

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER



N.B. FROM OCTOBER 1 OUR NEW ADDRESS WILL BE: 53 THEOBALD'S ROAD, LONDON WC1X 8SP.
(The move may mean some delay over publication of the October Newsletter).

MISSIONS

Yugoslavia: On August 4 in Zagreb, the trial started of four students charged in connection with last December's student strike: Drazen Budisa, Ante Paradzik, Ivan Zvonimir Cicak and Goran Dodig. British barrister Mrs Gay Martin observed the trial for Amnesty. She arrived on August 2, and although the authorities knew beforehand that she was coming, she was not allowed into court. However, by talking to officials, she collected valuable information which will be included in her report.

Bangladesh: At the beginning of July, Singapore lawyer Mr David Marshall went to Bangladesh on Amnesty's behalf. Future action will be based on his report and recommendations. He learnt that if war criminals are brought to court (and there is considerable international opposition to this) it will be before an international tribunal. The trials of some 12,000 "collaborators" began in early July.

ORGANISATION

International Council and Executive Committee: The latter meets on September 6 and 7 at Stichting Woudschoten Conference Centre, Zeist (near Utrecht). Resolutions submitted to the International Council will be considered, including the Statute amendment, the McKinsey and Long Range Planning Committee's recommendations on administration, a comprehensive review of the Research Department's activities, the proposed 1973 campaign on torture and prison treatment and arrangements for the International Council. On September 7, there will be a Finance Meeting, which will consider the 1973/4 budget proposals, also make recommendations to the Executive Committee. The International Council meets from September 8 - 10. The agenda has gone out. We hope most National Sections will be represented, and look forward to seeing delegates from outside Europe.

Prisoner of Conscience Week: Publicity material is now available from the International Secretariat. It consists of 12 cases from different countries together with photographs of the prisoners.

German Section's New Address: From now on please write to: 2 Hamburg 52, Beselerstrasse 8. The telephone number will remain the same.

Vacancies in the Research Department: The following posts are being advertised: (1) Middle East researcher; (2) Latin America researcher; (3) Europe, two researchers. Knowledge of the area and its languages is essential. For one of the European posts, knowledge of Greek and/or Turkish is necessary; for the other, Russian and/or one other E. European language. Salary scale: £1,674 - £2,244, according to age and experience. Closing date for applications: September 18. Send them to: George Gomez, Administrative Manager at the International Secretariat.

COUNTRIES

Greece: It is now safe to appeal for releases and suspended sentences on behalf of individuals again instead of making general appeals.

Turkey: We have been advised that groups with Turkish prisoners should not write directly to them or their relatives.

Czechoslovakia: John Mendelson, British Labour Member of Parliament, who offered to attend the political trials currently taking place in Prague and Brno on behalf of Amnesty, was refused a visa by the Czech authorities. The press release we subsequently sent out (on August 3) mentioned the possibility of the President exercising his powers of clemency. Soon afterwards, 10 prisoners were released on the President's order. Amnesty, in a telegram to President Svoboda, signed by the Chairman of the International Executive Committee, immediately appealed for the release of the 46 prisoners sentenced during July and August.

Portugal: In January, Amnesty sent an observer to the trial of Daniel Cabrita, a trade union leader sentenced to two years in prison and 15 years loss of political rights. He was accused of involvement with the Communist Party - which he denies. He was arrested after signing a letter to the International Labour Organisation protesting about the undemocratic way in which a Portuguese delegation to the ILO conference was chosen. He is said to have been tortured during interrogation. Le Monde reported that on August 2 his wife in despair committed suicide. He was not allowed to attend her funeral. We suggest Amnesty members raise funds for his four-year-old daughter, and join Portuguese trade unions in appealing for his release to: His Excellency Admiral Americo Deus Rodrigues Tomaz, Presidencia da Republica, Praca Afonso de Albuquerque, Lisboa 3, Portugal (President); and to: His Excellency Dr Marcelo Caetano, Presidente do Conselho, Lg. Cortes, Lisboa 2, Portugal (Prime Minister).

S. Korea: Poet and critic of the government Kim Chi-ha, an Amnesty investigation case for whom Japanese members have been particularly active, was released on July 8. He was arrested in April on charges of violating the Anti-Communist and National Security Laws. Four S. Koreans charged with working for N. Korea have been hanged - despite Amnesty protests. These executions were carried out after the joint North-South communique on the peaceful reunification of Korea.

