

air

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Jews, Wafdists, Muslim Brothers, Yemenis—In U.A.R. Prisons

Reports by the Israeli Government claim that at least 70,000 people are now in prison in Egypt. Our information suggests that this figure is highly exaggerated, but the numbers known to us are still very considerable.

Three thousand Muslim Brothers are held without trial and in appalling conditions. One thousand seven hundred of these are in Tourah prison, near Cairo, 80-100 to a cell, with open buckets for sanitation, kept on a diet of beans twice a day. (Prisoners in Egyptian jails normally have to buy their own food.) Many are alleged to have been tortured though the worst reports do not refer to Tourah. Few Muslim Brothers would probably be AMNESTY cases since the sect is both fanatical and violent, but it may be possible for us to collect enough information to enable us to protest against the inhuman conditions in which they are held.

Between 200 and 400 Egyptian Jews are still under arrest since the outbreak of the Arab/Israeli war but it is believed that releases are continuing and that they are, on the whole, well treated—or at least not treated any worse than the other inmates of Egyptian prisons, which have never had a very good reputation. The International Red Cross, which has a delegation in Cairo, has recently been authorised to visit stateless Jews in detention and to bring prisoners relief and parcels from their families. Jewish prisoners are now for the first time being allowed to receive visits from their families.

Other groups in prison, all without trial, include 50 Wafdists arrested for making a demonstration at the funeral of Nahas Pasha (the demonstration consisted of passing his coffin from hand to hand through the streets of Cairo to the famous mosque of Al Azhar); several hundred "feudalists", members of landed families turned off their estates by the late Field-Marshal Amer's "Committee for the Liquidation of Feudalists"; about 80 political non-conformists of different kinds—some ex-Wafdists, ex-communists and ex-Muslim Brothers, as well as the courageous lawyer who defended the Muslim Brothers in a major political case last year. The last communists imprisoned in Egypt, mostly "Chinese" communist

intellectuals, writers and musicians, were released after the Defence Minister's return from Moscow during the Arab/Israeli war.

Another group held under house arrest, reported well treated and perhaps soon to be released, are the 40 members of the unlucky Yemeni Republican Delegation arrested in Cairo in 1965 when the pro-Egyptian Republicans, led by Sallal, took power in their absence with Egyptian connivance. This group, which so rashly left for Cairo together, includes the Prime Minister and virtually all the members of the Cabinet, the heads of the Police, the Army and the Security Forces together with the heads of almost every government department. It is also believed that a number of N.L.F. supporters from South Arabia may still be detained although Qahtan Ashaabi, for example, has been released.

New arrivals in Egyptian prisons are 200 or so officers, house-servants and others arrested as a result of the late Field-Marshal Amer's recent attempted coup; the disgraced Chief of Intelligence and other senior officers held accountable for Egypt's ignominious defeat, and an unknown number of "pro-Americans" including two former Under-Secretaries.

The unfortunate General Neguib ousted in 1954, continues to live in complete obscurity under house arrest in a Cairo suburb. Four other members of the original Revolutionary Council now fallen from favour, though officially at liberty, are kept under close observation by the police and subjected to minor restrictions. Two of them were dismissed from the Government in 1964, mainly because of their criticism of Nasser's policy in the Yemen.

ALEX HEWSON

Cause Célèbre in St. Kitts

On October 16th several members of the opposition party in St. Kitts, the People's Action Movement, were being brought to trial on charges of conspiring to overthrow the lawful government of the State. The case has already become a "cause célèbre" in the West Indies and the trial, which was to be open to the public and the press, was to be attended by observers from both AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL and the International Commission of Jurists.

The three-island state of St. Christopher—Nevis—Anguilla (known as St. Kitts) is one of the five West Indian states in association with the United Kingdom. After the break-up of the West Indies Federation the former British possessions were broken down into smaller political units embracing a number of islands. When one of these, the Eastern Caribbean Federation, failed in its turn several individual islands and groups of small islands were given Associated Status with Britain. This means, in effect, independence except for foreign affairs and external defence, and is terminable at will. St. Kitts achieved "Statehood" on February 27th, 1967.

Three months later Anguilla, the smallest and poorest island in the group, expelled the tiny police force and declared itself independent. The islanders asked for troops from Britain; the Prime Minister of St. Kitts made the same request. Both were refused and the Prime Minister also failed to obtain military help from the neighbouring West Indian governments. Although a conference was held, attended by representatives from other West Indian governments and the British Government, in an attempt to solve the island's problems, no solution has yet been found.

