu Medici, has purged the Air Force and dismissed his Air Marshall in an attempt to stop the torture of political prisoners.

Greece: We have recently had reports that Amnesty-adopted prisoners who were seriously ill had their sentences temporarily suspended on the grounds that continued imprisonment would worsen their condition. In view of this we recommend that groups with prisoners who are ill should apply to the Greek authorities for a suspension of sentence: they should give exact details of the illness. Another factor which may lead to an early release is a clause in the Greek Penal Code which states that a criminal or political prisoner may, after serving two-thirds of his sentence, be granted a remittance of the remainder. This stipulation is also repeated in the Greek "Code of Penal Procedure". A number of prisoners have recently been released under this rule and we suggest that groups with adopted prisoners in Greece who have served two-thirds, or almost two-thirds, of their sentences should write on Amnesty-headed paper to the Greek authorities, drawing their attention to the fact. Such letters should be polite and detailed, giving the place and date of conviction and the length of sentence. A recent report revealed that a Committee of three Appeal Court Judges was investigating the cases of men and women deported to islands and isolated villages in Greece. Following this news the Secretary General of Amnesty International sent a telegram to the Chairman of the Committee pleading for immediate freedom for all deportees. Any group that has a Greek deportee as its adopted prisoner should follow up this telegram with an appeal on behalf of the individual deportee. Letters or telegrams should be addressed to: Mr. Michael Melas, Appeal Court, Athens. Messages should be signed as from an Amnesty International group, giving the country of origin.

Tanzania: Many individual Amnesty members who sent postcards on behalf of the six Zanzibari girls featured in the November Postcard Campaign have received stencilled replies from the Tanzanian authorities. These replies have stated, in effect, that the marriages are an internal affair of Zanzibar and that the government of the United Republic of Tanzania has no competence to interfere in the matter. This is technically true since, within the United Republic of Tanzania, Zanzibar enjoys almost complete internal autonomy. However, the Zanzibari government has, in the past, been unresponsive to Amnesty pressures and this was the reason for our request to the Union government to use its influence to persuade the Zanzibar authorities to release the girls. Individual members should not, as suggested in the stencilled letters, write directly to the Zanzibar authorities at present. Groups with prisoners in Zanzibar should follow the suggestions for further action contained in the circular letter from the International Secretariat dated 15 December, 1971.

U.S.S.R.: Mrs. Larissa Daniel has been released -- eight months earlier than expected -- from her exile in the village of Chuna in Eastern Siberia. An Amnesty "Prisoner of the Year" three years in succession, Mrs. Daniel was sentenced to four years' exile in October 1968 after being charged with "violating public order". The charge related to a demonstration in Red Square, Moscow, against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Yulii Daniel, Mrs. Daniel's husband, was released last year after serving a five-year labour camp sentence for publishing works abroad which allegedly "slandered the Soviet State". He is not yet allowed to return to Moscow, where their son still lives. A relative told Amnesty that Mrs. Daniel was expected in Moscow early in January.

Iran: On 16 December a statement was sent to the Iranian Government, signed by Amnesty International, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the French League for Human Rights, the Catholic Jurists and the International Commission of Jurists. The text read: "The under-signed organisations, which enjoy consultative status with the United Nations, express their concern regarding the fate of more than 150 Iranian citizens arrested at different times, and presently held in police stations. Information received from a variety of reliable sources stating that they have been subjected to maltreatment and torture makes even more pressing the need to transfer the matter to the judicial authorities and guarantee a public trial where the rights of the defence will be respected."

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Some News of Prisoners who have been on this Campaign:-

Eddison Zvobgo - Rhodesia (August 1971). Mr. Zvobgo was released from detention in Salisbury Remand Prison on 21 November 1971. In a letter to Amnesty Group, Germany 14, he stated: "I believe that your recent post-card campaign was very effective... please convey my thanks to everyone who has shared my agony during the last few years."

Henry Fahnbulleh - Liberia (November 1969) was released in December 1971 by a Presidential decree. As mentioned in the December Newsletter, a newspaper had published a plea for his release.

Erhard Weiner - East Germany (August 1970). The family of Erhard Weiner, who was released in June 1971, have been able to follow him to West Germany.

Rudolf Battek - Czechoslovakia (May 1970). It is reported that Rudolf Battek was arrested during the recent election campaign. He was formerly released in October 1970. It is believed that he and the other people now arrested had distributed leaflets explaining the right to abstain from voting.

General George Iordanidis - Greece (December 1970), has been granted a six month remission of his sentence because of ill health.

This month's prisoners:-

Mrs. Salawati Daud - INDONESIA

Mrs. Salwati Daud has been in prison since 1965. She has not been charged or tried but, under present Indonesian official policy, faces permanent administrative detention. Mrs. Salwati, who is 62, was at the time of her imprisonment a member of Parliament representing the Communist Party (PKI) and deputy Chairman of the nation-wide women's organisation, Gerwani. She is a practising Christian.

Mrs. Salwati's imprisonment is determined by the political situation within Indonesia. In October 1965, a pro-communist coup attempt was defeated by the Indonesian army, who then established a military-based administration which, in all essentials, remains in power at the present time under the leadership of President Suharto. The failure of the left-wing coup was followed by a violent and total purge of the radical movement in which at least 300,000 people died and over 200,000 believed communists were arrested. Perhaps 70,000 remain in prison today, of whom fewer than 200 have been tried.