Rhodesia: Extract from a letter to his Amnesty group from a detainee in Gwelo Prison (June 1972): "I don't know how many members are in your group...but I can see that you are determined to make my life more comfortable. I am indebted to every one of you and to all the friends and families who make your task surmountable...What a difference your coming to my aid has made to my difficult life! How thankful I am now that I can write letters to you."

Paraguay: Eleven long-term political prisoners, seven of them Amnesty adoptees, have been released this year. In July, the eldest daughter of Gladys Cazal (a political prisoner freed in March) arrived in W. Germany to begin a study course financed by the Amnesty group who had adopted her mother. In September, Amnesty's contact in Paraguay is due to reach Europe, where he will address groups with Paraguayan prisoners of conscience. On August 14, Amnesty adoptee Professor Antonio Maidana completed 14 years detention spent exclusively in one cell. Following a recent International Red Cross official's visit, improvements in the conditions of several police stations have been reported.

Iran: On August 18, we published a report on Trial Procedures for Political Prisoners.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

YAR-SHATER, Ehsan: "Iran Faces the Seventies". London. Praeger Publishers. 5 Cromwell Place, London S.W.7. £5.25. This book grew out of the papers presented at an international conference held at Columbia University, U.S.A. in November 1968. The conference set out to explore and analyse recent developments in Iran in their political, economic, educational, literary and artistic context.

"Apartheid is Built on Torture". Published by the Information Centre of the World Peace Council, P.O.B. 18114, Helsinki, Finland. 37 pages. No price quoted. Highly recommended booklet for all groups with S. African prisoners.

TROUP, Freda: "South Africa: an Historical Introduction". London. Eyre Methuen Ltd. 1972. £4.50. This is a political history of S. Africa from before the black inhabitants knew about white men until the passing of the Terrorism Act in 1967. The answers to many questions asked by groups can be found here. There is a useful chronology, a good further reading list, a comprehensive index and a list of the main "apartheid" laws that have been passed.

WHITAKER, Ben: "The Biharis in Bangladesh". A report of the Minority Rights Group. London. 36 Craven Street. 45p. An excellent report on the situation of the approximately 700,000 Biharis at present in camps in Bangladesh.

POSTCARDS FOR PRISONERS CAMPAIGN

News of Prisoners who have been on the Campaign

Pyotr Grigorevich GRIGORENKO - USSR (August 1969 and June 1972): The latest issue of the Chronicle of Current Events (No. 26) reports that on June 29 a psychiatric commission recommended continuation of his compulsory treatment for a further six months. He is 65 and his health is deteriorating.

Rudolf BATTEK - Czechoslovakia (May 1970): In the first of a series of political trials in Prague, he was sentenced on July 21 to 3½ years imprisonment. He has appealed against sentence.

Quintin and Rizal YUYITUNG - Taiwan (June 1970): Quintin was released on August 16 after completing his two year sentence. Rizal is due for release in August 1973. The Taiwanese government are reported to have promised that their families may join them in Taiwan - at present they are in the Philippines.

Dr Domingos Antonio Mascarenhas AROUCA - Portugal, Mozambique (July 1971): Recently, five Dutch Amnesty members began a three day hunger strike outside the Portuguese Ambassador's house as a protest about Dr Arouca's continued detention.

This Month's Prisoners:-

Mashouf KALANTARI - Iran

Mashouf Kalantari, who has been in prison since July 1968, was one of 14 civilian intellectuals who were charged with "having formed a group with Communist ideology which had plotted against the security of the state". An Amnesty observer who attended the trial, which was held before a military court, reported that the prosecution case relied mainly on individual guilt by association, and on group guilt established largely on the basis of one man's statement, said by the defence to have been one of several "confessions" extracted under torture. Kalantari was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

His family are very worried about his health. They believe he is suffering from tuberculosis and that the climate of Bandar Abbas, on the Persian Gulf, where he is imprisoned, is particularly unsuitable for someone in his condition. The prison is a long way from Teheran, where his family live, so they can seldom visit him. This makes them even more anxious about him. Appeals for his release, or at least that he be transferred to a prison nearer his family and less deleterious to his health should go to: His Imperial Majesty Shahanshah of Iran, Niavaran Palace, Teheran, Iran; and to:- His Excellency Fazlollah Kassemi, Chairman of the Petition Committee (Majlis Showraye Melli), Maydan Barestan, Teheran, Iran.

