

ARE YOU GOING TO LET AMNESTY FOUNDER?

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on Luxembourg

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AMNESTY

No. 4. 9th August, 1961

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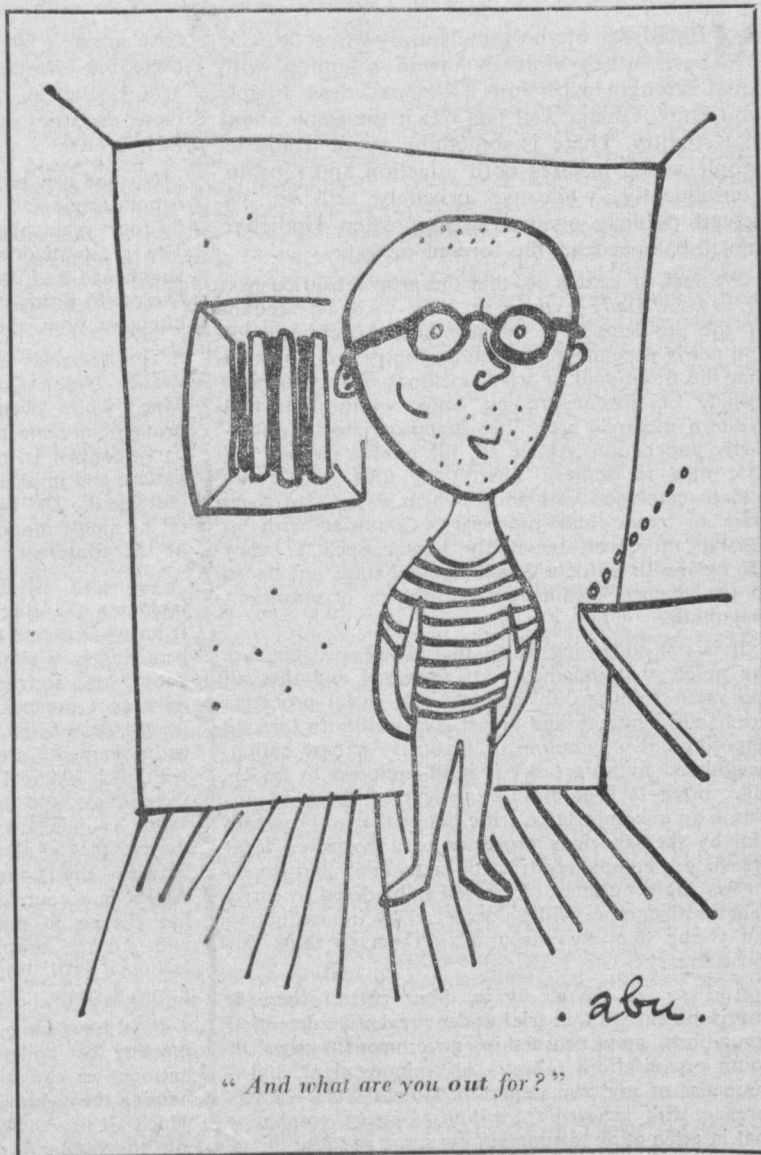
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AMNESTY NOTES



“And what are you out for?”

The Dangers in Ghana

By Adam Curle

Late Professor of Education, University College of Ghana; Visiting Professor, University of Harvard

MEMBERS of the same family often criticise each other violently while resenting with equal strength aspersions from outsiders. People who know Ghana well feel much the same about that country. There is something about it and its people which inspires both affection and kinship. Consequently, while we privately criticise, we defend publicly against attacks, often vindictive and ill-balanced, in the foreign press.

We feel, at least I do, that the prim censoriousness of, say the *Daily Express* or *Time* takes no account of the problems of a country both underdeveloped and newly dependent. In such a country it is apparent that the traditional or tribal methods of dealing with dispute or dissent are no longer valid, but that Western methods are either inappropriate or imperfectly understood. Above all, the qualities which enable men to achieve liberty for their people are seldom combined with those which could lead them later to peace and prosperity. Countries such as Ghana, moreover, inevitably handicapped as they are by the strain of a developmental stage analogous to adolescence, face material problems of enormous magnitude.

