

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

1 Mitre Court Buildings, Temple, London, E.C.4.

Bulletin No. 4.

Christmas 1962

Please forgive me for not writing individually but the AMNESTY movement has now grown to such proportions that it is difficult to write separate letters to each of our groups in different countries.

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

From what we have heard the ceremonies went off with success in many different parts of the world. I was particularly pleased to receive a batch of newspaper cuttings from South Africa showing that even there it had been possible to organise commemorations of Human Rights Day. There have been radio or TV programmes connected with AMNESTY's work in England, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Ireland and U.S.A. to my knowledge; there may have been others as well of which we have not heard.

The leading BBC TV programme "Panorama" will present the work of AMNESTY on Monday 24th December, which will give us a chance to stir the conscience of the world at Christmas-time.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The arrangements for publication of the Code seem to have gone well and a number of newspapers have printed references to it - not as fully perhaps as we would have liked. Nonetheless the existence of the Code has become widely known particularly as a result of broadcast references on all the BBC Overseas Services.

GROUPS OF THREE

There are now 125 of these groups established - a very encouraging increase in the last three months. We are re-organising the Technical Department at this office in order to deal with the added volume of work. Can I appeal to all our groups to concentrate during the coming year on forming these active groups which adopt three prisoners? There is no doubt that the intervention of groups can be effective; and it is only by forming new groups that we can intervene on behalf of the increasing number of cases referred to us.

CONFERENCES

We are hoping to arrange for the third international meeting of the AMNESTY Movement to be held on the weekend 21/22 September 1963. The theme of the conference may be "Pressures on the judicial system in political cases" dealing with the methods of interrogation with a special emphasis on psychological methods. It is hoped that it may be possible for the German Section to arrange for the meeting to be held at a suitable place in West Germany.

There will be a conference on "Asylum in Southern Africa" at the beginning of May in London. This will deal with the whole position of refugees from South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique, emphasising the need to provide physical protection and financial assistance for those who have found asylum in Basutoland, Swaziland, Bechuanaland and Nyasaland.

It is tentatively planned to hold a second conference during the autumn on "Personal Freedom in the Muslim World". Further details about this will be circulated during the spring.

CREDO

You will have noticed that there is an announcement on the inside cover of "A time to keep silence and a time to speak" of the forthcoming publication of a series of original essays on the conflict between obedience and conscience by a number of distinguished world figures. These essays will be published under the title "Credo" in England and the U.S.A. Some arrangements have already been made for translations but any group concerned to arrange for publication of this important book in their country should write to this office without delay; all the proceeds will be devoted to AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Will you please note that as from the 1st January 1963 the official title of our movement is "AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL". We shall be obliged if you would use this on your writing paper and publications. At the same time will you please, where convenient, make use of the candle emblem which appears on the head of this bulletin.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

We have had a number of complaints that our Christmas card this year was too depressing. We are arranging to have a wider selection next year to cater for those who like cheerfulness and bright colours.

ENVOI

From 2nd January 1963 Roger Burke will take up his duties as full-time Secretary of AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. Neville Vincent and I will remain actively connected with the work, but each of us is obliged to earn our living during the forthcoming year, consequently we can no longer devote all our energies to AMNESTY. Roger Burke (about whom details will appear in the next Quarterly magazine) is young, energetic and himself a former volunteer worker.

Finally, may I wish you and all those in your country who have helped the work of AMNESTY a joyful Christmas, and a New Year which brings hope to all the Prisoners of Conscience in the world. The office staff and the many volunteers at the London office join me in thanking you for all your work and wishing you well.

Peter Benenson.