Nikos POLITIS - Greece

Nikis Politis, a journalist, was arrested in December 1968. He was court martialled in May 1969. Along with 15 others, he was charged with a "Communist conspiracy to overthrow the regime" After a three day trial, he was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. Reports of the trial suggest that the evidence against Mr Politis was slight and unconvincing. As far as we know, he was not accused of having committed or planned any violent action. He was adopted by the Rugby (England) Amnesty group.

He is married and has children. At present he is in Korydallos Prison. He is reported to be in bad health (at the time of his arrest he was chronically sick: an epileptic suffering from a stomach ulcer). Please appeal on his behalf to: His Excellency Mr George Papadopoulos, Prime Minister of Greece, Athens, Greece; to: His Excellency Mr Anghelos Tsoukalas, Minister of Justice, Athens, Greece; and to: His Holiness Archbishop Hironomys, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church, Athens, Greece. Request suspension of Mr Politis' sentence on health grounds.

Vladimir BORISOV and Victor FAINBERG - USSR

Borisov and Fainberg have been in Leningrad Special Psychiatric Hospital for over three years. Borisov was sent there because of his dissident activities as a member of the unofficial Action Group for the Defence of Civil Rights in the USSR. Fainberg, an art critic, was arrested after taking part in a protest demonstration against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The health of both has deteriorated in the brutal conditions of the hospital. After treatment with powerful drugs, they went on hunger-strike. Later, Fainberg even attempted suicide. Friends and relatives report that the men's lives are in danger. In March 1972, apparently in response to outside pressure, they were taken for examination to the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry in Moscow (where many political cases are "diagnosed"). Although found to be sane, they were sent back to Leningrad. A Leningrad court overruled this finding and returned them to the Special Psychiatric Hospital. According to latest reports, the Serbsky Institute has now recommended at least five more months compulsory treatment for Fainberg. Borisov's fate is unknown. Even if brought to trial, they could face sentences of up to five years imprisonment if convicted under Article 70 for anti-Soviet activities. Academician Andrei Sakharov, an outspoken champion of human rights, has appealed to the Soviet Minister of Health to spare the lives of the two men, who, he says, "are dying" in the hospital.

Please write to the Minister of Health requesting the immediate release of Fainberg and Borisov on humanitarian grounds. His address is: SSSR, RSFSR, g. Moskva, Rakhmanovskiy Pereulok 3, Ministerstvo Zdravookhraneniya, Petrovskomy B. Please write also to Messrs. Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny at the following address: SSSR, RSFSR, g. Moskva, Kreml, Brezhnevu L. (Kosyginu A. and Podgornomu N.). In each case, please begin your letter: Esteemed Comrade Petrovskomy (or Brezhnevu, Kosyginu, Podgornomu).

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SOME REVEALING EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS SENT TO US BY A BRAZILIAN PRISONER

"...My arrest and conviction under military justice have been enough to close the slightest possibility of survival as a person conscious of a whole series of unjust events on this continent...All doors in the professional field are closed to me. After much suffering, pain and begging (!), I was able to find an educational institution that accepted me with an open spirit...I am teaching literature and educational sociology. I would like to study in Europe...Before my arrest, I had two chances to go abroad but I felt it was my duty to stay here aiding the people to raise themselves from their state of misery and exploitation. Today, I see the problem differently and feel that in specialising I will be able to aid more in terms of informing and educating the public."

This raises the question of after-care for former Amnesty adoptees. The following extract shows that families of prisoners, especially when poor and uneducated, may be frightened at receiving an Amnesty letter and may not respond for some time. In this case, groups did not hear from the family of the prisoner until the latter was released, but have now established contact and are considering ways of helping him travel to Europe to study.

"Your first letter caused a certain amount of worry in my family, due to receipt of a letter from Germany during a period of political instability and delicate internal circumstances. A short time before, I had been freed after having completed a two year sentence, imposed by a military tribunal. I felt it must be from a person of extreme solidarity who was looking for some means of concretely implementing his lofty ideals of aiding someone in wretched circumstances. I assured my parents that there was nothing to do with any liaison between myself and bodies with international political ambitions...My father is a country peasant, with little education, semi-illiterate, with rustic and country habits."