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NEWSLETTER FOR GROUPS

News from the Investigation Department.

"The Sunday Times" is publishing a three page article on Amnesty in the Colour Supplement for October 29th. The article will describe Amnesty's work, giving the case histories of about fifteen prisoners, and will be accompanied by photographs. "Medical News", the newspaper for the medical profession, has also agreed to publish a series of feature articles on imprisoned doctors. The first of these will deal with Captain Howard Levy, the American conscientious objector; the second will deal with two former Ministers of Health imprisoned in East Africa, the third with banned medical people in South Africa and fourth with imprisoned doctors in Communist countries. We hope that this will give us some useful publicity, increase our membership, and perhaps bring in some donations.

(Stella Joyce)

GREECE

Dr. Gustavo Comba, President of the Italian Section, is at present in Greece to investigate on Amnesty's behalf the conditions of the political prisoners and to make representations to various Ministers. On his return on Friday, 22nd September, Dr. Comba will be attending as an observer the meeting in Strasbourg of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe. He will thus be in a position to make known the results of his visit to individual delegates before the general discussion on Greece, which is scheduled for Monday, September 25th.

We have just heard that the Swedish government, possibly in conjunction with other Scandinavian countries, has decided to refer the question of Greece to the Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe when it meets in October. European National Sections of Amnesty have been active in urging their governments to take such action.

Mr. Bent Knudsen of the Danish Section acted as Secretary of the Delegation of Scandinavia<sup>2</sup> Deputies which visited Andreas Papandreou in prison and interviewed several of the prisoners detained in the Amaroussi Prison at the School of Gendarmerie in Athens. They found Andreas Papandreou 'tired and depressed' but were forbidden to discuss either his health or politics. Subsequently the Delegation obtained assurances from the Greek government that Andreas Papandreou would be allowed to see his lawyer alone (which up till now he has not been allowed to do) and that his trial would be public and open to foreign observers and witnesses. The Danish Section plan to send a lawyer, Mr. Thyregod, to attend Andreas Papandreou's trial. In view of the serious concern felt about Andreas Papandreou's health he has been adopted by a London group and special approaches have been made to the Red Cross.

According to the latest newspaper reports (The Times 18.9.67) some 2,000 prisoners on Yioura have now been moved to the island of Leros in the Dodecanese where about 200 prominent left-wing leaders had been detained since July. There are now apparently less than 100 prisoners still on Yioura. The government claims that 'declarations of loyalty' have been extracted from more than 4,000 of the 6,538 prisoners originally sent to Yioura and that the remaining prisoners would be released if they also signed this declaration. The Scandinavian Delegation managed to obtain a copy of this declaration which consists of a detailed questionnaire on the personal record of the individual concerned and of the societies or organizations to which he has at any time been affiliated, 'peace marches' are specifically mentioned. In conclusion the declaration demands a condemnation both of the illegal communist party and of a long list of so-called communist organizations and a promise that the individual concerned will not 'oppose in any way the work of the Government'.

(Elizabeth Gordon)

USSR

On August 31st three young Russian writers went on trial in Moscow on charges of organising a demonstration which 'disturbed public order'. Although the trial was supposed to be public no Western correspondents were allowed into the courtroom. Fortunately Amnesty had known about the three imprisoned writers from the time of their arrest and all were adopted.

Rumours had begun to spread that the three men might be dealt with harshly in order to discourage other dissident elements from causing incidents during the celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet Union next November. We therefore decided to put the three men and other imprisoned writers not yet tried on the August Cards for Prisoners Campaign. As luck would have it the trial began at a time when the hundreds of cards should have been arriving in Moscow. Although Vladimir Bukovsky was sentenced to three years imprisonment the other two, Vadim Delone and Yevgeny Kushev, were given suspended sentences and released.

Other writers Alexei Dobrovolsky, Alexander Ginsburg, Yury Galanskov and Peter Rodzievsky are still in prison awaiting trial on charges concerning their contributions to underground literary journals. Amnesty has applied for a visa for an observer to attend this trial in Moscow. Mr. Edward Lyons M.P. has kindly agreed to undertake this task.

