

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER



## MISSIONS

South East Asia: Since the beginning of December, Estrella Carreras has been travelling in South East Asia, meeting Amnesty contacts and, in the Philippines, discussing the formation of a Section. On 30 December on her return to Singapore from Brunei, she was refused permission to enter the Republic. Later, she was listed as a prohibited immigrant. The Singapore Government has not told Amnesty the reasons for this action, but the decision appears to be related to the fact that her visit coincided with an attempt by the opposition party, the Barisan Socialis, to publicise detention conditions, prior to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.

Portugal: Seven defendants were acquitted in the recent political trial in Portugal attended by Dr. van Andel, an Amnesty observer. The trial, which lasted from November 24 to December 21, involved nine men on charges connected with M.O.D. (Movimento de Oposicao Democratica). All political organisations except the ruling party are banned in Portugal. It was therefore claimed by the prosecution that the defendants were acting illegally in working for M.O.D. Three of the accused were also alleged to be members of the communist party. The main line of defence was that M.O.D. was not an organisation but a movement - an argument which the tribunal finally accepted. Two of the defendants, however, were found guilty of membership of the communist party and were given prison sentences.

## ORGANISATION

Tenth Anniversary: The Tenth Anniversary of the foundation of Amnesty International will take place on 28 May 1971. Background material will be sent soon by the International Secretariat to the National Sections. The groups may use the occasion for an all-out effort on behalf of their adopted prisoners, and the Sections for an intensive publicity and fund-raising drive.

Treasurers' Conference: A meeting of treasurers and fund raisers of national sections was held in Hamburg on January 9 and 10. In considering the budget for the International Secretariat for the years 1971/73 it was recognised that additional fund-raising over and above group contributions was required and there was a useful exchange of ideas on fund-raising techniques. A report will be sent to national sections.

Indian Section: Shri K.R.F. Khilnani, formerly Ambassador of India and now Counsel, Supreme Court of India, has become a secretary of the Indian section.

Kidnapping: Amnesty International issued a press release on January 7, stating that there was no contact between Amnesty and the kidnapers of the Swiss Ambassador to Brazil. This followed press reports that Amnesty International would receive the fees from a German periodical for an article relating to the kidnapping. No money has been received from such a source.

Prisoner of Conscience Week: Reports received so far indicate that Prisoner of Conscience Week 1970 was successful and active. In New South Wales the programme included a display, seminars, a concert, and a meeting addressed by Krishna Murti. In Luxembourg there was good publicity, a number of exhibitions were held and new members were enrolled. A German group reports that it distributed pamphlets, held a bazaar to raise money and increased its membership. British groups carried on similar activities: one group also held a church service and another held a meeting at which three former prisoners spoke. Members in Tasmania organised an active campaign, including contact with relevant trade unions. Next years' Prisoner of Conscience Week is related to "persons imprisoned by reason of their ethnic origin, colour or language." This was decided at the International Council Meeting in Oslo and confirmed by the International Executive Committee last month. It will link with the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, called for 1971 by the United Nations.

International Assembly (Luxembourg - September 24 to 26): Suggestions are invited for topics to be considered by the commissions which will be established at the International Assembly. The Assembly is "for the purpose of information, discussion and consultation and shall not have the power to adopt any decisions" (Article 24 of the Statute of Amnesty International). In preparing the agenda, however, we are anxious that it should reflect the wishes of the membership, and the International Executive Committee will consider at its March meeting the procedure to be adopted in Luxembourg. We urgently need to know how many people are likely to attend. Registration forms are being sent to national sections. An exhibition of Amnesty posters and other productions by national sections will be arranged. Please send copies of all Amnesty International material, especially posters, to the International Secretariat as soon as possible.

U.S.A.: Amnesty's report on conscientious objectors in the U.S.A. was published on January 15th.

### COUNTRIES

Korea (South): It has been reported that 75 prisoners were released under the new year amnesty. Among them are believed to be Chung Kyoo-Myung (40), former physicist at Frankfurt University; Chung Ha-Ryong (35), former Professor in Seoul; and Cho Yung-Soo (34), a university lecturer in Seoul. They were sentenced for "having belonged to an East Berlin espionage ring working for North Korea", together with 31 other prisoners who were released earlier.

Death Sentences: Death sentences passed in Leningrad and Burgos were commuted, but in Cameroun only three out of six death sentences passed have been commuted. Telegrams were sent by the International Secretariat in all these cases together with direct approaches to the Governments concerned. Cables failed to prevent the executions in Guinea.