It is not surprising, then, that dangerous mistakes are made, that judgments are impaired and that all too often solutions to political and social problems are harsh, inhuman and unjust. The ability to tolerate opposition is a symptom of maturity. A new nation, bewildered by vast tasks it is ill-equipped to undertake, often feels it more expedient to shoot or imprison an uncomfortable critic than either to prosecute him by the laborious processes of a borrowed legal system not completely trusted, or to allow him to go on making a nuisance of himself unhindered. It easily believes that more will be achieved by indoctrinating the young than by encouraging them to think for themselves.

And so, in Ghana as in other places, there is imprisonment without trial under preventive detention regulations, press censorship, government control of youth organisations (always an ominous sign), and—the cause of my own departure from Ghana—interference with academic freedom. I must emphasise that in attempting to suggest how some of these things

have arisen I am not condoning them. They are inexcusable offences against human nature. But only action based on understanding can eventually enable these countries to break out of a painful stage in their growth.

No one can be complacent about Ghana today. It is both tragic and exasperating that the bright promise of four years ago should so rapidly have dimmed. The great shadow cast by nearly 200 detainees is lengthened and darkened by a muzzled press and the five recent dismissals, for reasons which have not been disclosed, from the staff of the University College.

The tentacles of the party are everywhere: the Trades Union Congress is now officially its labour wing, while even sports organisations have been brought into the political framework. This degree of party control is, of course, very much in the Soviet pattern and implies an ideological ruthlessness towards individuals. Dr. Nkrumah, in fact, envisages the rule of a "single monolithic party" throughout the whole of the continent.

Yet with all this the whole ethos of Ghana—including the ethos of the party—is utterly different from what would be expected of a European country behaving in a similar way. With very few exceptions people are unfrightened and relaxed, and for the most part outspoken. Political opponents (and there is still an official opposition with a handful of seats in parliament) are not infrequently on good terms with each other. The prevailing atmosphere is one of friendliness and, above all, Ghana is *not* a police state. To someone like myself, recently freed from the clutches of the South African police the contrast between that country and Ghana is striking. South Africa is a complex and efficient modern state which has chosen in maturity to follow corrupted values with all the misplaced competence of considerable technical skill. What can be done for South Africa? I wish I knew.

But I have some idea of what we can do for Ghana. Starting by understanding her and the other new nations, we can work to strengthen their economies, helping them out of the tense post-independence stage which all too easily gives rise to injustice, persecution and the obliteration of freedom.

Liberty in Turkey

By David Hotham

The Turkish Army seized power from the Menderes government in May 1960 on the grounds that Menderes had tried to set up a dictatorial regime in Turkey and had thereby flouted the ideal of democracy to which Turkey in the last 15 years, and indeed since the time of Kemal Ataturk, has been committed. The Army leaders have repeatedly stated their devotion to this ideal, and have solemnly promised to hold elections for the return to the civil power on October 15th this year.

What are the conditions of liberty in Turkey? The question, if one wants to be fair, has always been a baffling one. For in Turkey the practices of liberty and oppression have for at least 100 years existed side by side. The Ottoman Empire was a byword for the blackest autocracy; yet the indolence and tolerance of the Turk made it in many ways, especially at certain periods, freer in a sense even than some countries of Western Europe. "The Turk governs with a loose rein," wrote Burke. Under the Millet system of the later Empire, for example, the racial minorities, except when they were actually being massacred, were extremely free.

These two elements have existed in all Turkish regimes, because they are part of the Turkish nature. Kemal Ataturk, the great leader of the 1920's and 30's, was an undoubted autocrat, yet he vested all power in a parliament which really represented the people, and which in his early days strongly opposed his rule. He drafted a liberal constitution

which did not remain a dead letter. The judiciary under Ataturk had a certain independence. Furthermore Ataturk himself genuinely believed in democracy, and twice created an opposition party which each time, after a period of near anarchy, was suppressed. Democracy is not so easy in a country where there is no tradition for its practice.

The Menderes government, brought to power by the first really free vote in Turkish history in 1950, was the same. Many people, especially its political enemies, claimed it to be a dictatorship. Certainly Mr. Menderes, in his later years, limited press freedom, rights of public meeting, and other civil liberties. But for all that Menderes's regime, even in its worst days of 1958 and 1959, was a good deal freer than most countries in Turkey's state of development, and even freer than not a few countries in Western Europe. There was a strong political opposition party, a parliament which worked and in which the great questions of the day were debated, a press 80 per cent of which was downright critical of the government, and, apart from a handful of journalists, some of whom were imprisoned for libel, no political prisoners at all.