(Bruce Laird)

BURMA

In July General Ne Win paid an unofficial visit to this country, ostensibly for medical purposes. Mrs. Hkio tried in vain to obtain an interview with the General or the Ambassador to plead the case of her husband, Sao Hkun Hkio, who has been in solitary confinement since the day of the coup in March 1962. Amnesty International also sent an official letter to the General requesting an interview to discuss the problem of political prisoners in Burma. Needless to say the Burmese officials maintained an impregnable silence, but we were able to give Sao Hkun Hkio's case, as well as that of other political prisoners, a certain amount of publicity in the national press. It is hoped that this might have some effect, if not immediately at least sometime in the future. All groups are advised to persevere with work on their adopted prisoners, to tackle their local Burmese embassies and obtain as much publicity in the press as is possible. It is still not advisable to write to anyone in Burma but this should not deter efforts on other fronts.

(Sarah Richardson)

NIGERIA

The confused war situation in Nigeria has made it impossible for us to take up prisoners' cases there except for Wole Soyinka, the distinguished poet, playwright and novelist who was arrested shortly after publishing an article recommending a truce. Numerous Nigerians are known to be in prison both in Biafra and in the Federal controlled areas. Reports of atrocities and ill-treatment continue to filter out but reliable information is almost impossible to obtain and Amnesty will probably not be in a position to intervene effectively until the dust settles.

(Stella Joyce)

SOUTH AFRICA

The recent ban on Raymond Hoffenberg defines with new clarity the type of citizen now thought dangerous by the South African Government, and also the amount of serious adverse publicity they are willing to invite in order to silence him.

Hoffenberg has been given a five year banning under the Suppression of Communism Act. This restricts him to the Cape Peninsular, forbids him to attend 'gatherings' of more than two other people, except where these are demonstrably related to his work, makes publication or quotation of any writing by him a criminal offence, and compels him to give up his teaching job at the University of Cape Town in December, when the academic year comes to an end. As has become the normal practice, the order was drawn up in the Ministry of Justice, there is no appeal against it, Dr. Hoffenberg cannot answer or challenge it in court, and he cannot be told the reasons for the ban.

Reading of such an arbitrary and drastic move by the Government one would imagine Dr. Hoffenberg to hold the most extreme political views, and to involve himself in action of real and material danger to life and limb. But the facts are very different. Bill Hoffenberg is a doctor, a senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town, and a gland specialist on the staff of South Africa's main hospital, Groote Schuur. He is pre-eminent among South African doctors for his work on radio-isotopes, thyroid function and protein malnutrition, and his reputation stands high in many parts of the world. In politics his views are moderate - he is a member of the Liberal Party. The only way in which he could seem to have crossed the Government's path is his Chairmanship of the Defence and Aid Fund. Until it was banned in 1966, this was the only agency which instructed and paid lawyers to undertake the defence in political cases; its function was purely legalistic in that it made no political judgement on the merits of any case, but merely on the right of an accused man to legal representation in court. Moreover since the closure of the Defence and Aid, the Government has announced plans to set up an official bureau to do just this - thus approving the principle at least on which Defence and Aid worked.

Although the list of banned persons now numbers more than 600, Dr. Hoffenberg's order has aroused comment from a section of the community which usually takes little part in politics. The doctors in South Africa and abroad have reacted strongly to the elimination of an eminent colleague. The Department of Medicine in Cape Town, publically expressed its "abhorrence of the banning without trial of a respected member of the medical profession", and described the restrictions placed on his right to practice or teach clinical medicine, conduct research, or publish scientific articles as "wrong in principle and detrimental to science and medicine". The British Medical Journal - never a radical periodical - said that by its actions the Department of Justice had "effectively deprived the world of medicine, abroad as well as in South Africa, of the services of a distinguished doctor". In most countries Dr. Hoffenberg would be acclaimed for his work. It is indicative of the present state of South Africa that he should be ostracised.

(Stephanie Grant)

RHODESIA

Terence Finley, who has done invaluable work in the Christian Council Relief Office in Bulawayo, for the past year, has been refused an extension for his work permit and is due to leave Rhodesia by September 30th. As yet no replacement has been found but it is hoped that someone will be able to bridge the gap in the meantime to keep the office running.

(Sarah Richardson)

ALGERIA

The situation in Algeria for the first time for years shows signs of improvement. Boumedienne now appears to feel confident enough to risk releasing some of his former opponents. Many releases have taken place during the past few months including 20 prisoners held in El Harrach. The O.R.P. leaders, Ben Bella and some of his colleagues still remain in but further releases are expected this month. The Algerian Embassy in London has promised to obtain for us a full and detailed list of both those released and those in prison. It is claimed that prison conditions have also improved and that visits from the families and doctors are allowed but we have not yet been able to substantiate this.