As a member of Parliament and a prominent women's organiser, Mrs. Salawati was regarded as one of the leaders of the communist movement when the purge began in October 1965. She herself had no knowledge of the coup attempt, and in any case would have been deeply opposed to the assumption of political power by violent means. She has had a long and distinguished career first as a teacher, then within the nationalist movement as a leader of the Nationalist Party (PNI). She was elected Mayor of Macassar and held this post for several years in the early 1950's, becoming a leader of Gerwani, the radical organisation which sought to educate and emancipate women. With the PKI, Gerwani was banned in 1966.

Cards appealing for Mrs. Salawati's release should be sent to President Suharto: address -- Sekretariat Negara, Djalan Veteran 17, Djakarta. They should be courteously worded and should stress the favourable impression which would be made outside Indonesia by the release of Mrs. Salawati. Cards can also be sent to Mrs. Salawati herself at: Rumah Pahanan Chusus Wanita, Bukit Duri, Djakarta, Indonesia.

Robert Mugabe - RHODESIA

In July 1963 seven Executive Committee members of the Zimbabwe African People's Union voted no confidence in their leader, Joshua Nkomo. They split away from ZAPU and the following
month formed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), with the Rev. N. Sithole as president. Robert Mugabe was secretary. During November 1963 the offices of both parties were raided and in April 1964 many ZANU officials were arrested and detained. Mr. Mugabe was arrested in September, 1964, following the banning of ZAPU and ZANU in August. Held without charge or trial, he was restricted at Gokwe and then detained at Salisbury Remand Prison, where he now is. Mr. Mugabe has been studying for Ll.B (London) since 1966. He is married to a Ghanian who took a diploma in Education in the U.K. and who has obtained permission to stay in the United Kingdom.

In October 1968 Mr. Mugabe signed a memorandum to the commonwealth Secretariat regarding the 'Tiger' and 'Fearless' talks. The memorandum was drafted and sent out from Salisbury Prison. It stated that ZANU would continue its efforts of 'physical opposition and resistance' to the illegal position sanctioned by Britain through 'ready acquiescence' and maintained that Zimbabwe must be ruled by Africans. During the recent Anglo-Rhodesian negotiations, Mr. Mugabe, as deputy leader of ZANU, was consulted by Sir Alec Douglas-Home, the British Foreign Secretary, and is thought to have adhered firmly to his political principles, at whatever cost to himself and his family.

Please send cards to:- The Minister for Law and Order, the Honourable D. Lardner Burke, Private Bag 704, Causeway, Salisbury, Rhodesia; or the Hon. Ian Douglas Smith, M.P., Prime Minister, P.O.B. 3122, Causeway, Salisbury, Rhodesia.

Simas KUDIRKA - Lithuanian SSR

In November 1970 Simas Kudirka, the radio operator of a Lithuanian fishing-boat, attempted to remain on board an American cutter in USA territorial waters. The captain of the cutter handed him over to the Soviet sailors. Kudirka, who is 43, was arrested, an investigation was carried out by the KGB and a charge brought under Article 62 of the Lithuanian Criminal Code -- "betrayal of the fatherland". He was sentenced to ten years' hard labour in strict-regime camps with confiscation of property.

The trial took place in May in the court-room of the Lithuanian Supreme Court. Simas Kudirka pleaded not guilty. Explaining his reasons for trying to escape to the West he spoke for more than four hours. He told of how he had grown up in a very poor family. In 1940, he said, when Lithuania was joined to the USSR poverty had been supplemented by national oppression. He remembered how people had been taken away to Siberia in 1941, and he knew that it was the most public-spirited Lithuanians who were sent into exile. In 1944 he had again witnessed people being exiled to Siberia and had seen mass murders. Many of his comrades had joined the partisans*. Almost all of them had perished. He had continued to go to school, completed eight classes and decided to become a sailor. He wanted to see the world and thought that at sea he would be able to forget the tragedy of his people. Kudirka spoke of the struggle of the Lithuanian people against assimilation. He told of the ten-year struggle of the "Forest Brethren" -- the post-war partisan movement -- almost all of whom had been killed or had died in concentration camps. Even officials of the KGB confirmed that 50,000 Lithuanian partisans had perished. "Never in the history of the world has a partisan movement survived for so long or cost so many lives". Kudirka has a mother, wife and two children. Please send your cards to:-

EITHER
SSSR,
g. Moskva,
Kreml,
Predsedatelyu Kerkhovnogo
Sovieta SSSR,
N. Podgornomu.
(Chairman of the Supreme Soviet
of the U.S.S.R.)

OR
SSSR,
Litovskaya SSR
g. Vilnyus
Predsedatelyu Verkhovnogo Suda
Litovskoi SSR,
Misiunas I.P.
(Chairman of the Supreme Court of
the Lithuanian SSR)

(It is not clear whether Kudirka is referring to the partisans of the German or the Soviet occupation period. The above is a condensed version of a report in the Chronicle of Current Events, No.20).

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