



**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**  
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

*Tapol bulletin no, 25, December 1977*

This is the Published version of the following publication

UNSPECIFIED (1978) Tapol bulletin no, 25, December 1977. Tapol bulletin (25). pp. 1-12. ISSN 1356-1154

The publisher's official version can be found at

Note that access to this version may require subscription.

Downloaded from VU Research Repository <https://vuir.vu.edu.au/26387/>



British Campaign for the

Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners

TAPOL Bulletin No 25

December 1977

**THE TIMES:**

# A TROPICAL SIBERIA

On 20 December, two release ceremonies were held in Indonesia. At one on Buru Island, which took place in the presence of foreign journalists, 1,500 tapols were released for transportation in two warships to Surabaya, East Java. In North Sumatra, 886 "fit but apathetic" tapols were released at a ceremony at Tanjung Kasau Prison attended by foreign diplomats. (Reuter, Dec. 20)

The prisoners released in the two ceremonies were some of the 10,000 category B tapols whom the authorities have promised to release before the end of 1977.

All these prisoners were required to sign statements pledging allegiance to the Government, denouncing communist ideology and condoning the government's past treatment of them. At the ceremony in Tanjung Kasau, the military commander officiating, Brigadier-General Ismail, told the prisoners to be "ready for questioning if deemed necessary by the local authorities".

Three members of President Sukarno's last cabinet are among the prisoners released in these ceremonies. They are Mr. Astrawinata, former Minister of Justice, Mr. Sumardjo, former Minister of Education, and Ir Setiadi, former Minister of Electric Power. The novelist, Pramudya Ananta Tur was not among those released despite earlier reports that his release was imminent.

## Transfer to Labour Camps Looms Large

The decision to stage one of the release ceremonies on Buru Island, where the first labour camp was set up eight years ago, is clearly intended to counteract criticism directed against official plans to transfer released prisoners to Buru as well as to other labour camps.

Still, arrangements for further transfers are definitely going ahead. During November this year, Admiral Sudomo,

'Tapol' is an Indonesian contraction for 'tahanan politik' meaning political prisoner. It is still widely used although it was banned in 1974 because the military authorities said that all the prisoners are 'criminals'.

Chief of Staff of KOPKAMTIB, the Security Command, made an inspection tour of new labour camps for tapols which are now officially referred to as "re-settlement" camps. He announced that they were being set up in no fewer than nine regions. These include camps at Amborawang in East Kalimantan, Buntok in Central Kalimantan, and two camps in the region of Sidikalang, North Sumatra, one in the village of Sidira and one in the village of Parikki.

Pledges made by military spokesmen, as quoted for example in a Reuter report from North Sumatra on 20 December, that released tapols will each be given a house and five acres (over two hectares) of land must be seen as a part of the policy to transfer the majority of those "released" to labour camps. The camp at Sidira is described as covering an area of 600 hectares and is intended for 200 tapols, just about five acres per person. The experience of tapols on Buru shows that the new "settlers" will work the land but will certainly not own it.

At the same time, Admiral Sudomo has made the point that "a number of prisoners on Buru... (have) refused to return to their original homesteads although they have been set free" (see Press Release from the Indonesian Embassy in London, 22 November, 1977). This could be used in the future to explain why some "released" prisoners have not returned home.

Admiral Sudomo has also made a number of pronouncements about the circumstances under which released tapols will be sent to camps. He has stressed repeatedly that everyone will be allowed to return to their "places of origin", and that transfer to "re-settlement" camps would only take place in the case of those who "within six months... have not yet found employment". At the same time, he has confirmed that the released tapols will be held under home detention for the first six months without explaining how persons subjected to such restrictions can set about looking for work.

## US Food Aid Delays Over Human Rights Clause

It was reported earlier this month from Washington that Indonesia is one of several countries classified as "troublesome" on human rights and therefore subject to the restrictions of a human rights amendment recently written into the US Food Aid

continued on page 12

# AMNESTY REPORT ON INDONESIA

On 18th October, Amnesty International published a major report on Indonesia. The 146-page Report which describes political imprisonment in Indonesia as "without parallel today" was widely covered in the world press. Interest in the Report was certainly helped by the fact that it was the first major Amnesty publication to appear after the announcement just one week beforehand that Amnesty International had been awarded the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Report gives a comprehensive survey of political imprisonment in Indonesia, providing a brief historical background as well as a detailed account of administrative control, classification and numbers, forced labour and conditions in the prisons and penal settlements, notably on the island of Buru.

It also includes several valuable appendices, in particular extracts from a KOPKAMTIB decision defining the grounds for arresting and detaining people as G.30.S. prisoners, as well as a portion of the defence plea of Mr Oei Tju Tat, a tapol who was tried and sentenced to 13 years in 1976.

