

December 1969

First some news about prisoners who have been on this Campaign:

Thich Thien Minh, South Vietnam (October 1969) was released on November 1, 1969 in connection with an amnesty for 310 political prisoners to coincide with National Day of South Vietnam.

Teresa Asilvera de Patino, Paraguay, (November 1966). It is believed that Mrs Asilvera de Patino is released and is now living in Buenos Aires. We hope to receive confirmation soon.

Sr. Alfonso Carlos COMIN Ros, Spain (March 1969) continues to be held in La Modelo Prison in Barcelona and is now believed to be working for the shortening of his sentence in the prison's shoe workshop. Many changes have taken place in the Spanish Government since the last newsletter and since Sr. Fraga Iribarne is no longer Minister of Information and Tourism, it could be useful to write to the new Foreign Secretary pleading for Sr. Comin's release: Don Gregorio LOPEZ Bravo, Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Plaza de Santa Cruz, Madrid, Spain.

Dr Abdul Rahman al-Bazzaz, Iraq (August 1969). It is known that Dr Bazzaz is now receiving good medical treatment. He is, in fact, being cared for by the same doctor as the President. Wild rumours that he had been seen at various European airports are entirely without foundation.

Patrick Peter Ooko, Kenya (May 1969). One of the other trades union leaders originally arrested with Mr Ooko in 1966 has since been rearrested under the Preventive Detention legislation together with the leader of the opposition party, all opposition members of parliament and several party officials. The K.P.U. has been banned and it now seems improbable that Mr Ooko will be released in the near future.

Noureddine Ben Khader, Tunisia (July 1969).

An amnesty of 43 political prisoners was announced on December 7 which should include Mr Ben Khader.

Here are this month's prisoners:

Ignacio Chamorro, Paraguay

One third of the Paraguayan population lives in exile in the countries bordering Paraguay. In spite of this the names of more than 100 political prisoners are known to us, many of them in prison for 5 to 10 years without trial. One of them is

Ignacio Chamorro. At the time of his arrest he was a young boatman who innocently ferried some guerrillas over the river where he was working. It is claimed by reliable sources that he is not connected with any activities against the dictatorial Stroessner government. He was a member of the Liberal party.

Ignacio Chamorro has now been held for 10 years without trial. In 1967 he went on hunger strike, for almost two months, but without result. During September this year he went on hunger strike again. (His sugar content was sustained by means of chocolate secretly passed into him).

Cards appealing for his release should be sent to:

EITHER OR to the Director of the Police Station where he is held:
Ministro del Interior, Comisaria Policial Seccional Segunda,
Senor Don Sabino Montanaro, Villa Aurelia,
Asuncion, Asuncion,
Paraguay Paraguay

Po Yang, Formosa (Taiwan)

Po Yang, who is about 45, is one of Formosa's most popular writers and the former editor of a Taipei newspaper. He is one of a number of intellectuals sentenced by the military tribunal of the Formosan Garrison Command under the Nationalist regime's continuing campaign to limit intellectual dissent in their country.

Po Yang (commonly used pen-name: his real name being Kuo Yi Tung), whose 30 novels and collections of essays made him a leading intellectual figure, was arrested in March 1969 and charged with offences alleged to have been committed 20 years previously. (He was, for example, accused of having attended a Communist "spy school" in Manchuria for two days in 1949).

It is commonly believed by Western and American observers that his arrest came about because he angered the regime by translating a Popeye cartoon which could be interpreted as satirizing President Chiang Kai-shek and his elder son, Deputy Premier Chiang Ching-kuo. The cartoon showed Popeye and a boy alone on an island, with Popeye claiming himself President and the boy making fun of him for wanting to deliver a speech to the non-existent nation.

In a court session open to his lawyer and relatives Po Yang repudiated previous confessions which had been forcibly extracted from him during prolonged and exhausting interrogations. His trial was not finally concluded until July 1969, by which time he had already spent 16 months in prison - for the first 6 months he was held incommunicado. As Po Yang was given a 12 year sentence for charges which usually carry a mandatory death sentence, there is speculation that the Formosan Government was concerned about the interest shown in Po Yang's case by Chinese intellectuals abroad.

Send your cards to: Premier Chiang Kai Shek,
Formosan Government,
Taipei,
Formosa

Angel Cuadra Landrove, Cuba

Since the Revolution in 1959 Castro and his Government have maintained tight control of their one-party state. Dealing strictly with those who deviate from Party policies and ideologies. Trade unionists of prominence were imprisoned for periods of as much as 30 years when they fell out with Castro in the early years, and the Government still takes a grave view of those who do not conform to its view of "the Revolution" and the country's welfare.

Emigration is made extremely difficult (because emigrants are seen as being disloyal to the country and the Revolution). Most have to leave almost all their money and property in Cuba and to wait a long time for permission to leave. Some classes of professional people are even prohibited emigration because their skills are deemed important.

It seems to be these views which have led to the imprisonment of Angel Cuadra Landrove. He is a 38 year old lawyer who does not like living under the post-Revolution government and has several times attempted to emigrate. He three times obtained study scholarships from foreign sources to study abroad and was, each time, not allowed to leave. He was finally tried and sentenced on ill-defined charges of activities against the State 10 years previously. He was not allowed an opportunity of defence, and has now served 2 years of his sentence in Guanahay Prison.

Amnesty Group Germany 45 is currently also running a postcard campaign for this man.

Addresses to which postcards should be sent are:

EITHER

OR

Ministerio del Interior de Cuba,
La Habana,
Cuba

Secretaria de la Presidencia
de la Republica,
La Habana,
Cuba

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Several members have asked us not to acknowledge every reply they send in to the Secretariat. While we appreciate their wish to reduce the work of the staff here, it is in fact very difficult to keep a record of which people (out of a membership approaching 1,000) don't want an acknowledgement. It would help us if you could write NO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT NEEDED on each reply sent in should you not want its receipt acknowledged.

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