The Labour Party which was in power when the island became independent, has in the past had no serious political rivals. In 1965 on his return to the island, Dr. William Herbert, a British trained barrister, formed a new political party, the People's Action Movement. The party stood for the separation of government from the sugar trade union (at present closely allied with the Labour Party) and planned economic development which would benefit the smaller islands as much as St. Christopher. Support for P.A.M. came mainly from the younger and more

educated sector of the population. It was naturally also popular in the smaller islands. P.A.M. gained 39 per cent of the vote at the last election but only two seats.

When the disturbances started on Anguilla, Mr. Bradshaw, the Prime Minister, declared a State of Emergency throughout the State, and arrested 21 members or supporters of the opposition party. They included the leaders of the only two non-government trade unions and Geoffrey Boon, a lawyer who had acted for Dr. Herbert and had published letters in the press criticising the government. The vaguely formulated charges against the prisoners associated them with the rebellion on Anguilla. The prisoners appealed and won their case before the West Indies Associated States Appeals Court, which ruled that the purported State of Emergency was invalid and their detention therefore illegal. The prisoners were released. Two days later, on August 12th, the Prime Minister put new emergency legislation through the House of Assembly and prisoners were re-arrested. This legislation was again proved invalid because of a flaw in drafting. The government then arrested six of the former detainees this time bringing criminal charges against them. They were not allowed bail and were held as prisoners on remand until the trial opened in the third week of October.

The government now claims that the opposition intended to overthrow the government by force and no longer links the charges specifically with Anguilla. It appears that the prosecution will attempt to implicate the accused opposition members in a number of shooting incidents which took place on St. Christopher during June. No substantial evidence has yet been produced which would connect the opposition with any of these incidents and indeed the latter has made serious allegations against the government of interference with the judiciary and with witnesses. The case has received wide publicity in the Caribbean, American and British press. Reports have commonly been critical of the government and this criticism has found a practical expression in the offer by more than 12 members of the West Indian Bar to defend the six prisoners without fee.

The prisoners are adopted by AMNESTY. When the Prime Minister, Mr. Bradshaw, was in London on a visit recently he took the opportunity to discuss the situation with AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL and invited us to send an observer to the trial.

STELLA JOYCE

Preventive Detention in Pakistan

The new Constitution of Pakistan came into force in 1962. It gives the President legally absolute power, except that he must exercise it in accordance with the law. He is not responsible to the legislature (the National Assembly) nor directly to the people. Nevertheless, as his term of office is limited to five years—with a maximum extension to eight—he might be said to be responsible periodically to the Electoral College, should he desire re-election.

The President—and also the provincial governors, who are appointed by him and are subject to his directions—can issue ordinances, without consultation with the National Assembly, which have the same effect as a law made by the legislature, and may not be nullified by the Assembly. Another feature of the Constitution is that the President may declare by proclamation that a state of emergency exists in the country in which case the operation of fundamental rights is suspended and the courts no longer have the power to enforce these rights.

Under the ordinary law of Pakistan those who are arrested cannot be detained in custody without being informed of the grounds for their arrest. They have the right to consult and be defended by a lawyer of their choice, they must be produced before a magistrate within twenty-four hours of their arrest and they may not be detained in custody beyond this period without the authority of a magistrate.

However, detention without trial and without limit of the period of detention, already permitted under certain circumstances by an earlier Act, is provided for by the Defence of Pakistan Ordinance, issued by President Ayub Khan in 1965 when he declared an Emergency at the time of the Indo-Pakistan war. At this time he also authorised the Provincial Governments to enforce the Ordinance. Legally speaking, the Emergency is still in existence.

There are probably well over a thousand political prisoners in Pakistan, about two-thirds of whom seem to be in East Pakistan at present. How many of these can be described as prisoners of conscience is debatable, but of those cases which have come to the notice of AMNESTY's Investigation Department, the majority appear to be members of opposition parties and groups who have been over-critical in public speech and print of Government policy. Some were arrested during the period of martial law when President Ayub Khan came to power, and have remained in custody without trial for over eight years. It is said that a number of them are still uncertain as to the grounds of their detention, and it has been suggested that the Defence of Pakistan Rules are being used somewhat indiscriminately to suppress political opposition.