The chapter on Classification and Numbers deals at length with the government's policy towards release, in particular the programme announced on 1 December 1976. On the Indonesian Government's schemes to "transmigrate" prisoners, the Report states the following: "The Indonesian Government has maintained that this 'transmigration' of prisoners is 'in accordance with the guidelines on national transmigration as set out in the second Five Year National Development Programme'. Amnesty International finds the Indonesian Government's explanation completely unacceptable and has pointed out that such policy and

practice contravenes internationally accepted standards of human rights. "Transportation to indefinite detention in a penal colony cannot be interpreted as equivalent to release to ordinary life." (Page 34)

The Report gives substantial information to show that the Indonesian Government's statistics on the prisoners have been confusing and misleading. It points furthermore to a demonstrable discrepancy between the figures published by KOPKAMTIB and figures secured by Amnesty from independent sources. On numbers, the Amnesty Report concludes that "there are more than 55,000, perhaps as many as 100,000 who are being held." (Page 113)

The chapter on prison conditions describes several places of detention about which little has been heard in the past such as a prison in the Central Java city of Surakarta, Lampung Prison in South Sumatra, a prison in the village of Liananggang, to the south-east of Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Ranomut Prison near Menado, North Sulawesi, and a prison in the centre of Payakumbuh, in Central Sumatra.

One unfortunate omission in the Amnesty Report however is that no reference is made to the situation in East Timor where Indonesian invading troops have been responsible for widespread killings of civilians and persecution of people for allegedly being supporters of Fretilin, the party which strongly opposes Indonesia's annexation of East Timor.

Copies of the Report are available for £2.00, and can be obtained from Amnesty International, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HF, or from any National Section of Amnesty.

## SUDOMO ON RELEASES

"The following is an interview with Admiral Sudomo published by Tempo on 3 December 1977"

Q. Will they be released unconditionally?

A. Yes. But the process from being a prisoner to becoming truly free must of course go through phases. At first, they will remain at home, then they will be allowed to go out, and only afterwards will they be free.

Q. Is this move the result among other things of 'pressure' from Amnesty International?

A. Plans for release have been made since 1972, not because of pressures from outsiders who want to interfere. We do indeed have to deal with the issue raised by Amnesty International implying that this resettlement is a second Buru. This is entirely an internal affair.

Q. According to you, thirty percent of the prisoners are 'diehards'. What do you mean?

A. Their ideology is still strong, they want to restore the PKI to greatness. We are still trying to convince them that the path they have taken is wrong.

Q. And if you can't?

A. I am sure we can. Just look for example at the Tanjung Kasau Inrehab.\* They are very busy working and forget about ideology. The ones I fear for are those being detained at the RTM (Military Prison). They can't move about there, and as a result could give in completely or the contrary could happen.

Q. Is there any fear that those who are to be released will return to the communist ideology?

A. It is not yet possible to see. From questions and

answers with them it is clear that some are still ideologically strong. One thing is clear: every year, on average, 200 of the old lot - not new cadres - are arrested.

Q. Which important leaders are to be released? Pramoeodya Ananta Toer?

A. Most of the leaders of the CC (Central Committee) and CDB (Major Area Committee) level are dead. As for Pramoeodya, there is indeed a plan for his release but I need to check this first. Leave this till later because the names will be announced ten days before the releases are carried out.

Q. Can they return to their original profession? Can Pramoeodya for instance write again?

A. Yes, they can. But only after release from home detention status, because their release is implemented in stages prior to their being fully released.

Q. On the one hand, the Government is releasing them while on the other, it frequently warns of the latent danger of the PKI. Isn't this likely to confuse the ex-prisoners as well as the Community?

A. There is no contradiction because the danger is clearly still present. This policy of release does indeed involve risks but we are trying to reduce these risks as much as possible. If we talk about a latent danger this is to ensure that we are always vigilant. It is only a warning.

\* Inrehab (Rehabilitation Installations). Prisons where tapols are held were initially called Rumah Tahanan Khusus (Special Prisons) The name was subsequently changed to Kamp Pengasingan, abbreviated to Kamsing, but since 1974, the name

Inrehab has been used.

# FOREIGN NEWSMAN VISITS PRISONS

David Jenkins, the Jakarta correspondent of the Far Eastern Economic Review was permitted to visit prison camps and publish his report, Inside Suharto's Prisons in order "to counter-act the views of Amnesty International which criticises detention without trial in Indonesia", the spokesman of the Department of Defence and Security, Brig-General Daryono told Tempo (12 November, 1977). "When we ourselves speak, outsiders don't believe us, do they?" he declared.

The remark is quoted in a comment by Tempo suggesting that foreign journalists are given special privileges. According to Tempo, "Jenkins' report obtained the permission of Admiral Sudomo, KOPKAMTIB Chief-of-Staff, a thing which Indonesian journalists almost never get." Comparing the Jenkins report with the series of articles published in the Indonesian daily, Sinar Harapan, Tempo points out that the FEER piece is far more detailed. Referring to Jenkins' interview of Dr. Subandrio, the journal reports that this went "without any censorship from Admiral Sudomo. Initially, Sudomo had objections but finally agreed on one condition: that Subandrio should be described not as a political prisoner but as a convict (narapidana) - the term used only for convicted criminals" (Actually, Jenkins avoids using any designation in his report of the interview.)