The present military leaders have shown the same curious mixture of unusual tolerance with sudden bursts of outright repression which are utterly in conflict with the democratic ideal to which they seem so sincerely attached. They really intend, it would seem, to clear out and hand over power in October. They have drafted a new Constitution—the most liberal Turkey has had. They have half handed over power already to an

Assembly, even if that Assembly was not elected but nominated. They have handed Menderes & Co. over to a Court of Justice to be tried, not by special revolutionary law, but by the normal law of the land.

At the same time they have acted often in ways which are the complete negation of their own democratic principles. They have arrested thousands of people, often on the flimsiest pretexts. They have held many of them indefinite periods without trial. They have introduced retrospective amendments to the penal code. In October last they suddenly dismissed 147 university professors from their chairs, without warning and without giving them a chance to state their case. A good example of this curious mixture of motives and principles is the recent national referendum on the new constitution, held on July 9th.

The military leaders clearly wanted the people to vote YES in the referendum, but 38 per cent of the people, either because they were still attached to Mr. Menderes, or for some reason disaffected with the present regime, were not afraid to vote NO. The military leaders, though clearly vexed and alarmed about the result, made no attempt, as far as one knows, to conceal the figures of the poll. On the part of both people and leaders, it was a fine example of freedom.

Yet a few days later, forgetting all about democracy, General Gursel, the Head of State, issued an edict which must be one of the most repressive ever issued by any government in peacetime. It banned all public discussion by

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WILL YOU HELP US WITH YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

Amnesty

No. 4 9th August, 1961

Comment

With much of the world split into two opposing camps the old tradition of "political asylum" has been broken into two halves. One can be described as "warm welcome"; the other as "cold shoulder." A defector from the Communist states receives the sort of welcome from the West that a visitor supposedly receives in Hawaii: Although the Eastern countries are none the less warm. But, the hundreds of men and women seeking asylum, who fit into neither category, have difficulty even in finding one country which will let them enter.

Wang Shou-Kang, whose case is at present at issue was very nearly tossed to the wolves. After 21 hours questioning he was eventually given permission to reside in the United Kingdom for 14 days. Finally, after high-level representations the Home Secretary is reported to have consented to his staying.

This case has three lessons for civilised communities. First, a lawyer should be available at the principal national airport who can assist those seeking asylum while they are still on the threshold." Second, application for permanent residence must be made simultaneously to several Governments—to be on the safe side. And if it is decided to give temporary permission to enter the country it should be for at least a month. It takes at least two weeks to get an answer from most Governments; Finally, every Government ought to establish a special department to receive applications for Asylum, staffed by Home Office officials, Foreign office men and security officers. In this way the delay between application and decision could be reduced from many weeks to several days.

Where is the Archbishop of Prague?

(This letter went off from our offices last month. We hope the reply will arrive in time for publication in the next issue.—ED.)

10th July, 1961.

H.E. The Czechoslovak Ambassador,
7 Kensington Palace Gardens,
W.8.

Dear Sir,

We have received numerous inquiries from different countries regarding the present whereabouts of Monsignor Beran, Archbishop of Prague.

We have, at present, no up-to-date information, our latest news being a statement made by Dr. Plojhar in November 1958 in which he informed a British newspaper correspondent that Mgr. Beran was not permitted to exercise his function until he had taken an oath of loyalty to the régime. This did not, however, explain where he was. Since then a number of reports have circulated, some of them saying that he was dead and others that he was gravely ill.

We have told all those who have sought information from us that we are not in a position to give accurate information until we have made inquiries from the Czech Government. Accordingly, we should be obliged if you could let us know as soon as possible where Mgr. Beran is, whether he is under detention or free, and what is his present state of health.

Yours sincerely

PETER BENENSON,

Joint Director.

Amnesty Notes

"Are there any good banks in Zurich?" Peter Benenson inquired naïvely at the recent meeting of AMNESTY supporters in that city. The enthusiastic and unanimous affirmative from the audience has led to the AMNESTY movement's international banking account being established at the Kreditanstalt, Zurich. The purpose of this account is to receive remittances from hard-currency areas, where they can be used, in part, to maintain the International Secretariat and pay for international activities, and also to facilitate transfers to assist newly-established National Sections.