Spain: A State of Emergency has been declared in one of the Basque provinces and Article 18 of the Statute Law (habeas corpus) has been suspended for six months over the whole of Spain. Reports of arrests without trial are reaching us.

Greece: A letter from a group of imprisoned Greek intellectuals appeals to Amnesty not to stop its "intense work in all directions to rescue all Greek political detainees." Expressing "warm thanks and sincere gratefulness" to Amnesty International it says: "For years we have remained in prison... Especially bad are the conditions under which the political detainees are kept... Instead of becoming more human most of the time they deteriorate. The sick remain without aid; sometimes in damp or unsuitable prisons; political detainees are dispersed and mixed with common criminals, in order to render their ideas and their relationships ineffective, and to create the impression that political detainees do not exist in Greece. Above all, none of our problems which we have put forward to Greek officials of the Red Cross has been solved and the report remains secret. The Government does not renew the agreement with the Red Cross. In this way it wants to get rid of one silent but particularly annoying testimony."

Rhodesia: When a man is released from restriction in Rhodesia, he is faced with the problem of unemployment and inability to support his family. There is mass unemployment among Africans; and former prisoners, restrictees and detainees suffer additional handicaps when seeking work from white employers. Their situation is so serious that organisations in Rhodesia have initiated schemes to teach them pig-raising, chicken rearing, carpentry and building, or vegetable growing. The aim is to enable them eventually to become self-supporting. Such schemes, however, have to be financed. Many Amnesty groups are willing to contribute towards the maintenance of their restrictee and his family even after he has been released, and it might be more productive to contribute towards these self-help schemes. The cost of training is approximately £25 per individual. Groups who are interested can contact the International Secretariat for further details.

Portugal: Inger Fahlander, the Amnesty staff member responsible for research on Portugal, spent Christmas in Lisbon. After a week, the police came to her hotel room and asked her to leave the country immediately. At the Embassy in London the Press Counsellor, Senhor Potier, informed Amnesty that the action may have been taken because the police felt that Miss Fahlander unduly interfered with the internal situation of the country. The Secretary General and Dr. Zeman had explained that during her visit Miss Fahlander had seen released prisoners and their families and that there had been no intention of interfering with the internal situation of the country.



RECOMMENDED BOOKS

"Violence in Southern Africa: A Christian Assessment", produced by the Student Christian Movement and available from their London office (56 Bloomsbury St., London, WC1 3QX), 15s, 1970. "Power and Society in Contemporary Peru" by Francois Bourricaud. Faber and Faber 70s, London 1970. "Greece 1963 - 1970", produced by the National Union of Greek Students (EFEE) and available from EFEE, 60 Tottenham Court Road, London W.1. 6s. 1970. "The Russian Secret Police 1565 - 1970" by Ronald Hingley. Hutchinson and Co. 60s, 1970. "The Enemy: Notes on Imperialism and Revolution", by Felix Greene. Jonathan Cape 18s, 1970.

POSTCARDS FOR PRISONERS CAMPAIGN

News of Prisoners who have been on this campaign:

Caio Prado - Brazil (May 1970). His sentence of 18 months was upheld at the last appeal hearing.

This month's prisoners:-

Ananias MAIDANA Palacios - PARAGUAY

Ananias Maidana Palacios was born in 1924. He was educated to the level of secondary school teacher, but at the time of his arrest was working as a store-keeper. He was arrested on 3rd June, 1959, while leaving a bus. Accused of being a communist, he has never been brought to trial.

This prisoner is alleged to have been tortured over a period of seven months. For the rest of the time he has been kept in a cell at the 3rd police station in the centre of Asuncion. Ten prisoners share a cell which is said to measure 3 metres by 4 metres. Washing facilities consist of a small tin can in the cell itself. Prisoners rarely leave the cell, and Mr. Maidana Palacios has not been out of his cell for six years. Like several other prisoners he has lost all his teeth through lack of sunlight and deficiency of food and vitamins. He has not been allowed written communication for the past 11 years. His wife and daughter, who was born shortly after his arrest, are allowed to visit him for a few minutes every Sunday morning, in the presence of a guard and separated from the prisoner by two sets of bars.

Cards pleading for his release should be sent to: President Alfredo Stroessner, Asuncion, Paraguay; or the Paraguayan Embassy in your own country.