"If," Jenkins adds, "for any reason a detainee cannot meet the five requirements laid down by KOPKAMTIB, he will be sent to a resettlement camp in one of the outer islands. Either way, KOPKAMTIB says, the detainee is 'dimasyarakatkan' (returned to society)."

Jenkins then provides a detailed account of life in a tapol detention camp in Sumber Rejo, near Balikpapan, East Kalimantan. (TAPOL Bulletin No. 24 contained information about this camp.) He describes the mood in the camp as "one of resignation and smouldering resentment". The tapols act like men who recognise the futility of outward opposition. "On the other hand, they are plainly bitter about their long detention"

After describing the inadequacy of the diet and supplies of basic essentials, Jenkins writes: "Speaking with an almost desperate intensity, prisoners at Sumber Rejo told of men who had developed huge lumps on their bodies as a result of inadequate diet. They claimed others had been sent to hospital with hernias as a result of overwork. Conditions were so bad, they claimed, that many detainees had died in the camp. Others were currently in hospital."

David Jenkins then follows this report with an account of a newly established camp, the Amborawang Resettlement Centre in the jungle 25 miles north of Balikpapan. This he describes as "a place which offers prisoners a good deal of hope for the future". He quotes an Army officer as saying: "The detainees like being sent here. It is the first time many of them have breathed free air in 12 years. We have an advance party of 175 men working here and only eight guards. No one has ever tried to escape."

Waxing almost lyrical, Jenkins continues: "... the detainees have a stake in Amborawang. Once the land is cleared and ploughed they will be the beneficiaries of whatever is produced."

continued on page 11

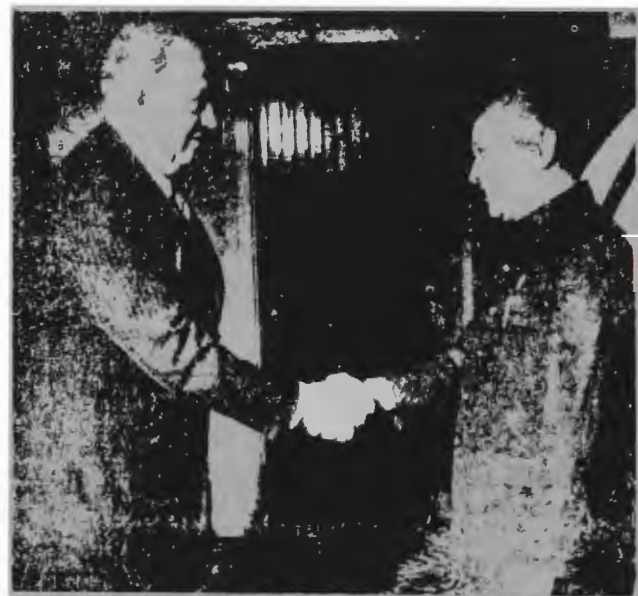
A five-page report entitled Inside Suharto's Prisons was published as the cover-story by the Hongkong-based weekly, Far Eastern Economic Review on 28th October just ten days after Amnesty International's Report on Indonesia, which appeared on 18th October.

The FEER report, most of which is written by the journal's Jakarta correspondent, David Jenkins, presents some revealing information about a few camps which the journalist was permitted to visit, but its basic purpose appears to be to explain and justify the release programme announced in December 1976

The programme, code-named Operasi Sakti (operation supernatural), is described as a "genuine effort... to return detainees to society" but lists five conditions which must be met if a tapol is to be allowed to return home and not be transported to a labour camp. These five conditions are, according to David Jenkins:

- \* The Government must be satisfied that it has succeeded in "readjusting the mental condition" of the detainee, in "Changing their minds from communist minds to Pancasila minds".
- \* The tapol must already have shown that he or she followed the Pancasila way of life in camp.
- \* The tapol's family must be prepared to receive him/her back.
- \* The tapol's former neighbours must also be prepared to receive him/her back.
- \* A job must be available.

In any case, Jenkins writes, a tapol who is allowed home will be kept under house arrest for six months and town arrest for a further six months, and will be obliged to report weekly to no fewer than four separate government offices.



Chilean Minister for Mines, Enrique Valenzuela Blanquiere, being welcomed by General Suharto during a visit to Indonesia in September. He brought a letter from Chilean President, General Pinochet for Suharto.



# THE SAWITO TRIAL

THE TRIAL OF Mr. Sawito Kartowibowo, accused of subversion for his alleged involvement in the so-called Letter Plot last year has become a major event in Jakarta. Large and very vocal crowds have attended each of the hearings so far and have responded enthusiastically to many of the statements made by the defendant and his team of defence lawyers.\*

The trial is taking place at the Central State Court, Jakarta and the defendant is assisted by a team of five lawyers headed by the well-known human rights lawyer, Mr. Yap Thiam Hien.

The proceedings so far have been marked by several startling developments. The defendant has made a series of counter-accusations, and he has refused, on advice from his defence team, to comply with trial procedures adopted by the court.