(Rosamund Linell)

MALAYSIA/SINGAPORE

The Malaysian Government recently released 180 political prisoners on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of Independence. These include Dr. Rajakumar and other adopted Amnesty prisoners, but we have still not succeeded in obtaining the full list of names. Many thousand, however, still remain in jail. The situation in Singapore remains unchanged.

(Stella Joyce)

KENYA

Almost all the members of Oginga's Opposition Party have been released from detention. Our work is now primarily concerned with the Somali leaders imprisoned by the British prior to Independence, who have been kept in detention by the Independent Government and are now held in a former Mau Mau camp near the coast. None of these have either been tried or charged.

(Stella Joyce)

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

Reports by the Israeli Government claim that at least 70,000 people are now in prison in Egypt. Our information suggests that this figure is highly exaggerated, but the numbers known to us are still very considerable.

3,000 Muslim Brothers are held without trial and in appalling conditions. Few of these would probably be Amnesty cases since the sect is both fanatical and violent but it may be possible for us to collect enough information to enable us to protest against the inhuman conditions in which they are held.

Between 200 and 400 Egyptian Jews are still under arrest since the outbreak of the Arab/Israeli war but it is believed that releases are continuing and that they are well treated. Other groups in prison all without trial, include 50 Wafdists arrested for making a demonstration at the funeral of Nahas Pasha. (The demonstration consisted of passing his coffin from hand to hand through the streets of Cairo to the famous mosque of Al Azhar); several hundred 'feudalists', members of landed families turned off their estates by Field Marshal Amer's 'Committee for the Liquidation of Feudalists'; about 80 political non-conformists of different kinds - some ex-Wafdists, ex-Communists and ex-Muslim Brothers, as well as the courageous lawyer who defended the Muslim Brothers in a major political case last year. The last Communists imprisoned in Egypt were released after the Defence Ministers return from Moscow during the Arab/Israeli war.

Another group held under house arrest, and reported well treated, are the 40 members of the unlucky Yemeni Republican Delegation arrested in Cairo in 1965 when the pro-Egyptian Republicans led by Sallal took power in their absence with Egyptian connivance. This

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group includes the Prime Minister and virtually all the members of the Cabinet, the heads of the Police, the Army and the Security Forces together with the heads of almost every government department. It is also believed that a number of N.L.F. supporters from South Arabia may still be detained although Qahtan Ashaabi, for example, has been released.

New arrivals in Egyptian prisons are 200 or so officers house-servants and others arrested as a result of the late Field Marshal Amer's recent attempted coup; the disgraced Chief of Intelligence and other senior officers held accountable for Egypt's ignominious defeat, and an unknown number of 'pro-Americans' including two former Under-Secretaries.

The unfortunate General Neguib ousted in 1954, continues to live in complete obscurity under house arrest in a Cairo suburb. Four other members of the original Revolutionary Council now fallen from favour, though officially at liberty, are kept under close observation by the police and subjected to minor restrictions. Two of them were dismissed from the Government in 1964, mainly because of their criticism of Nasser's policy in the Yemen.

(Stella Joyce)

#### WEST INDIES ST. KITTS

The Independence of the West Indian islands formerly under British control has brought with it similar problems to those experienced by the new African States. The first island with serious internal political troubles is St. Kitts - Nevis - Anguilla where the Government has arrested several Opposition leaders, all of whose cases have been taken up by Amnesty. The case has received considerable publicity in the British, American and Caribbean press and has been covered in two television programmes in Britain. The prisoners will come up for trial during October. Friends of the prisoners have created a defence fund to pay for the legal expenses of engaging lawyers, including an English Q.C.

Amnesty was invited by the Premier for discussions during his visit to England and <sup>the</sup> has asked for an Amnesty Observer to attend the trial. We are hoping that the American Section may be able to arrange to send an Observer but it is not yet known whether this will be possible.

(Stella Joyce)

#### ETHIOPIA

The Galla, the majority tribe in Ethiopia have recently found themselves in conflict with Haile Selassie who last year arrested all the leaders of the Galla co-operative movement which he accuses of being used for political purposes as the spear-head of a Galla Nationalist Movement. The trial is in progress at the moment and we have taken up some of the prisoners as Investigation Cases.

(Stella Joyce)