Gabriel DOMBAL - TCHAD

Tchad, which was formerly part of French Equatorial Africa, became independent on August 11th, 1960. In March 1962 all political parties were banned except the Tchad Progressive Party (PPT). The following year, after elections under a Presidential Constitution, Tchad became officially a one-party state ruled by the PPT under the leadership of President Francois Tombalbaye. Since independence Tchad has had its share of internal problems: in March 1963 and December 1967 the discovery of 'plots' against the Tombalbaye regime was announced, and large scale arrests followed. Since 1968 French troops have been aiding the Tchad government in putting down a rebellion among the predominantly Moslem population in the northern part of the country. Internal discontent with President Tombalbaye's autocratic regime has been fermenting for some time.

Early in 1968 the Tchad government announced the arrest of eight trade unionists, including Mr. Gabriel Dombal. On February 25th, 1968, President Tombalbaye stated that they had been arrested for distributing anti-government pamphlets. He said that the pamphlets attacked him personally as well as his government's policies, and blamed 'hidden forces' for trying to discredit the national leaders at a time when Tchad was fighting to maintain its independence and working to increase its prestige abroad. Mr. Dombal was Assistant Secretary of the Union National des Travailleurs de Chad (UNATRAD). Most of the others arrested were also members of this union. Mr. Dombal has been an Amnesty investigation case for over two years, but the Tchad government has not been willing to divulge information concerning his fate. It is not known whether he has in fact been tried and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, or where he is being held. The cases of these

prisoners were given prominence during Prisoner of Conscience Week in November 1970.

Please send your cards to: His Excellency M. Francois Tombalbaye, President of the Republic, Fort Lamy, Tchad; or M. Joseph Brahim Seid, Minister of Justice, Fort Lamy, Tchad.

Natalya Gorbanevskaya - USSR

Natalya Gorbanevskaya, engineer, philologist, translator and poet, is aged about 33 and has two children. Over the last decade she has played an active role in the new samizdat or unofficial publishing movement, and latterly she was a founding member of the "Action Group for the Defence of Civil Rights in the USSR". A few of her poems have appeared in official publications, but the majority have been printed in samizdat. She worked for the State Institute of Experimental Pattern Design and Technical Research as an engineer and translator but was forced to resign from this job in the autumn of 1968 after demonstrating in Red Square, against Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. After the demonstration in Red Square, all the participants, except Natalya Gorbanevskaya, were sentenced to terms of labour camp or exile. After her release, although officially declared to be insane, she is believed to have travelled extensively, collecting information about arrests and imprisonment, probably with the aim of publishing it in the Chronicle of Current Events,\* the unofficial newspaper of the samizdat movement.

In the summer of 1969 two appeals were sent to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, drawing attention to violation of human rights in the USSR. Mrs. Gorbanevskaya's signature appeared on both and she may well have been one of the leading organisers of the petition. In December she was arrested and sent to a psychiatric clinic for investigation. In July 1970 a trial was held at which Mrs. Gorbanevskaya was charged with "the systematic distribution in verbal form of clearly false fabrications discrediting the Soviet State and public order as well as the preparation or distribution in written, printed or other form of such content." She herself was absent from the proceedings, being considered a psychiatric case. The defence pointed out the existence of two reports on her mental condition. The first, prepared the previous November by the chief psychiatrist of Moscow, concluded that Mrs. Gorbanevskaya was not mentally ill and did not require treatment in a psychiatric hospital. The other report prepared by the Serbsky Institute for Forensic Psychiatry concluded that she was suffering from a type of schizophrenia, of which there were no visible symptoms and that she should be forced to have treatment. The Serbsky Institute is notorious for producing diagnoses of mental illness in cases of people arrested after criticising the Soviet system. Despite the strong arguments of the defence, the court found Mrs. Gorbanevskaya guilty of infringing articles 190 (1) and 191 of the RSFSR Penal Code, while of unsound mind, and ordered her to be placed in a psychiatric hospital "of special type" for compulsory treatment for an indefinite period.

Please send your cards to Mr. Aleksei Kosygin, President of the Council of Ministers of the USSR - Address: SSSR, g. Moskva, Kreml, Predsedatelyu Sovieta Ministrov SSSR, Kosyginu, Alekseyu, USSR; or The Ministry of Health of the RSFSR - Address: SSSR, g. Moskva, Vadkovsky pereulek 18 - 20, Ministerstvo Zdravookhraneniya RSFSR, USSR.

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\* The Chronicle of Current Events will be published for the first time, on a trial basis, as a printed document early in February. In order to finance continued publication we shall need at least 600 subscriptions. The cost will be £3 a year for five to six copies of the Chronicle. Groups will be informed of the new arrangements in due course.