## Defendant's Counter-Accusations.

At the second hearing on 27 October, the defendant used his right to challenge the legality of the trial by presenting a lengthy *eksepsi* (demurrer). He asserted that the series of letters and documents (five in all) for which he is being held responsible were in fact the responsibility of various different persons who had drafted or amended them. He himself had been the initiator of only one of the documents, the one entitled An Apology to the Late President Sukarno, and could be held responsible for one other, entitled Towards Salvation, jointly with the other signatories, former Vice-President Hatta, Catholic Cardinal J. Darmoyuwono, Moslem dignitary Dr. Hamka, Chairman of the Indonesian Council of Churches, Mr. T.B. Simatupang, and head of the Council of Mystic Religions, Mr. R. Soekanto.

The defendant further declared that it was totally incorrect to speak of a Sawito Movement; the endeavours undertaken with the drafting of the various documents had in fact been at the initiative of the late Mr. Domopranoto, Deputy Chairman of the Peoples Assembly (MPR) at the time and head of the Armed Forces group in Parliament. It was he, said Mr. Sawito, who had warned that tensions were running high in the MPR and "a fearful explosion could occur" if something were not done to safeguard government. The 'means of salvation' should only be used with the consent of the President and the MPR and the saviours should, according to Domopranoto, be former Vice-President Hatta and Cardinal Darmoyuwono.

The defendant even went so far as to declare that the Attorney-General himself, Ali Said, was collaborating with these endeavours. "He was helping us," said Sawito, "behind the scenes. He said that the President, as holder of the Mandate of the MPR, together with his family, had indeed violated the law" and "that the Attorney-General's Office had already prepared charges against the President which would be preferred when he was no longer in office".

The defendant asked: "Why did the Attorney-General provide information against the President? Why did he arrest and detain me and then bring me for trial?" Mr. Sawito accused the Attorney-General of having some secret motive, and made a similar charge against another senior official, Sudharmo, Chief of the State Secretariat.

Sawito's statement which was more than forty pages long was frequently interrupted by the President of the Court, urging him to "cut it short" while the crowds sitting in the public gallery showed their feelings by shouting: "Keep going! Keep going!"

## Mr. Yap Challenges Court's Impartiality

Mr. Yap Thiam Hien also submitted a demurrer objecting to the composition of the court, with judges appointed by and bound on oath to serve the interests of the Government. How can such

persons, he asked, sit in judgment on a man accused of seeking to overthrow the Head of Government?

In a speech which the Australian journalist, Hamish McDonald described as "one of the most outspoken addresses of his career" Mr. Yap also protested against the barriers imposed between Sawito and his lawyers, against the insulting behaviour of Presiding Judge Sumadijono towards the accused and other aspects of the Court's handling of the case.

## Defendant Keeps Silent.

After a brief third session on 3rd November which was quickly adjourned because of continual interruptions by the public, a sharp conflict arose at the succeeding session on 7th November between defence and court. When the Court and the Prosecutor proceeded to question the defendant before the prosecution witnesses had been called, Sawito refused to answer any questions. On the advice of his lawyers, he invoked Article 289 of the Procedural Code (HIR) which clearly stipulates that "After all witnesses have been examined, the Judges shall examine the accused".

The Presiding Judge justified his departure from this procedure on the grounds of tradition, saying that since the 1950's courts had questioned the defendant first. Mr. Yap insisted that tradition could not supercede written law, and that it was up to the Prosecution to prove their case by presenting their own witnesses before subjecting the defendant to questioning.

The defence counsel was repeatedly accused of obstruction but insisted on the right of the defendant to act in accordance with the law. All questions remained unanswered therefore, and the subsequent hearing held on 14 November proceeded with the testimony of prosecution witnesses.

This is the second time that Mr. Yap, acting for a political prisoner on trial, has challenged the court on the question of the order in which prosecution witnesses and defendant should be examined. The first case was when he defended Asep Suryaman in 1975; on that occasion too, the defendant adamantly refused to answer any questions until prosecution witnesses had been heard.

The stand taken by Mr. Yap in 1975 provoked a strong public rebuke by the Indonesian Association of Judges (IKAHI) which accused him of contempt of court. The Association was angered on that occasion not only by Mr. Yap's attitude on this question of procedure but also by his demurrer challenging the impartiality of a court consisting of government appointees, bound on oath to serve the interests of the government.

\* This item is based on reports in *Tempo* 12 November and 19 November and an article by Hamish McDonald in *National Times* (Canberra) 7-12 November 1977.



Sawito (left) with a witness, Mr. Sudjono

# BURU

Issued by: TAPOL The British Campaign for the Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners

PRISONERS MAKE

NOTORIOUS ISLAND

PROSPEROUS

Indonesia

Buru,

island

of

brutality

Prison algebra

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Indonesian prisoners take oath of allegiance.

The

Devilish Island

INDONESIA:

POLITICAL EXILE

ISLAND

„Wij willen  
voor Boeroe  
werken, maar  
niet als slaaf.”

