

# monthly newsletter from amnesty international

## postcards for prisoners campaign

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August 1967.

Here is some news about previous prisoners:

Geoffrey Boon, St. Kitts. (June 1967 Newsletter). Mr. Malcolm Butt, Q.C., was sent from London this month to prepare Habeas Corpus applications for Geoffrey Boon and several of the other detainees. All but five of the applications were upheld by the Supreme Court of the Associated States of the West Indies and Geoffrey Boon, Dr. William Herbert (leader of the opposition party) and fifteen detainees have now been released. Mr. Butt was able to demonstrate that the state of emergency in the territory was invalid as a result of a technical flaw in the drafting of the Islands' legislation. (Relatives of Mr. Boon and other detainees have visited the Amnesty office to thank us for the efforts we have made on their behalf). The Prime Minister has now pushed through Parliament a new bill giving him valid emergency powers; it is reported that Dr. Herbert has been re-arrested and other re-arrests are anticipated.

Dr. Carlos Serrate Reich, Bolivia. (March 1967 Newsletter). Several members of the Postcard Campaign have received letters of thanks from Senora Marta de Serrate, in which she writes: "On behalf of my husband I should like to convey our deepest gratitude for your generous sentiments of solidarity during the very difficult time we experienced when he was imprisoned by the Government in the cheerless regions of the Amazon forest. We are certain that to a great extent the restoration of his freedom was due to the many letters sent by the members of Amnesty International calling for the rule of human rights in this country, one of which was yours. We would like you to know that after 95 days of captivity my husband was released on April 23, in a somewhat delicate state of health. He was Minister of Education and Culture in the last Constitutional Government, and is now subjected to political persecution, being under permanent surveillance and a type of house arrest. Once again many thanks for your unprejudiced and honest concern. We all remain - myself, Carlos, and our children (who are 2 and 3 years of age), your good friends in Bolivia, and hope that we may have the opportunity of meeting you personally one day. Marta de Serrate." Dr. Serrate - who was re-arrested in La Paz on June 12 but then released - has written to the International Secretariat (July 12) stressing his appreciation of the efforts made by Amnesty International and his gratitude for the appeals made on his behalf and for the letters he has received.

Mr. Koirala, Nepal. (October 1966 Newsletter). Mr. Koirala's health, always precarious is reported to be deteriorating seriously. Members are asked to renew their appeals for his release on humanitarian grounds.

Caroline Okello-Odongo, Kenya (January 1967 Newsletter). Mrs. Okello-Odongo is still in detention. Many members have received fairly angrily worded replies from the Attorney-General expressing resentment at Amnesty's attempt to interfere in Kenya's internal affairs.

Captain Howard Levy, U.S.A. (July 1967 Newsletter). Howard Levy is still in Fort Jackson, Army Stockade, and expects to be transferred soon to Fort Leavenworth. In a recent letter to the Bremen group in Germany, Levy wrote, "I wish to express my appreciation for the concern and interest which Amnesty International has taken in my case. I am familiar with your organisation and I am proud to be adopted by your outstanding movement." He has lost his first automatic appeal by the military review board, which means that his appeal will now be taken to a higher board for consideration. Many members have received a full and courteous reply from the acting Chief of the Military Justice Division of the American Ministry of Defence outlining the legal situation.

Sao Hkun Hkio, Burma (May 1966 Newsletter). General Ne Win of Burma has been visiting this country for the ostensible purpose of a medical check-up and Mrs. Mabel Hkio has tried in vain to seek an interview with the General to plead for her husband's release. Neither the General nor the Burmese ambassador would see her and she intends to take her husband's case, and that of other political prisoners in Burma, to the U.N. Commission of Human Rights. It can only be hoped that the publicity given to this case by the English press in the last week will persuade the General to relax his attitude to political prisoners in his country.

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Here are this month's prisoners:

Michael Holman - Rhodesia

Michael Holman, aged 21, President of the Students' Union of the multi-racial University College of Rhodesia, was served with restriction orders confining him to his parents' home in Gwelo for the period of a year from August 11th, 1967. Holman is the third European to be restricted or detained under the Smith regime's emergency powers. His restriction orders still stand despite the fact that on the same day the Salisbury magistrates' court found Holman Not Guilty on a charge of contempt of court arising from a satirical poem in the student magazine "Black and White", which Holman edits. The poem was said to have violated the dignity and respect of Mr. Justice Lewis, one of the judges in a constitutional test case. Entitled "A Judgement" the poem ran as follows:

Rhodesia! spite of metaphysic prate,  
Is formed an independent state!  
Containing in its very nature  
All principles of legislature  
Responsible and bound to none,  
A pure democracy in one;  
Whose legislation is the plan,  
To bully black men all it can,  
Whose jurisprudent scheme maintains  
What force secures, the white man's gains.  
Possession is without a flaw  
All points of policy and law  
If not de jure so to letter,  
It is de facto which is better,

(Cont.)

Michael Holman continued

For such is Lewis's, Freedom's lease,  
For maintenance of whited peace.

In 1966 a test-case was brought by two political detainees to test the legality of the 1965 Constitution. The judges returned the verdict that the Smith regime, although not the de jure, (i.e. legal), government was the only de facto (i.e. effective) government. The case is currently being heard on appeal in the High Court.

Michael Holman was born in England but was brought up in Rhodesia after his parents had emigrated. In April he was elected President of the Students' Union by a large majority and carried shoulder high by the African students. After the news of his restriction a crowd of 200 demonstrated in the centre of Salisbury, as a result of which 8 students were arrested.