Any reader of this paper who is not quite sure where to send his donation should address it to "Appeal for Amnesty," c/o Kreditanstalt, Zurich (seeking Government permission if there are currency restrictions in his country).

Our front page this week carries a cartoon by Abu, the well-known contributor to the *Observer*. Abu is going to draw for us regularly so his bespectacled little man will become familiar to regular AMNESTY readers (I hate to say it but—have you subscribed to get AMNESTY regularly?)

* * *

The last issue of AMNESTY which printed a feature about the proposed international Card to be sent to "Forgotten Prisoners" this Christmas has brought in a number of suggestions about the wording it should carry. The idea of consulting the paper's readers, before taking important decisions, is one which is going to be followed whenever possible.

CROWBAR

Heinz Brandt disappears

By THENA HESHEL
AMNESTY Correspondent

There were thousands of people in West Berlin on Friday, 16th June, 1961. Berliners going about their daily business, newly arrived refugees from East Germany getting their first glimpse of life in the West, and Heinz Brandt. There is no reason to suppose that the "ordinary man in the street" took any notice of Herr Brandt. There was nothing unusual about his appearance. He was a man in his early fifties, the editor of *Metal*, the journal of the West German Metal Workers' Union, and he had arrived from Frankfurt that morning in order to report on a trade union conference. He phoned friends in Berlin to tell them of his arrival and presumably went out into the streets. Since then no one in West Berlin, or anywhere else in West Germany has seen Brandt or spoken to him. The next news that came of him was from the East German News Agency which reported on 19th June—"The spy Heinz Brandt has been arrested while carrying out an order of a Western information service in the neighbourhood of Potsdam."

This is not the first time that Heinz Brandt has been arrested. A good proportion of his 52 years has been spent in detention. In 1929, when Brandt was 20, he joined the German Communist Youth organisation and became a party member two years later. When the Nazis came to power in Germany in 1933, Brandt was an obvious target. He was not only a Communist but also a Jew. Soon after Hitler's rise to power Brandt was arrested, and after torture sentenced to six months' imprisonment. His prison sentence com-

pleted, he was not released but sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp where he remained until 1942. Then Brandt was transferred to Auschwitz, worst of all the concentration camps, where millions died in the gas chambers. Brandt was one of the minority who survived—and when the Russians advanced towards the camp he was sent with other survivors to Buchenwald. When he was finally liberated by the Americans in the spring of 1945 Brandt was just a living skeleton. But for the first time in eleven years he was free—and hopeful that he could now play his part in the upbuilding of an anti-fascist Germany.

He went to Berlin, joined the Socialist Unity Party (the East Ger-

man communist party) and after a while became the secretary of the Berlin District Council. But though Brandt's Communism no longer counted in his disfavour with the authorities—he was still a Jew. Early in 1953 came the news of the "doctor's plot" against Stalin. One of Brandt's colleagues warned him that investigations were to be made into people of Jewish origin. On 17th June, 1953, Heinz Brandt was dismissed from his job, delegated to a junior position and rebuked for his "deviationary tendencies." There were further disputes between Brandt and his fellow Communists. They ended with his dismissal from the Party. On 14th Septem-

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Work to be Done

By Seán MacBride

Sometime Foreign Minister of the Irish Republic

THE Luxembourg Conference brought its participants face to face with the magnitude of the task which we have undertaken. It is no longer a question of campaigning for the release of a few isolated "Prisoners of Conscience"; it is a question of trying to secure the freedom of countless thousands who have been deprived of their freedom because of their political or religious views in some twenty different countries.

With the realisation of the magnitude of the task involved, the wisdom of the decision of the founders of *Amnesty* to take a world census of "Prisoners of Conscience" became more and more apparent. True, there would be difficult border-line

cases; these can be examined by a quasi-judicial body. But as far as 95 per cent of the cases are concerned no such difficulty would arise. Therefore, important as the compilation of the Register may be, it will not preclude action in regard to the vast majority of cases.

Another aspect of our task which made its impact on the Luxembourg Conference was the need for preventive action, and therefore the desirability of letting governments know that the imprisonment without trial, or after a fake trial, of one's political or religious opponents is not the norm of conduct which is acceptable to the free world. This is an all-important aspect of our problem. For instance, many new states are

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Socialist Education

[By C. H. ROLPH

LORD CAMPBELL, in his *Lives of the Chief Justices*, quoted an 18th century Judge at Stafford Assizes sentencing a man to death for uttering a forged banknote. Advising him to prepare his mind for the life to come, the Judge concluded:—

“I trust that, through the merits and mediation of our Blessed Redeemer, you may there experience that mercy which a due regard for the credit of the paper currency of the country forbids you to hope for here.”