„WE'LL WORK FOR BURU,  
BUT NOT AS SLAVES”

SAHI SHIMBUN:





*Indonesian prisoners take oath of allegiance: Crocodiles and rifle butts*

## The Devilish Island

**H**undreds of gaunt-looking men in tattered clothing lumbered off two ramshackle boats and searched the waiting crowd for once-familiar faces. Many of the men had not seen their families since 1965—when more than 150,000 Indonesians were arrested following an unsuccessful Communist coup attempt. The Jakarta government had recently released 10,000 of these political prisoners from camps across the island nation—and last week the two boats brought the first batch of former detainees from the crocodile-infested island of Buru to the east Java port of Surabaya. One prisoner died along the way of a heart attack; another died shortly after arrival. Those who survived appeared old and ill and uncertain about their future. “What is given to us is freedom on loan,” said one of the prisoners. “It could be taken from us anytime.”

The men who arrived at Surabaya had lived through a harrowing ordeal. From time to time in the last twelve years, stories leaked out about the corruption and brutality of Buru’s prisons. The Indonesian authorities denied the charges, and they invited a group of journalists to Buru to witness the recent mass prisoner release. But what the newsmen found seemed to support some of the stories about the devilish doings on Buru.

Military police called prisoners’ names through a bullhorn, stapled labels to their shirts and herded them onto barges headed for the village of Namlea. There, the prisoners were assembled on a soccer field and handed printed booklets from which they dutifully read an oath of allegiance to President Suharto.

denounced Marxism-Leninism, vowed to accept all actions taken against them as necessary for national security and promised not to sue the government for being held without trial for so many years.

**Sexual Abuse:** But out of earshot of the guards, the prisoners told of savage beatings, sometimes with rifle butts. One prisoner, they said, had committed suicide out of shame after guards sexually abused his young daughter. Some of the inmates complained of the long hours of labor under the blazing tropical sun. “The soil here is not good for farming,” one of them said. “But if we don’t farm we don’t eat.” Many prisoners said they subsisted on only 200 grams of rice, cassava and vegetables a day.

So harsh are conditions on Buru that 40 prisoners made a suicidal attempt to escape through the jungle in 1973. According to the camp commandant, Lt. Col. Karyono, nineteen of them were found dead of starvation—or eaten by the others. The remaining 21 meekly returned to camp. Karyono said he knew nothing about prisoners being murdered by guards, but villagers at Namlea claimed they knew of six “Communist” prisoners who had been shot to death.

Most of the prisoners released in recent days were over 50 and suffering from tuberculosis or other serious diseases. Some were so crippled that they had to be carried out on stretchers. “The government knows that these people are too old and too tired to indulge in any political adventures once released in Java,” said a camp official. Lest they be tempted, however, the “freed” men will remain under house arrest for six months

and then be restricted to their home villages.

The prisoners left behind faced an even bleaker future. Hasyim Rachman, a former editor of the left-wing paper, *Bintang Timur*, was placed in confinement shortly after speaking to foreign correspondents, and other inmates feared punishment once the press departed. “After the last journalists’ visit in 1971, many of us were beaten up by the soldiers,” one prisoner said. “I was one of them because I was working without a shirt on when a journalist walked past and remarked to an official how thin I was. The guards said I should have covered up.” Another prisoner, novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer, angrily told *Newsweek*: “This place should be burned down. The government has deprived me of my basic rights for twelve years, and for this I am very bitter.”

After the release of the 10,000 inmates, the Indonesian Government contended that there were only about 20,000 more political prisoners left in its jails. President Suharto’s plan is to release them in two stages over the next two years. But one government official admitted that “we have not really come to any concrete plan on what to do with Buru yet or what to do with the hard-core Communists.” And in a statement that welcomed the recent releases, Amnesty International, the London-based human-rights organization that won the Nobel Peace Prize for 1977, estimated that as many as 100,000 more political prisoners still lingered in Suharto’s camps.

—RAYMOND CARROLL with bureau reports

**Newsweek, January 9, 1978**



## Indonesia

# Prison algebra

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Jakarta

"In no other country of the world are so many political prisoners held without trial for so many years." That was Amnesty International's verdict on Indonesia in October, and it may have had something to do with the release of some 10,000 prisoners this week. Most of these people had been detained since the attempted communist coup in 1965 and had spent the past dozen years in prison without being tried.

This week's prisoners were somewhat luckier than the 2,500 released last year, in that they were set free with fewer conditions. On December 17th Indonesia's intelligence chief Admiral Sudomo announced that the released prisoners will be free to return to their homes "but they will still be under the supervision of local authorities until they become good citizens". Diplomats were told earlier that homecomings will be allowed provided the ex-prisoners are "acceptable" to family and neighbours, and can find a job—two big ifs—and also avoid any political activities. Some prisoners may be obliged to "volunteer", like last year's lot, for resettlement in remote areas such as Buru Island, which houses the largest prison camp in Indonesia. Admiral Sudomo said that 16 settlement areas will be open to the released prisoners.

