



# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Bromley & Orpington Group May 2017 Newsletter



Our thanks to Neville White of Orpington for sponsoring this month's Newsletter

## COME TO OUR NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 9 May  
Tuesday 13 June  
Tuesday 11 July

Campaign Meeting  
Speaker To be Confirmed  
Campaign Meeting

## Bromley Little Theatre

*In aid of Amnesty International*

*Presents the Charity Premiere*

*Of*

## 'Nell Gwynne'

*By Jessica Swale*

*"A Rollicking Restoration Romp!"*

**THURSDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY AT 7.45PM**

**TICKETS £12 FROM**

**DAVID HOWKINS 01689 823793. BOOK NOW!**

### Monthly Letter: Laos

This month's Appeal letter concerns two former student leaders, **Thongpaseuth Keuakoun** and **Seng-Aloun Phengpphanh**, two of five leading members of the Lao Students Movement for Democracy who were taken into custody on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1999. After nearly 18 years, they are the only two still in detention in Samkhe Prison, one student, Khamphouvieng Sisaath, having died after being grossly ill-treated by prison warders. The other two detainees were released. They were sentenced after urging social economic and political dialogue. Conditions in the prison are alleged to be very harsh. Amnesty believes they have been imprisoned for exercising their right to freedom of expression and are Prisoners of Conscience. Please sign, address and post the enclosed letter. This will cost £1.17 to post.



*Don't forget to find us on Facebook; we now have 28 members who have found us on Facebook; if you use and enjoy social media why not join us for news updates and campaign information. You can also find us online (details below).*

### Monthly Action#1: – Iran



British-Iranian prisoner of conscience **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe** has been suffering from severe neck, arm, and back pain and has extremely limited movement in her arms. April 3<sup>rd</sup> marked one year since she was detained at Tehran airport, on her way back from visiting her parents with her daughter. On 4<sup>th</sup> February, she was seen by a doctor in Evin prison's clinic, who referred her to a neurology specialist. On 22<sup>nd</sup> January, during his weekly press conference, the Iranian judiciary spokesperson announced that her five-year prison sentence had been upheld by an appeal court. She had been convicted of "membership of an illegal group" in connection with her work at BBC Media Action and Thompson Reuters Foundation (TRF), a charity organisation promoting socio-economic progress, independent journalism and the rule of law. The charges are viewed as highly spurious and there are acute concerns for her health and well-being. We wrote to the Iranian authorities calling for her immediate and unconditional release.

### Monthly Action#2: – Greece



**Noori**, a 21-year-old Syrian refugee, continues to be unlawfully detained in a police station on the Greek island of Lesbos. He has been in detention since 9<sup>th</sup> September and is awaiting a decision whether he will be forcibly returned to Turkey under the EU-Turkey deal. Noori's prolonged detention exceeds the maximum time that any asylum-seeker can be detained under Greek law (90 days). The poor detention conditions paired with the prolonged uncertainty about his future are having a very negative impact on his physical and mental health. Noori's distress about his fate and prolonged detention was visible when Amnesty International met him. He said: "I sleep on a mattress on the floor in a cell with five other people....I have nothing to read in my language. I have not been given a clean blanket since my arrest. We wrote to the Greek authorities calling on them to end his detention in keeping with Greek law. We also sent personal messages of hope to Noori to encourage him. More information on both these cases can be found at [www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk)

### Death Penalty: US in the Spotlight

The State of Arkansas is in the spotlight for seeking to carry out a 'rapid-fire' series of executions which initially sought to carry out eight executions over 11 days, a conveyor belt of death that is unprecedented since the death penalty was resumed in 1976. After a flurry of legal stays, the number has been reduced to five, with one carried out on 20<sup>th</sup> April. The Arkansas Governor has been widely condemned for his actions that (at the time of writing) may still see multiple executions carried out on 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April. In a further move that may lead to stays of execution, US Healthcare Group, McKesson is suing the State in a bid to stop it using the vials of drugs it supplied for therapeutic purposes. The carrying out of death by lethal injection has become strained as companies world-wide have sought to ban or refuse the use of their products being used in the execution of prisoners. In some states stockpiles have run low leading them to 'experiment' with alternatives. The execution of **Ledell Lee** on 20<sup>th</sup> April was the first in the State of Arkansas since 2005.



**Present on 11<sup>th</sup> April:** Neville White, Vivien Glanz, Vivienne Andrews, Waultraut Gilchrist, Margaret Coppard, Gladys Edmonds and Wendy Simmons. **Apologies:** David Howkins, Patsy Paine.

Meetings are held in the Wesley Room, Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington commencing at 7.30pm. **E-mail** [amnestybromley@gmail.com](mailto:amnestybromley@gmail.com) **website:** [www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/bromley)

**Neville White (Chairman) 01689 896368**  
[Neville.white@waitrose.com](mailto:Neville.white@waitrose.com)

**Vivien Glanz (Secretary)**  
[vivienglanz@hotmail.com](mailto:vivienglanz@hotmail.com)