Cards should be sent to either:

The Honourable Ian D. Smith. M.P., or  
Prime Minister,  
P.B. 700,  
Causeway, Salisbury,  
Rhodesia.

The Honourable D. Larder-Burke M.P.,  
The Minister of Law and Order,  
P.B. 703,  
Causeway, Salisbury,  
Rhodesia.

#### Helio Fernandes - Brazil

Helio Fernandes, the Editor of the Rio de Janeiro evening newspaper "Tribuna da Imprensa", has for a long time been under attack by the Government because of his forthright denunciations of the military regime. When he stood as an opposition candidate in the election of November 1966 Marshal Castelo Branco bypassed the judiciary by a Presidential decree depriving him of his political rights for 10 years, thus making him ineligible to stand for Congress. The Government's application for a banning order had previously been turned down by the Supreme Tribunal in Rio.

In March 1967, a new Press Law came into effect, which created a large number of new press offences, and imposed mandatory sentences on journalists found guilty of making criminal allegations against the President, whether the allegations were true or not. Helio Fernandes was one of the most outspoken critics of the new Press Law, and one of its first victims. He was charged with engaging in political activities while banned from so doing under presidential decree (see AIR, May 1967) but managed to establish in court in July 1967 that the loss of his political rights did not prevent him from writing political articles, and that he could continue to practise his profession.

When the former President, Marshal Castelo Branco, was killed in an air crash in July, most Brazilian papers published formal obituaries mourning his death. Helio Fernandes denounced this as hypocrisy, and wrote that "the death of Marshall Castelo Branco marks the disappearance of a wicked man without principles, devoid of all greatness and nobility." This time, the Government did not wait for the decision of the Courts. The Minister of Justice ordered his deportation, and he was conveyed at once to the island of Fernando de Noronha on the grounds that he had insulted the late President. His family were prevented from seeing him at the airport at gunpoint, and he is reported to be on a hunger strike. The Brazilian Press Association has protested against his deportation on the grounds that it represents an interference with the freedom of the press, whilst not necessarily supporting the views expressed by Helio Fernandes in his editorial. This point should be made in letters of protest on his behalf. Members should stress that whilst they are not necessarily in agreement with Helio Fernandes views, his arbitrary deportation represents an attack on the fundamental Liberties of the press and on the traditional freedom of opinion in Brazil.

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Cards should be sent to either:

The President,  
Palacio do Planalto,  
Brasilia,  
Brazil.

or Minister of the Supreme Federal Tribunal,  
Adauto Lucio Cardoso,  
Brasilia,  
Brazil.

#### SOVIET UNION

Yury Galanskov, Alexei Dobrovolsky, Peter Rodzievsky, Vadim Deloné, Yevgeny Kushev, Ilya Gabai and Vladimir Bukovsky.

Three young Russian poets, Yury Galanskov, Alexei Dobrovolsky and Peter Rodzievsky were arrested in Moscow on about January 17th this year. They are supposed to have attracted the attention of the KGB (Soviet Security Police) by contributing to an independent journal called "Phoenix 1966", secretly printed and distributed by an underground movement called S.M.O.G. ("Samoye Molodoye Obshchestvo Geniev - Youngest Society of Geniuses"). Previously S.M.O.G. publications have mostly contained works of poetry and prose by young Russians but "Phoenix 1966" was more political in character with an article "What is Socialist Realism?" by the writer Andrei Sinyavsky (Now serving a seven year sentence in a labour camp), a defence of Sinyavsky and his friend Yuli Daniel by Yury Galanskov and other contributions on philosophical, religious and political topics.

On January 22nd, a few days after these arrests, a group of about 50 young people gathered in Pushkin Square, Moscow, carrying banners calling for the release of these young poets and for the repeal of repressive laws designed to make unofficial demonstrations and publications illegal. The demonstration was short-lived as KGB men quickly broke up the gathering and tore down the banners. A few days later Vladimir Bukovsky, Ilya Gabai, Vadim Deloné and Yevgeny Kushev were arrested as ringleaders. Bukovsky was adopted by Amnesty International last year when he was detained in a mental institution for over six months after taking part in a demonstration in December 1965. The others were not known to us before but Yury Galanskov was well-known in the USSR as a pacifist - he once staged a solitary demonstration outside the U.S. Embassy in Moscow in protest against American policy in Viet-Nam.

All those arrested and detained are reported to have undergone psychiatric examination and possible some kind of "treatment" - one can only speculate about what form this may have taken, but reports received about Soviet practices in this sphere give cause for disquiet. Galanskov, Dobrovolsky, Kushev, Deloné and Rodzievsky, who were later removed to the Lefortovskaya prison in Moscow, have at least the prospect of a trial but Bukovsky and the schoolteacher Ilya Gabai are still reported to be held in mental institutions.

In November this year the Soviet Union will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. Security forces have been strengthened and it is feared that the authorities may decide to take harsh punitive action against these young people in order to dissuade other dissenters from staging public protests during celebrations. What form this action will take is uncertain, but it may well mean heavy sentences of imprisonment in labour camps for those now in prison and indefinite detention for those in mental institutions. Action to help them is urgently needed.

Cards should be sent to either:

The Prosecutor-General,  
Moscow, USSR,

(in Russian)

USSR, Moskva,  
Prokuratura,  
Generalnomu Prokuroru USSR.

or

Mr. Alexei Kosygin,  
Chairman of the Council of Minister of the USSR,  
Kremlin, Moscow, USSR.

USSR, Moskva, Kreml,  
Predsedatelyu Sovieta  
Ministrov USSR,  
Alekseyu Kosyginu.