The Russians have just caught up with this. Two Soviet citizens, Mr. Y. E. T. Rokotov and Mr. V. P. Faybishenko, have been put to death for currency offences, six other men being sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment apiece. The two men now dead were also given 15 years at their first trial, but the prosecutor-general, says *Tass*, “protested about the mildness of the sentences”; and accordingly on 20th July, after a re-trial lasting two days, they were shot and all their property was confiscated.

On 5th May the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet had decreed that the struggle against “especially dangerous crimes” was to be intensified. The death penalty (by shooting) now applies to (a) cases of large-scale misappropriation of State and public property (b) forgery and coining, and (c) dangerous inmates of prisons terrorising other prisoners. The last-named has its origin in the well-known defencelessness of all “political” prisoners in the labour camps, where they have always been deliberately left at the mercy of the hoodlums and professional criminals and regarded as fair game for the pathological cruelty which imprisonment often engenders; but its apparent concern for their prison welfare may well mask a new plan for getting quietly rid of undesirable prisoners of every kind. Two further decrees prescribe banishment and forced labour for people convicted of “parasitic activities” (forbidden industries, private enterprise, speculation, begging, improper gainful use of private cars, use of hired labour, and obtaining rent from land and buildings).

In 1947, “in keeping with the people's wishes,” the death penalty was abolished except for treason and espionage (treason having a pretty wide meaning). In 1954 it came back for certain heinous kinds of murder, and in 1958 for terrorism and banditry. And after what seems to have been a period of experimental

and self-congratulatory leniency on the part of Mr. Khrushchev, Soviet legislation is now tightening its grip in all directions on the stubbornly and awkwardly surviving (not to say expanding) criminal community, no doubt in preparation for the 22nd Party Congress to be held in October this year—when, it is understood, Mr. Khrushchev intends to hand over the functions of the State to society, “completing the transition to communism.”

The two ugliest things about the new code of laws are the power of the “comrades' Courts” (against whose decision there is no appeal) to deport people “refusing socially useful work,” and the extension of the death penalty to dangerous and “terrorist” inmates of prisons. The former could remove a host of innocent but politically inconvenient citizens from the scene, and the latter could be used, without fear of challenge, as a reason for putting them to death.

“At a time when the Soviet Government,” wrote Max Beloff in *The Times* of 31st July, “is conducting a merciless campaign against the inefficiency and corruption that it finds in the running of the economy, the new programme relies wholly upon a ‘socialist education’ to ensure that the citizens do in fact give of their best in socially directed productive effort.” This may be the theory of the new programme, as it has been of its predecessors and of all the five-year and four-year plans (it is itself a fifty-year plan). But “socialist education” can still be seen as a system of indoctrination whose failures become exiled political prisoners—now, once more, to face the firing squad.

JEW'S FLEE CUBA

Almost all of the 2,000 Jews who lived in Cuba have fled from the country and their only congregation has been disbanded. This report was made to delegates attending the 12th International Conference of the World Union for Progressive Judaism in London, by Rabbi Hugo Gryn, its executive director. Rabbi Gryn said his co-religionists left the country, not because of direct persecution, but as a result of pressures similar to those aimed at prominent Catholics on the island.—E.P.S. Geneva.

HAVE WE HAD A SUBSCRIPTION FROM YOU?

Liberty in Turkey

(Continued from page 3)

the Turkish people, on pain of the severest penalties, of all the principal topics of the day—the Yassiada trials, the referendum itself, even the forthcoming elections. Many people, both Turks and foreign, rightly pointed out that it was a little unfair for the military régime to be trying Menderes for his life on a charge of violating the constitution, when the regime which deposed him was equally clearly flouting the constitutional rights of Turkish citizens.

Despite this the Turks are, I should say, sincere in their desire for democracy. But they are often carried away by their passions and forget about their ideals. The most crucial decision they will have to make for many years is the judgment they must shortly pass on the fallen leaders at Yassiada. Many Turks are bent on executing the chief among the former leaders, as a lesson to future generations that the principles of democracy should never again be flouted. What they have to consider, long and earnestly, is whether a torrent of blood at Yassiada is really the best foundation on which to construct the type of Western democratic régime on which their hearts seem genuinely set.