Inhuman Prison Conditions

Meanwhile, the information that has reached us about the prison conditions of those arrested under D.P.R. is uniformly depressing. Some of this information comes from private sources, but much of it is confirmed by news items in Pakistan papers. It is alleged that prisoners are detained under "C" class conditions (which means that they are treated as criminals); that they are given a subsistence allowance of about 1s. 6d. a day, of which the catering contractor takes a share; that they are allowed no personal allowances, no beds or mosquito nets (in a country swarming with malaria-carrying mosquitos); and that though the majority of them have broken down in health, medical treatment is either unavailable or inadequate. It is also alleged that in most cases the authorities have done nothing to alleviate the financial difficulties of political prisoners' families, as a result of which many of them are virtually destitute.

Most of these prisoners are educated people, and one commodity they crave is literature. It appears that they are allowed gifts of books, and AMNESTY members and groups may care to send books in English or weekly journals such as the *New Statesman*, *The Economist* and *New Society*, to prison governors in Pakistan for distribution to political prisoners held under the Security of Pakistan Act or the Defence of Pakistan Ordinance.

India's Parallel Law

Finally, it should be remembered that India, Pakistan's estranged counterpart in the sub-continent, also clings to its state of emergency, declared at the time of the Indo-Chinese crisis of 1962, and its Defence of India Rules which allow for preventive detention. All the more encouraging therefore was the welcome news that Miss Mridula Sarabhai, a distinguished Indian political worker and advocate of autonomy for Kashmir, had been freed from house arrest. A few days previously Mr. Tofazzal Hossain, veteran Pakistani journalist, had been released from preventive detention in Dacca, East Pakistan. Since there is no reason at all to suppose the two events to be in any way connected, perhaps we may hope that with a further decrease in tension more liberal policies may soon prevail in both countries.

MONICA JACKSON

Conditions in a Chinese Labour Camp

An Interview

Over the last 18 months the Chinese Cultural Revolution has received wide coverage in the international press. The fact that many reporters have been expelled and others, as foreigners, have been isolated from the Chinese, has prevented detailed reporting at first-hand. News-stories have thus described only the general trends and it has been impossible to know what practical effect political events have had on the lives of individuals.

This is an interview with a former Chinese civil servant who worked in a Peking ministry until the late nineteen-fifties when he was sent to a state farm near the Soviet border, in the north-east of Heilunkiang Province. Although the experience he describes ended some six years ago, the farm is still believed to exist.

Q. Why were you sent to this camp?

A. Because during the Hundred Flowers movement in 1957, I criticised the Chinese Communist Party during a meeting. I was accordingly declared a rightist counter-revolutionary. I was never officially arrested, but simply told that I would be sent to a camp for labour and reform (re-education). My family was told in advance and given my address . . . I was never officially charged or tried or sentenced, nor was I officially regarded as a prisoner.

Q. What were the general conditions of your imprisonment?

A. We were sent to a part of Manchuria that had previously been uncultivated and virtually uninhabited, and imprisoned in a State Farm to cultivate the land. The State Farms are modelled on the military pattern, each farm being equivalent to an army division. My "company" consisted of 100 men who, like myself, had all been in government service when arrested. We were still theoretically government officials, not prisoners, and continued to receive our government salaries while we were in the camp. The conditions of our imprisonment were therefore considerably better than those of real prisoners.

We were not given bed-clothes or toilet articles, but we could bring what we needed from Peking. We could also receive necessary articles from our families or buy them in the prison shop. There was no heating whatsoever and we suffered terribly from the cold, since the temperature went down to -16°C . indoors in the winter. None of us was allowed to take a bath for the first several months. The toilets consisted of simple holes in the ground, and this resulted in considerable hardships during the winter months.

Q. Did you receive an adequate diet?

A. At first it was quite good. Each prisoner received 90 catties of food a month (1 catty = 1.3 lb.), including rice, Chinese bread, quite good meat and fish. Because our working hours were long, we received 4 or 5 meals daily. During the Great Leap Forward, however, our ration was cut progressively from 90 to 50 to 45 to 36 to 21 catties a month. We no longer received any grains, only a type of feed normally given to pigs. There was no longer any hot food, and we had only two meals a day. We all began to suffer from malnutrition, which resulted in swellings and other forms of illness. We tried to supplement the regular diet by eating leaves, dead birds and field rats that we found on the ground, etc.