The government has already resettled about 75,000 families from overcrowded Java in Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. Amnesty regards forced resettlement as an easy way to keep tabs on former prisoners—which it is. But officials have a less dastardly motive for seeking recruits for the country's "transmigration" programme. This programme, which aimed at resettling



Free, sort of, in Buru

200,000 families by the end of 1978, has fallen far behind schedule. The World Bank has made a tentative offer of a \$1 billion loan after 1979 but has threatened to give little or nothing unless the first settlements look successful and unless the government stops making ex-prisoners join up.

Pressure from Amnesty, the World Bank and President Carter has kept President Suharto to his timetable this year. But tens of thousands of prisoners still remain in Indonesian jails and prison camps, though estimates vary from Amnesty's high of 100,000 to the government's own suspect figure of 29,000. In August Mr Suharto promised to release a further 10,000 detainees in 1978, and the remainder in 1979. All these are "B" category detainees who are suspected of having been involved in the 1965 coup but have not been brought to trial because of insufficient evidence. The government admits that there are another 1,900 or so "A" category detainees ostensibly awaiting trial: in 10 years military tribunals have managed to try—and convict—fewer than 1,000 people. Another 1,000 prisoners have not yet been classified. The president recently said that most "A" prisoners will be tried by the end of 1979, and all others will be downgraded to "B" status and made eligible for release.

President Suharto's algebra at least spells a marginal improvement on the situation described by Amnesty in October. There are domestic political reasons for the president to appear more accommodating. In November university students took to the streets of Jakarta, Surabaya and Bandung to protest against

government corruption. These were the first serious demonstrations since the riots at the time of the Japanese prime minister's visit in January, 1974.

Unlike President Marcos in the Philippines and President Park in South Korea, who have both recently faced campus revolts, Mr Suharto did not crack down on the students. Only a few students were arrested, and ministers were despatched to meet student leaders and university deans. One dean told your correspondent that he was instructed to permit all forms of dissent on campus, but was warned that the army would break up demonstrations if they "spilled over" into the towns. An armed forces' journal said in late November that student activity was "inevitable" and should even be encouraged if played according to the rules.

This unlikely tolerance on the part of the army has its roots in Mr Suharto's own political strength. Although he is up for re-election next March, he has no challengers; and he is hoping that by avoiding unpleasant incidents over the next few months he can ensure that the vote—in the mostly handpicked national congress—will be unanimous and uneventful.

If things go swimmingly, he may even be in a position to choose the general he wants as his successor, replacing the Sultan of Jogjakarta who is now the civilian figurehead in a government rooted in the army. The president is also importing 2m tonnes of rice: without it, food shortages in January and February, after one of Indonesia's worst-ever harvests, would almost certainly bring the anti-government riots he desperately wants to prevent.



# Buru, the island

**P**ROFESSOR SALEH ISKANDAR was taking it all with wry humor. "We've just been up to the town square to practise our release, but I'm afraid we are not very good at drill and exasperated these military men."

His eyes beamed with mock ingenuity behind thick spectacles and his lips and goatee beard twisted around a wildly angled front tooth. Twelve years of prison had clearly taught this former teacher of Indonesian his safest defence.

A day before Professor Saleh, 57, had been holding court under a tree 20 kilometres inland from Buru's tiny capital, Namlea. "I would still like nothing better than to go to court to prove that I'm innocent," he said.

Yet here he was in Namlea, going through the motions, swearing an oath renouncing communist rebellion. He had even helped the camp commander check the grammar beforehand. No doubt a final charade was worth release from the "rehabilitation installation" of Buru Island.

There is no other escape from Buru. Surrounded by a blue, shark-infested sea, the island is in a back-water of the archipelago, some 2000 kilometres from home in Java. It is reached by a day-long boat trip from Ambon or a half-hour flight by a Dakota aircraft that lands on a coral airstrip still surrounded by bomb-craters from World War II.

A small boat takes you from Namlea across a wide bay to a low swampy shore and passes through a fishing village built on stilts at the mouth of the Waingapu River. It chugs for four hours between walls of sago palms, tall reeds and trees trailing vines into the brown water. The crocodiles have learnt to disappear when they hear the motor.

There has been only one attempt to run. In November, 1974, some 48 men escaped from one of Buru's 21 camps into the jungle. Only 21 survived the jungle to surrender and face severe beatings and indefinite detention at a jail in Namlea.

Not only is there a battalion of guards and a hostile jungle but the prisoners are hated by the semi-wild inhabitants of the Buru interior for occupying their land. As recently as three

weeks ago, a prisoner was speared to death.

The boat arrives at a landing stage, where a work detail of prisoners is waiting to carry baggage up to the simple wooden huts of the Buru Island "inrehab headquarters". One quietly introduces himself in fluent English. It is Basuki Effendi, 49, once a leading film maker in Jakarta, now a prison laborer.

"Where are you from? Australia? I have a friend there, a film maker called Cecil Holmes, we once attended a film festival in Prague. Of course, that was 20 years ago when we were both young men."

It was the first of many scenes in which men with the appearance of tramps revealed themselves to be highly educated and desperate to make contact with the outside world. Many of Buru's prisoners, who now number about 10,150 with the release of 1500 on Tuesday, were once prominent intellectuals, arrested for their association with communist-controlled organisations.

