AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, Turnagain Lane,
Farringdon Street, London E.C.4.

POSTCARDS FOR PRISONERS CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER - MAY 1967

This month's releases:

Dr. Carlos Serrate Reich, Bolivia (March 1967 Newsletter). On 25th April we received the following cable from Dr. Serrate. "I wish to inform you that on the 23rd April I was restored my libertyafter 95 days of confinement in the Amazon forest thanks to the help of Amnesty International. I thank you for the many sentiments of sympathy with my wife in difficult times, and I congratulate Amnesty International for its humanitarian work in defending human rights and freedom of thought". The release of Dr. Serrate, who had been deported from La Paz without trial and removed to a concentration camp in the Amazon jungle, is a notable step forward in Amnesty's work in Latin America. This is the first occasion on which we have had such a dramatic success in this region and all Members who wrote to the Bolivian Government or to Senora Serrate are to be thanked for their work on his behalf.

Jacek Kuron, Poland. (March 1967 Newsletter) "Le Monde" of May 12th carried the good news of the release from prison of the Warsaw lecturer Jacek Kuron 14 months before his sentence was due to expire. It is also reported that Karol Modzelewski will be released this October. This news has been confirmed by reliable sources in London.

Sadi Alkilic, Turkey. (January 1967 Newsletter). On the 15th May 1967 we received the news that Sadi Alkilic was released from prison. No further details are known yet, but it is evident that Amnesty's work helped.

Inima Leite Flores, Brazil (October 1966 Newsletter). Members will be delighted to hear that one of the Members of the Campaign has received a reply from the Governor of the State of Guanabara dated 2nd May 1967 informing us that this prisoner has been freed.

News about previous prisoners:

Demetrio Vallejo Martinez, Mexico. (December 1966 Newsletter) We have heard from the Group which has adopted Vallejo and is directly in touch with him through his family that he is starting a hunger strike this month in protest against his continued detention. Members are asked to renew their appeal for clemency to:
Senor Excelencia el President Diaz Ordaz, Palacio Presidential, Ciudad de Mexico, Mexico

Mihajlo Mihajlov, Yugoslavia. (November 1966 Newsletter). Mihajlov was sentenced on the 19th April to 4½ years imprisonment on three separate charges. He was accused of publishing and engaging in hostile propaganda against the Yugoslav State. In addition to the prison sentence he has been banned from "engaging in public activity" for 4 years after release.

Octavio Jorda Laliga, Spain. (April 1967 Newsletter). Many Members have received a repl in Spanish from Manuel Iribane Fraga, Minister of Information and Tourism in which he explains the circumstances of Sr. Jorda's arrest for distributing "illegal" propaganda. His case will come up for trial on the 27th May. Amnesty is sending a representative to his trial, an English Labour M.P.

Father Elemer Rozsa, Hungary. (January 1967 Newsletter). The Ministry of Justice has granted Bishop Pal Brezanoczy, apostolic administrator of the diocese of Eger, permissio to visit Father Rozsa and other priests in prison. It is hoped that some of these priests, sentenced to long terms of imprisonment at closed trials, may be released in the near future. According to the KNA (Catholic News Agency) their total number is ove thirty.

Alexander Ginsburg, USSR. (February 1967 Newsletter). He is still detained in the Lefortovo prison in Moscow and awaiting trial. According to the same source some of the people who were arrested last January during a brief demonstration in Moscow are also in prison with him. They are said to have undergone "psychiatric treatment".

Here are this month's prisoners:

RADOMIR ISAKOV - Yugoslavia

Radomir Isakov is a Yugoslav conscientious objector serving a four year sentence on the penal island of Goli Otok.

He was brought to trial in 1966 for his refusal to perform duties involving the handli of lethal weapons, while in the Yugoslav army on military service. As a Nazarene - a small religious sect - Isakov's beliefs compel him to practice strict non-violence at all times. Nazarenes are willing to accept military service on condition that they can avoid handling guns or other instruments of destruction. But the Yugoslav authorities have consistently refused to allow them alternative domestic or administrative jobs. Heavy - and often repeated - sentences are the rule.

Cont...

Radomir Isakov cont..

Send your cards to: The Minister of Justice,
Milorad Zoric,
Savezni Sekretarijat 2a,
Pravosvdje,
Belgrade 35, Yugoslavia.

and To the Yugoslav Ambassador in Members' countries.

ILIAS ILIOU - Greece

As a result of the recent military coup in Greece many thousands of people have been arrested and detained without trial. A few of the Centre Union politicians are still detained in Athens but the vast majority (6,138 according to the latest official information) are now on the island of Yioura. Their cases are being examined by a special commission and the new Minister of the Interior has promised that half of them will be released shortly. It is not clear, however, whether these releases will depend on the prisoners signing some statement of loyalty.

Conditions of Yioura are known to be bad. The island is barren and waterless and all drinking water has to be imported. Many of the detainees are people who were listed as communists or communist sympathizers during the time of the Civil War and many are now old and ill. One case which arouses particular concern is that of Ilias Iliou - a well known lawyer and the parliamentary leader of the left-wing EDA Party. Iliou is 65, he is a diabetic and he is also suffering from severe arterial disease, for which he was operated on in London last year. He is therefore urgently in need of permanent supplies of insulin and of proper medical care, which he is unlikely to be receiving on Yioura.

You are asked to send cards appealing for Iliou's immediate and unconditional release to:

General Stylianos Patakos,
Minister of Interior,
Stadiou and Dragatsaniou Streets,
Athens, Greece.

and

Mr. Constantine Kolias,
The Prime Minister,
Palaia Anaktora,
Queen Sofia Avenue, Athens, Greece.

ABBE GOBENJA - Ethiopia.

Abbe Gobenja is the most popular author in Ethiopia writing to-day and has been described as the Bernard Shaw of Ethiopian writers. Many of his novels take the form of a satirical commentary on present day Ethiopian society. His last two novels 'The Flaming Sword' and 'I do not wish to be born' were banned by the Ethiopian censorship, an active body more concerned to censor political or social ideas than pornography.

Abbe Gobenja was employed as a civil servant in the Ministry of Health. Shortly before the election in 1965 he resigned his post so as to be eligible to stand for Parliament. He was arrested shortly afterwards and has been in prison ever since. He has never been brought to trial nor, it is believed, have any charges every been made against him. First detained in Gore, a remote, primitive area where many political prisoners are held, he has recently been moved to Mocha in Illubabu Province.

Abbe Gobenja is 28 years old and married. He comes from the ruling Amharic group and is described as a gentle,dreamy,young man, who although a convinced advocate of social change in his writings, certainly never advocated any violent over-throw of the existing regime.

Send your cards to:

His Imperial Majesty,
Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia,
P.O. Box 520
Grand Palace Compound,
Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia.

and

H.E. The Minister of Justice,
Mamme Tadesse,
Imperial Ethiopian Ministry of Justice,
P.O. Box 1370,
Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia.