

monthly newsletter from amnesty international

postcards for prisoners campaign

August 1968

Here is some news about previous prisoners:

Denis James O'Donnell - Australia /May 1968/. According to the latest report from Australia O'Donnell has come to an arrangement with the army which satisfies the law and enables him to fulfill one of his ambitions, constructive teaching. "The New South Wales Section writes "Amnesty has done a fine job here, but can do no more." We may therefore consider this case closed.

Helen Joseph - South Africa /November 1967/ As a result of widespread appeals on Mrs Joseph's behalf, her banning order has been modified to allow her to attend an Anglican church service on Sundays.

Dr Kibaya - Uganda /June 1968/ has been suggested as a candidate for Prisoner of the Year.

The Commonwealth Medical Conference begins in Uganda on September and will last for a fortnight. We would like you to renew appeals on Dr Kibaya's behalf to co-incide with the Conference. You could write to the Uganda Minister of Health, the Right Hon. Mr. J.W. Lwamafa, Box 8 entebbe and might also find out whether anyone from your country will be attending the Conference and approach them about making an appeal for Dr. Kibaya's release.

Professor Tran Huu Khue - South Vietnam /July 1966/. It appears from a letter received from Saigon /written in June 68/ that towards the end of last year there was a slight reduction of Professor Tran Huu Khue's sentence. He still has to serve 10 years with hard labour

Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski - Poland /March 1967/, who were rearrested in March this year following student unrest at Warsaw University, are now reported to have been tried secretly on April 3rd and sentenced to a year in prison each.

Wole Soyinka - Nigeria /November 1967/. Last month we asked members to appeal to the Nigerian authorities to permit Mr Soyinka's wife to visit him in prison in order to dispel rumours of Mr Soyinka's death. Would anyone who received a reply to their appeal, please let us have copies of their reply immediately.

Adam Demaci - Yugoslavia /April 1968/. If anyone has received a reply to their appeal on behalf of Mr Demaci, would they please send us a copy.

Stefan Gardonyi - Rumania. Mr. Gardonyi is a journalist by profession. He has spent seventeen out of the last twenty years in prison. He is now serving a six year sentence for attempting to leave Rumania illegally.

In 1948, while working in Bucarest as a "stringer" for the London DAILY HERALD, Mr Gardonyi was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment on a cover charge of espionage. This was a period when any Rumanian citizen employed by a western firm or embassy was automatically open to suspicion on grounds of "politically unreliability". Mr Gardonyi served sixteen years of his sentence and, in 1964, was released under a general amnesty for political prisoners.

During the next three years he made constant applications to the Rumanian authorities for a passport so that he could join his mother - aged 93 - and his fiancee in West Germany. Rumania has imposed stringent restrictions on the issue of passports to citizens wanting to emigrate and in Mr Gardonyi's case these were only intensified by his record of political imprisonment. His applications were refused. In August 1967, he tried to leave the country without papers and was arrested at the Rumanian-Hungarian border. His trial took place on December 1967 and he was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. Had his sentence been one year shorter - five years is usually regarded as the maximum for this offence - Mr Gardonyi would probably have benefited from 1967 Christmas amnesty whereby prisoners with terms of five years and under were released.

Mr. Gardonyi is now in the hard labour prison at Aiud. He is 63 years old and, after sixteen years in some of the most savage prison conditions known to Amnesty it is unlikely that he is physically strong.

Send your card to:

EITHER OR
Minister of Justice The local Rumanian Embassy
Ministrul Justitiei
Bul.6 Mardie No. 33
Bucaresti, Rumania

Mohamed PANAHI - Iran. Mr. Panahi is a lecturer at Shiraz University. He was arrested in April, with three other members of the staff, after police had broken up a seven-day strike by the students in support of their demands for better conditions in the university. Numbers of students were arrested at the same time, but the majority have now been released or sent to do military service in the army. Mr. Panahi has been neither charged nor brought to trial, and letters to the Iranian authorities should ask

for this to take place as soon as possible.

Mr Panahi is 29 years old. He studied in England, at Exeter University, has an english wife, and lectures in English Literature. He is known to have criticised the Iranian Government and, politically, to stand to the left.

Send your card to:

EITHER

His excellency Mr Javad Sadr
The Ministry of Justice.
Teheran

OR

The local Iranian Embassy.

Dr. Sami El-Joundi, Syria.

Dr Sami El-Joundi, the Syrian Ambassador to Paris was arrested after the publication of a book he had written about the Arab-Israeli situation, according to a report in Le Monde, July 11th 1968. The book was moderate in tone and not in accordance with current Syrian government policy. Dr Sami El-Joundi had also made visits to several Western countries which may not have met with the approval of his government.

The only other information we have about Dr El-Joundi is that he had formerly held the post Syrian Minister of Education before being posted to paris two years ago.

Send your cards to:

EITHER

Dr Youssef Yaygin
Prime Minister of Syria
Damascus

OR

The local Syrian Embassy.