Despite some attempts at shepherding by officials, the 20 foreign and local journalists who spent three days in the prison camps were able to talk at length with the prisoners.

Some risked reprisals by talking openly in front of guards. Hasyim Rachman, 59, former chief editor of the Leftist Jakarta newspaper *Bintang Timur* (Eastern Star), was one who talked recklessly to the Pressmen about the beatings and hardship and the desperate wish of nearly all prisoners to leave Buru.

He was immediately led away by the arm and interrogated for several hours in a guard officer's house. For this reason it seems risky to use the names of the dozens of other prisoners I spoke to out of earshot of officials.

After the last visit by a Press party in 1971, many were beaten even if they had not talked.

"I was one of them because I was working without a shirt when a journalist walked past and remarked to an official how thin I was. The guards beat me for not covering myself," said one detainee.

One prisoner gave me his story, which was typical of most. Arrested soon after the September 30, 1965 coup he was shuttled around jails in Jakarta for months.

"In the Tangerang jail, for example, I was witness to two or

three men dying each day because their food was terribly bad and they had dysentery," he said. "And many were hungry. If they received a parcel from their family — say some cassava if it was a poor person or peasant — they couldn't restrain themselves to eat it properly because of their hunger. They just wolfed it all down and a few minutes later they were dead."

The prisoner said he and hundreds of others were assembled on Nusakambangan Island, near Cilacap on the south coast of Java. "We were then brought here to Buru on a very old ship that soon after sank, I heard," he said.

"I was put right in the bows, at the peak of which was the

HAMISH McDONALD, "The Age" journalist who visited Buru to see the political prisoners.



Released prisoners wait for boats to take them down

toilet. We tried to keep it clean, but it kept blocking and flooding, and when the ship hit a wave the human waste just flowed back into the prisoners' quarters.

"Everything was broken or rusted up. The ship was groaning and creaking as though it was breaking up. A bicycle would have been faster. We were not allowed on deck, locked down below. Sometimes the ship stopped in mid-ocean, after breaking down.

"We arrived in Namlea. A few friends were made to get off to prepare a kitchen, about 15 to 20 men. They landed for the first time. I was surprised because on boarding the ship they had said to us: 'Have a good trip towards your new life.'

"The first to land were greeted



# nd of brutality

man in Indonesia, was with a party of  
the release of some of the island's 10,000  
Here is his report.



ownriver to Namlea, the main port of Buru Island.

with blows from rifle-butts. I was shocked. But we got down, it was all right, and we stayed at a place called Jike Kacil for a few days.

"My group was the first to go into Buru, into the interior along the Waingapu. It took six hours to go five kilometres, skirting around fallen trees and with thorns tearing holes in you everywhere.

"When we arrived at the site we were woken up before dawn and told to do exercises under the command of a sergeant who we couldn't see because of the dark. Our first work was to clear roads, and because we had no tools we had to tear out the sword grass with our hands until they bled.

"We knew that our food allo-

cation was 600 grams of rice a day, some dried fish and salt. But it turned out that was only for the first week. Then it became 500 grams, and in three months became bulgur (low grade wheat) that had rust from the ship in it so we got sick. But we had to work very hard under guard. One man was down to 29 kilos. We had to eat anything: lizards, lizard eggs, cats, dogs, snakes, birds, anything we could catch. And beatings kept coming beyond reason."

More waves of prisoners kept arriving. And initial hopes that Buru would become self-supporting and prosperous quickly faded. The soil was poor, insect pests ate the crops and no local stone was available for permanent retaining

walls, irrigation channels and road surfaces. The local timber quickly rots.

Medicine was often not available. "We used to have what was called 'special medicine'," said one prisoner. "If you got sick in the stomach, the guard would give you a punch in the belly. If you had toothache, you'd get a punch in the mouth."

Beatings were routine and occasionally caused death from injuries or suicide. The staging camp of Jike Kecil became a punishment camp. Prisoners allege, with great consistency, that sadistic guards carried out vicious beatings and torture. In some cases that were cited, prisoners were deprived of water and fed salted food so that they drank their own urine in desperate thirst. One who allegedly died of this treatment was officially reported as having hung himself, the prisoners said.

According to dozens of separate accounts, Jike Kecil was the scene of deliberate murder. One day in 1973 a group of six prisoners collecting timber angered a guard. He shot one man dead. Then he took the remaining five back, lined them up and shot them one by one in the chest with a pistol. Only one survived.

Conditions started improving in 1974, the prisoners say, and took a dramatic change for the better last year. The punishment centre, which had been moved to a camp ironically named Ancol after a seaside resort in Jakarta, has been turned into a normal camp. Beatings are now only occasional.

A few like the author Pramoedya Ananta Toer — recognised as Indonesia's leading modern novelist — were freed from farm work at the end of 1973. Pramoedya has since written eight novels, set perhaps wisely in the middle ages, all laboriously typed in book-form. He was allowed to receive an English translation of his short-stories I had brought, the first time he had seen such a copy.

However all say life on Buru is still arduous. Crops have not greatly improved and in some cases yields have declined because fertiliser insecticide is too expensive to buy.

