

News about previous prisoners:

CAROLINE OKELLO-ODONGO, Kenya (January 1967 Newsletter). Members have sent in a great many acknowledgements received from President Kenyatta's office. We also had a letter ourselves from the Comptroller suggesting that some of our members were "cranks running out of control", to which we replied appropriately. Rumours have reached us from reliable sources that the government is considering releasing Caroline, together with some of the other K.P.U. detainees, within the next few months.

MOHAMED SHAMIE, Tanzania (January 1966 Newsletter). Since the amnesty when 24 political prisoners were released, we have received disturbing reports of further unrest and arrests without trial on Zanzibar island. It seems that at least 70 people have been arrested since January.

JAMES BASS, Liberia (February 1967 Newsletter). James Bass has now been released on bail and the government has privately stated that it is quite likely that all charges will be dropped against him. The I.C.F.T.U. has written to Amnesty expressing their appreciation of the help that we have given. Members who wrote to Liberia about this prisoner and perhaps received no answer can justifiably feel gratified at the results of their work.

TERESA ASILVERA DE PATINO, Paraguay (November 1966 Newsletter). We have received news of this prisoner through a contact who informs us that she has been moved to another prison where she has a comfortable room with a WC. She has a sewing machine and, being a seamstress, is allowed to make clothes to keep herself and her child, who is now four years old. Her health has improved as she was treated for haemorrhoids in the prison hospital, where she was given drugs sent to her by friends. Her husband has been promised his freedom and hopes to be discharged. We have been recommended not to write any letters to or on behalf of this prisoner at the moment as they might jeopardise her chances of being freed.

ELENI VOULGARI, Greece (February 1967 Newsletter). She has now had her baby (a boy) and is planning to marry her fiance, Caralambos Golemas, as soon as she is sufficiently well to do so. Apparently she will be allowed to keep her child with her for the first 2½ years of his life in prison, after which the father will assume responsibility for him. You are encouraged to continue to send cards to the King on her behalf pleading for a remission of her 10-year sentence.

DEMETRIO VALLEJO MARTINEZ, Mexico (December 1966 Newsletter). Some members have received replies from the Mexican Government which state that Vallejo is "a common delinquent, not a political one, and is subject to judicial process in which he will have all the guarantees that the Penal Code offers backed up by the Constitution of the United States of Mexico". The Mexican Government's reply is a trifle disingenuous. Vallejo was arrested under the much criticised 1941 Law of Social Dissolution which covers the distribution of "Propaganda of whatever form that will disturb public order or affect national sovereignty". Strikes are among the activities which are construed as disturbing public order. Offences under this law are classified as criminal. This law has been condemned both by reputable lawyers and the Mexican press. It also violates several articles of the Constitution.

HERE ARE THIS MONTH'S PRISONERS:DAVID MITCHELL, U.S.A.

24 year old Political Conscientious Objector serving a five year prison sentence in Connecticut for "non co-operation" with the system of conscription in his country. (Amnesty knows of nearly 200 young men imprisoned in the USA because of their objection to fighting in Vietnam). Before his trial he had been working in a Greenwich Village bookshop. He started his sentence in February 1967.

David Mitchell has a long history of resistance to conscription. He was first arrested at the age of 18 together with 7 other members of the Committee for Non-violent Action for attempting to interfere with the commissioning of the nuclear submarine Ethan Allan. In 1962 he launched the "End of the Draft" Committee in Brooklyn.

In January 1965 he refused induction writing: "I challenge the right of the Draft Board to classify anyone or even exist as an agent of United States cold war policies which are in violation of treaties and international law. The age old principle that an individual is individually responsible and can be found guilty for participation in criminal acts of his government has a legal precedent in the Nuremberg trials and the First Session of the United Nations General Assembly". He was found guilty of avoiding conscription.

An Appeal Court reversed his original conviction and remanded him for a new trial. The main point of Mitchell's defence was his objection to United States "war crimes" in Vietnam. The judge rejected the defence submissions and a sentence of 5 years' imprisonment was confirmed.

Send your appeals to: Mr. Nicholas Katzenbach,
Attorney General of the U.S.A.
Department of Justice,
Constitution Avenue,
between 9th and 10th Streets,
Washington D.C., 20530. USA.

and, Mr John Dempsey,
Attorney General,
State Capitol,
Hartford,
Connecticut,
U.S.A.

DR. CARLOS SERRATE REICH, Bolivia.

Dr. Carlos Serrate Reich is an advocate in Laz Paz. He has been a correspondent of Amnesty International. In July 1966 he wrote to us describing the reign of terror under the military junta which seized power in November 1964 and the deportation without trial of opponents of the government. In July 1966 the military regime became a civilian government and General Rene Barrientos was elected President with more than 60% of the votes. General Barrientos embarked on a policy of economic co-operation with Argentina and his government was regarded as stable and moderately progressive. In January 1967 there were student demonstrations in Laz Paz; these demonstrations were anti-American and were a protest against a Government decision to allow private educational establishments to give academic degrees. The demonstrations were considered by the authorities to be the work of a widespread anti-Government organisation and the Government reacted by deporting 20-30 left-wing political leaders and critics. The deportations were made without trial and are completely unconstitutional, because the State Security Law under which they were ordered lapsed when constitutional government was re-established last July.

Dr. Serrate was arrested on January 18th and was deported to a concentration camp in the Amazon jungle. His wife writes that the prisoners have no medical attention, have to subsist on tropical food, are a prey to tropical diseases and have no recourse to lawyers.

Letters of protest should be written to:

President Rene Barrientos Ortuno, and to: Senor Antonio Arguedas, the Minister of the
Ministro de Gobierno, Interior, at the same address.

La Paz,
BOLIVIA

Letters of support may be sent to: Senora Marta de
Serrate, Casilla 1198, La Paz, BOLIVIA.

JACEK KURON and KAROL MODZELEWSKI, Poland.

Karol Modzelewski is a Communist aged 29 who comes from a traditionally Communist family; his father was Polish Foreign Minister in the early fifties and his mother is a member of the Polish Writers Union. He was a history lecturer at Warsaw University until the spring of 1964 when he was suspended from his post due to his active participation in a club for political discussion.

Jacek Kuron is aged 32 and was also a lecturer at Warsaw University. Less is known about his background, but it is reported that he had been awarded the Polish Silver Medal for his political work with young people, and that he was about to start work on his doctorate in the field of pedagogy. On March 19th, 1965 both he and Modzelewski were arrested. The following July both were tried on charges of preparing material containing false information about the social, political and judicial system in the country. This refers to their joint authorship of an "Open Letter to the Party". The Defence maintained that they had expressed opinions and that they had not given any information. However the Court rejected the evidence of the Defence. Kuron was sentenced to 3 years and Modzelewski to 3 years and 5 months imprisonment. In passing this sentence the Court invoked the so-called Small Penal Code which was created during the Stalinist era and intended to be a temporary measure to deal with the reconstruction period (1945-48).

Although the trial had been fixed to coincide with the summer vacation hundreds of Warsaw University students waited outside the Court and when the two men were led away in handcuffs the Internationale was sung.

Both men are obliged to do physical work in prison and although the Ministry of Justice gave permission for them to continue with their academic work it is reported that they are being denied writing materials.

Send your cards to: Jacek Kuron, Karol Modzelewski,
Wiezienie Potulice, Wiezienie Barczewo,
Naklo, via Olsztyn,
POLAND. POLAND.

Also to: Wladyslaw Gomulka,
First Secretary,
Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party,
ul. Nowy Swiat,
Warsaw,
POLAND.