Q. Were visits allowed?

A. No, our camp was too far away and visiting permission was never granted.

Q. What punishments were given to prisoners?

A. We were occasionally refused meals if other prisoners had reported us as being counter-revolutionary. We were all encouraged to spy on our fellow-prisoners and to report any suspicious remarks to the authorities. We received no corporal punishments of the type that were inflicted on "official" prisoners.

Q. How did your treatment compare with that of criminal prisoners?

A. No real distinction is made in China between criminal and political prisoners. All crimes (including theft) are regarded as basically political (anti-government, anti-Party, etc.).

Q. Did you have any contact with "official" prisoners?

A. No, but there was a camp fairly near ours in which political prisoners who had been officially sentenced by a court were kept. These prisoners had usually received sentences of at least ten years and some were in prison for life. They were guarded by soldiers with guns, they were flogged for various offences such as trying to escape (at night we could hear screams and shouts from their camp); and their diet was considerably worse than ours; they had no prison shop, could not receive parcels from outside, etc. These men were regarded as active counter-revolutionaries, while we were simply considered to be "rightists", "bad enemies" or "historical counter-revolutionaries", i.e. as men who had worked for the Kuomintang government but who were nevertheless not responsible for current counter-revolutionary activities in China.

Q. What work did you do?

A. Mostly digging ditches to drain water. In the winter the earth was frozen three feet deep, in summer we were immersed in water as we dug. We also did some planting and harvesting soy beans, and built roads and houses. We worked between 14 and 16 hours a day. During an extremely bad period at the time of the Great Leap Forward we worked for 10 days and nights at a stretch with virtually no rest at all.

Q. Was there a "norm" to be fulfilled?

A. No, but there was a competitive system between groups. Rewards and special titles were given to the hardest workers. We were told that this was very effective in expediting our release from the camp, that in fact it was the only way to become free. So we all worked as hard as we possibly could.

Q. Would you complain about your working conditions?

A. Yes, we were forced to work far too hard. As a result, many of us fell ill, some seriously so. Of the 100-odd people in my original group about 20 died from illnesses which resulted essentially from over-work and malnutrition. There was no adequate hospital facility for those who became ill. When I myself was released and returned to Peking, I was too weak to walk upstairs.

Many thousands of prisoners, arrested in the 1965 coup, have been released. But a great deal of scepticism has been expressed about a statement by Attorney-General Sugih Arto that only 55,000 Gestapu-P.K.I. prisoners remain. Indeed, it is generally thought that this figure is less realistic than the Attorney-General's earlier figures of 120,000 civilian prisoners (September 1966) and 105,000 (February 1967), which were thought to represent about 50 per cent of actual numbers at those times. Actual numbers at the present time are probably well over 100,000 and perhaps as high as 150,000.

The releases earlier in the year have been explained in different ways. Some say that high officials of the government have come to favour generous releasing, on the ground that people previously only marginally involved in Communist activities were being made into well-schooled Communists by long internment. Perhaps more important, the earlier view that prisoners had to be kept interned because their lives would be endangered if they returned to their villages, is now less widely held; the anti-Communist fury in the population at large has generally receded. Probably the most important factors, however, have been the pressure of world opinion, to which Djakarta is highly sensitive, and the difficulty of providing prisoners with even the barest minimum of food.

Food conditions have always been exceedingly bad for the Gestapu prisoners, except for the few who have had food sent in to them daily by their families outside; and there are some indications that conditions have become worse this year. One recent report has it that the prison authorities of Central Java were receiving food for only 10,000 of their 50,000 Gestapu-P.K.I. prisoners. In some areas prisoners have been required to do farm labour in or around their compounds and allowed

Indonesia: The Gestapu—P.K.I. Prisoners and The Tangerang Jail

to eat some of the food they have produced. In others they have been put to road work and provided with minimal food. In others again there has been meagre help from local Christian congregations (though this has usually been mainly in the form of clothing, of which the prison authorities have provided next to none). But the general situation in a great many of the camps has remained one of near-starvation. Prisoners who have been released and others who have visited jails and camps tell of inmates who look like mere skin and bones and of hundreds dying of sheer neglect.

