

News about previous prisoners:

CAPTAIN EDGAR BRECCI, Colombia (February 1966 Newsletter). Several members of the Kit Scheme have received replies from the Colombian Government alleging that Captain Edgar Brecci has been imprisoned because "he failed in the discharge of his duty". He may therefore be guilty of some offence under Military Law; this may not necessarily mean that he is not a "Prisoner of Conscience". We are investigating this case to try and establish the truth of the Colombian Government's statement and will be very interested in any further communications received by Kit Members. The response to the Kit Scheme has been most encouraging. Kit Members have also received letters of thanks from Captain Brecci's wife.

MELANIE BOEK, E. Germany (March 1966 Newsletter). Melanie Boek was released from prison in East Berlin on September 30th and, although an East German citizen, she was given the choice of staying in East Germany or leaving the country. She chose the second course, and we received a letter from her recently from Bavaria where she is taking a holiday. She wrote "Many, many thanks for your efforts in my case, and let me say that I never will forget those people who appeared as true friends in my time of trouble". Melanie's mother, Hilde Boek, was released a few days after Melanie and was also allowed to go to West Berlin.

AECIO MATOS, Brazil (June 1966 Newsletter). A Kit Member has received a letter from Aecio Matos expressing his gratitude for the letter he received. "All the cards and letters I received give me strength to support the lonely days in prison... I am thanking you for your kind words of hope, courage and faith... I hope that soon as the truth appears I can be released". He hopes to resume his studies when his sentence ends.

MOHAMED SHAMTE, Tanzania (January 1966 Newsletter). The Zanzibar authorities published a decree on the 28th October establishing secret political courts from which public prosecutors are banned as well as any counsel for the defence. The secret courts, which are retrospective to May 1st 1966, are empowered to pass the death penalty and only Shaikh Karume, President of Zanzibar, can grant a reprieve. It is believed that this legislation was introduced partly to counteract any intention by Nyerere and the Tanzanian government to release those Zanzibaris still detained on the mainland, such as Shamte.

ANLREI SINYAVSKY, U.S.S.R. (December 1965 Newsletter). Hope for the imprisoned Soviet writer seems to be rising since the news of a strongly-worded protest addressed to the Soviet government and signed by 62 leading Soviet writers. They include Kornel Chukovsky, the 90 year old "grand old man" of Soviet literature and Ilya Ehrenburg, the internationally famous writer, author of "People, Years, Life." The writers pleaded for the release of Sinyavsky and Daniel, another imprisoned writer, and ask to be allowed to stand security for them, believing this would be "an act of both wisdom and humanity". Chukovsky's daughter, Lidia, also a writer, attacked the Soviet novelist and Nobel-prize winner Mikhail Sholokhov for his support of the sentences, saying, "to listen to you, one would think that the condemned men... had sent abroad not works of fiction but the blueprints for a fortress, or a factory at the very least."

It is possible that next month we shall ask Kit Scheme Members to write to an Italian Minister about new legal status for Conscientious Objectors instead of taking up one specific case.

We apologise for the fact that so many background sheets are out of date. We hope to replace them gradually with up-to-date information.

Here are this month's prisoners:

Teresa Asilvera de Patino - Paraguay.

The recent Amnesty report on Prison Conditions in Paraguay (published last August, price 4s.) showed that there are probably 150 political prisoners in Paraguay. They include people like Teresa who are not known to have been involved in any political activities whatsoever, but have been arrested for

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interrogation. Political prisoners in Paraguay are often detained in extremely bad conditions and many cases of torture have been reported.

Teresa Asilvera de Patino's husband and father were arrested, tortured and made to sign a confession after being falsely denounced as Communists; the father is now thought to be held in a prison camp and the husband in solitary confinement in a Police Station. She has been in prison since June 1965 with her baby aged $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. After being tortured and raped she tried to kill herself by cutting her wrists with a razor blade. She was removed for a time to the Police Hospital. (She is now held in Police Station No. 9, Chacarita, Paraguay.)

Send your cards to; Dr. Edgar Ynsfran,
Minister of the Interior,
Ministerio del Interior,
Asuncion.

Any extra correspondence should go to:
Senor Ricardo Brugalla,
Foreign Minister,
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores,
Palacio del Gobierno,
Asuncion.

xxx see below.)

Kon Sook Siong - Malaysia.

Arrested in 1965. As with most other detainees in Malaysia and Singapore alleged to be Communists, in fact, he was a member of the Malaysian Labour Party, also a Roman Catholic whose family have been Roman Catholics for three generations. Before his arrest he was a hill farmer in Balik Pulau. His detention order mentions 6 charges against him dating from 1951, when he was only 14! None of the charges relating to the years 1951, 1958, 1959 and 3 at various times in 1964 could have been criminal as, if they were he would presumably have been arrested long before. The final charge relates to his being in possession of a book "10,000 Miles Tour of China" which is alleged to be 'prejudicial' (note, it is not banned). His activities were at all times open. He has never had the opportunity to refute the allegations alleging sinister communist motives in an open court.

Send your cards to: The Honourable the Prime Minister of Malaysia,
Tunku Abdul Rahman putra al'Haj K.L.M; C.H.
The Residency,
Kuala Lumpur.

Any extra correspondence should go to:
The Honourable Tun. (Dr.) Ismail bin Dato
Abdul Rahman,
Minister for Home Affairs,
Kuala Lumpur.

Mihajlo Mihajlov - Yugoslavia.

Mihajlo Mihajlov is a young academic who begins a one year sentence this month. The charge on which he was convicted was one of sending false information about Yugoslavia to foreign journalists, but the real reason for the arrest appears to be that he tried to found an opposition party and journal. Although this will be the first time he has gone to prison, he was given a suspended sentence last year after some allegedly critical remarks about the Soviet Union had appeared in an article by him in a Belgrade magazine. In your letters to the Yugoslav authorities, please ask for remission of the sentence on the grounds that freedom of expression and opinion are guaranteed in Articles 39 and 40 of the Yugoslav Constitution.

Appeals should go to: The President,
The Croation Supreme Court,
c/o The Federal Minister of Justice, Milorad Zoric
Savezni Sekretarijat za Pravosvdje,
Belgrade 35,
Yugoslavia.

Letters to Mihajlov should be addressed his prison:
Kazneni Popravni Dom
Sremska Mitrovica,
Belgrade,
Yugoslavia.

xxx (in your letters to the Foreign Minister stress the importance of Paraguayan cultural relations with foreign countries.)