Work to be Done

(Continued from page 5)

now being born on the African continent. Under colonial rule, imprisonment without trial was regarded as a normal exercise of power. There is a danger that the emerging African States may accordingly come to regard the imprisonment of political opponents as not only a convenient exercise of sovereign power but also as the norm.

These were some of the considerations which prompted the Luxembourg Conference to decide that *Amnesty* should communicate with all the governments of the world to ascertain the extent to which the Rule of Law prevailed within their jurisdiction.

It was also decided that attempts should be made to influence governments who hitherto have been regarded as the most obdurate in their policies of political, religious or racial persecution.

These are but some of the conclusions of the Luxembourg Conference. The most important aspect of it, however, was the birth of an international movement dedicated to the preservation of liberty.

While the Eichmann trial was not mentioned at the Conference, one felt that, had an international movement such as *Amnesty* been in existence in the 1930's we might not have had a war, concentration camps, extermination chambers—or an Eichmann.

Heinz Brandt disappears

(Continued from page 5)

ber, 1958, Brandt fled to West Berlin. After six months in a refugee camp, he was offered the job of editor of *Metal*—and went to Frankfurt.

With such a background Brandt would never go back voluntarily to the German Democratic Republic. His colleagues are convinced of his innocence—and equally convinced that he was kidnapped. This can happen with particular ease in West Berlin.

Telegrams of protest have been sent to Mr. Khrushchev and Herr Ulbricht, the East German leader, asking for Brandt's release "in the name of humanity and international understanding." The telegrams have been sent by Brandt's friends in West Germany, by French left-wing leaders such as Daniel Mayer and Claude Bourdet, the French writer. Protests have been sent from the United States by Norman Cousins, Erich Fromm and Stuart Hughes, the Automobile Workers' Trade Union and the Electrical Workers' Trade Union. Not one of them has received any reply.

On 16th June, 1961, in West Berlin Brandt disappeared. He may be in an East German prison. He may, by now, be dead.

"The Spectator"

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Are You Helping?

If AMNESTY is to be effective as an instrument for the achieving of greater political liberty it must have a wider circulation—and it must be solvent.

Many of you who are reading this will already have sent in a subscription to the paper. We ask you to help us get AMNESTY more widely read. Mention it to your friends—mention it to strangers if you have the opportunity, circulate it or leave it somewhere where other people will read it. You can do something now by filling up the coupon below with the names of people whom you know would be interested in AMNESTY.

We have ourselves circulated the paper on approval to those we thought might take a subscription. Then we now ask to send in a guinea and in return they will receive AMNESTY until the end of the year.

As the weeks pass so the quality of the paper will improve. This fortnight's issue already carries features by a statesman, a distinguished scholar and some well-known journalists, not to mention Abu.

Will you help us to stay alive and grow?

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This is what AMNESTY is all about

THE organisation known as **APPEAL FOR AMNESTY 1961**, was launched by a group of lawyers, writers and publishers in London, all of different backgrounds, political attitudes and religious views.

It aims for the release of all people, in whatever country, who are held prisoner for their opinions and their conscience, who are physically restrained from expressing genuine non-violent views.

It aims to build up in all countries a publicity campaign which will set a tide of opinion running in favour of all Governments—of whatever shade of opinion, in whatever part of the world—guaranteeing the freedom of men to express their opinions and practice their faiths, however opposed to their nation's Establishment.

Membership of the founding group is reserved to those who are determined to ensure that the conduct of **APPEAL FOR AMNESTY 1961** remains wholly impartial — between countries, parties, politics, ideologies, religions. Its aim is not to speak for non-Communist prisoners in Communist lands, nor for Communist prisoners in other totalitarian lands, but to agitate for the rights of both—and, indeed, those who are neither.

The Joint Directors are: Eric Baker, former Joint Secretary of the Quaker Centre in Delhi and Secretary of the National Peace Council in London; and Peter Benenson, who in 1956 took the initiative which led to the formation of "Justice," the all-party body of lawyers to uphold the Rule of Law.

There is a tremendous lot more to be said about **APPEAL FOR AMNESTY 1961** that cannot be said in this column.

If you want to know more, as we hope you do, write to **Mitre Court Buildings** or 'phone **London Central 7867/9429**.