The Tangerang jail some 20 miles out of Djakarta is by all accounts particularly bad. A report carried by the official armed services journal *Angkatan Bersendjata* (July 9th, July 16th) conceded that the funds allotted for food there were far short of what would be required for a daily rice ration of 0.4 kilogrammes, to say nothing of other needs. And, as most of the inmates are from relatively far-away areas, little is sent in by members of their families. The jail buildings at Tangerang are old and dilapidated, and the 2,500 or so inmates are crowded together in highly unsanitary conditions. Moreover, the attitudes of the jail authorities there seem to be particularly harsh. Beating of prisoners during interrogation is common practice. One former prisoner tells of how guards encouraged prisoners to fight out their squabbles and then stood by laughing while one prisoner wrought injury on another. A prisoner's wife tells of how she is never allowed to go near any part of the prison, much less see her husband, when she takes food there for him. In the words of one former Tangerang guard, an army N.C.O., "one is made to treat the Gestapu prisoners like dogs".

Amnesty strengthened by Administrative Changes

It is six months since we referred in this Review to developments within the AMNESTY movement. At that particular time the difficulties were considerable and assessments of the situation were compounded of faith as much as fact. Today the facts alone justify a high degree of optimism.

One indication of the way in which AMNESTY has faced its problems appeared on July 7th in the English newspaper, *The Guardian*. Under the headline "AMNESTY Over Critical Days of Transition", Geoffrey Moorhouse reported: "If morale in AMNESTY was low during the critical days of early spring, it seems to have recovered by mid-summer. The most remarkable indication of the movement's tenacity, in the face of all the adverse publicity it received a month or two ago, is that not one of the Groups who adopt prisoners pulled out of AMNESTY, though there were anxious inquiries from several. And there are now 550 of them in 20 national sections, with membership gradually rising."

This trend has continued. The reason is not only the loyalty of the membership but also the effort that has been made by the movement to look closely at itself and to institute changes. In all voluntary movements there is some conflict between the need for a largely individualistic staff to have freedom of action and the need for organisation and method. The job of satisfying both requirements was given to specialist sub-committees whose findings were discussed in detail at the meeting of the International Executive Committee on October 7th and 8th. Their aim: to work out an organisational, administrative and financial framework within which the movement can grow swiftly but methodically.

Financial stability is fundamental to the effective growth of the movement. The Finance and Administration sub-committees have been able to analyse the work-load of the Secretariat, to establish basic staff requirements and responsibilities and to prepare a budget that, while retaining a necessary fluidity, lays down guidelines that relate growth with income more accurately than has been possible before. It was agreed by the International Executive that the movement should temporarily operate within a framework of £20,000 a year, though this figure will be reviewed well before the end of the financial year.

Raising even £20,000 a year is no easy matter for an organisation that is still unused to the idea of fund-raising. However, Groups and National Sections are now beginning to give this a higher priority—and at the Executive meeting itself, four Sections made immediate financial pledges to the International Secretariat that, together with appeals from sources such as trusts, trade unions and the general public, indicate a far more secure financial basis for the future.

Another matter that required close attention was AMNESTY's field operation. In this sphere, it was necessary to lay down much firmer rules. The sending of missions to carry out special investigations or the attendance of AMNESTY observers at trials demand a high degree of skill, diplomacy and method. There are now detailed instructions for procedure at every stage of such missions.

The way is clear, then, for AMNESTY to move forward. Human Rights Year offers the opportunity to do so. Plans are now being made for participation in the year by all levels of the movement and we are confident that by this time next year, there will be an even more encouraging report to give.

PETER BURNS

Human Rights Day December 10th, 1967

Every year, on December 10th, the AMNESTY movement celebrates the anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. AMNESTY Groups and Sections all over the world will gather to witness the lighting of the Barbed Wire Candle and to remember, in varying ways, all who are denied their fundamental human rights. Members will be organising services, concerts, theatrical events, processions, meetings. In London, a new and additional event will be the inaugural AMNESTY Human Rights Day Lecture, to be given at Congress House by the American Trade Union Leader, Victor Reuther.

Readers of this journal are invited, and urged, to participate in these activities and to pledge on that day their continuing support.

Human Rights Year, 1968

1968 is the twentieth year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United Nations, at the request of the Secretary-General, U Thant, is marking the occasion through an International Human Rights Year, planned to intensify the practical work being done to ensure the Declaration's full implementation by all governments.

AMNESTY will be playing an important part in Human Rights Year. An international "Prisoner of Conscience" Week is planned for November 1968; National Sections will participate in the National Committees now being established; special projects will be adopted; intensive fund-raising and membership drives will be launched. Progress reports will be published through the year in this journal and elsewhere.

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