Regular heavy deductions from production are made by the guards, even though they are officially maintained by the Government. Extra produce such as

poultry and eggs are not normally consumed by the prisoners but sold to buy clothes, soap and medicine.

Every six months when a camp commander goes on leave or finishes his assignment his prisoners are forced to give a "farewell gift" of 500,000 rupiah (about \$1080) from sales of their rice, eggs and handicrafts. Some units also pay a monthly contribution of about 50,000 rupiah (about \$112) to their commanders.

While the camps have a total of seven doctors, two of them inmates, and thus better provided for than the general Indonesian population, medicine is not free even for desperate cases, the prisoners said. In one unit 17 men with advanced tuberculosis rely on their mates to buy medicine. If money cannot be found, their treatment simply lapses.

The position of the 175 families who came to join their menfolk in a special unit called Savanajaya is also criticised. Some said they had been forced to come. Most said they had been grossly misled about facilities on the island through seeing a film which was not about Buru at all. They said they are confined to the island, and their children are not allowed to carry on their education in Ambon after passing through Namlea's junior high school.

"Tuan, please tell me, what is our position, are we free?" one 20-year-old youth asked me.

While at Savanajaya we witnessed the mass wedding of 15 couples who have been kept on ice over the past 12 months for such an occasion. "We have several kinds of corve (forced labor) here," said one detainee. "Corve for carrying the baggage of military men, corve for planting rice, now we have a marriage corve."

All couples had to swear to remain on Buru for the rest of their life before permission to marry was given.

Despite the recent improvement, prisoners say they are set against Government suggestions that they return here as free settlers after their release, which is promised for all before the end of 1979.

Says one source familiar with Buru: "Only 2 or 3 per cent would like to stay here and some others would like to go to other areas for transmigration such as Sulawesi or Seram. But not here. The memories are too black."



# INDONESIA: A LOOK AT THE POLITICAL EXILE ISLAND OF BURU

## Held 12 Years Without Even Knowing Reason For Arrest

Buru Island, Moluccas Island Group, December 20.  
(From Special Correspondent, Masuko.)

On 20 December, two large-sized landing craft carrying 1,500 people left Buru Island, known internationally as a place of exile for political prisoners. The craft headed for the island of Java. The passengers were political prisoners, held captive for 12 years and now being released and returned to their homes.

Despite criticism from human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, the situation on Buru Island has remained shrouded in mystery. However, the Indonesian Government has now decided to try or release over 34,000 people by 1979, and the processing of the first 10,000 people has begun. Taking this as an opportunity, I went to see "the forbidden island".

Note: Category B political prisoners are those who are alleged to have participated in the G30S/PKI affair (September 30th Movement/Indonesian Communist Party). Specifically, there is alleged to be reason to believe they were implicated but there is not sufficient evidence to bring them to court. Thus they have been held up till now without trial.

The other political prisoners include: Category A (participated directly in the affair, and scheduled for trial — about 1,900 people); Category C (believed to have participated indirectly in the affair, a less grave classification).

Approximately 540,000 of this Category were all released by the end of 1975. And others.

## No Doctors for the Sick

### "Freedom — It is for Real This Time?"

Buru is an isolated island, about one and a half times the size of Bali. It is located to the west of Ambon, about 2,000 kilometers from Jakarta. It became a place of exile for political prisoners in 1969. Since then, mainly male Category B prisoners from camps in Java have been sent there. It now has a prisoner population of about 11,600 people.

As camp commander, **Lieut-Colonel Karyono** (52) boasts, the camp has neither guard towers nor barbed wire. There are ploughed fields and chickens pecking at feed. There is a Moslem mosque and a soccer field. Suddenly, a farmer in a straw hat came up to me and started speaking to me in fluent English. Except for the talk about human rights, etc, the atmosphere was hardly any different from that in a village in Java.

However, the depth of the feelings of dissatisfaction and opposition among the political prisoners far surpasses what it was according to Colonel Karyono. This reporter visited the camp for five days. During that time, I spoke to more than a hundred people. When the guards were not present, they all talked about past occurrences and criticised the present situation. In what follows, I will exclude things I heard from only one person or which are unverifiable; I will include only those things regarding which several sources were available.

## Fear

On the night of 12 December, 1974, 48 prisoners attempted a joint escape from Camp No. 2 which is situated about two kilometers west of (camp) headquarters. Twenty-one of them were caught and the rest were never heard of again. It is believed they

died of starvation in the jungle. The prisoners say that all the inmates of Camp No. 2 were held collectively responsible, and that they were beaten half to death. The re-captured prisoners are now being held in the village of Namlea (capital of Buru).

## Sickness

The released prisoners included people who had to be carried by stretcher. One of them was a 37-year old man who was suffering from cancer. His pulse was being taken and there was a vacant look in his eyes. Probably he was returning home only to die.

Many of the remaining prisoners are suffering from diseases. Particularly numerous are those suffering from tuberculosis. In Camp No. 2, for instance, it is estimated that of the one thousand inmates, about seven percent have the disease. It is said that there are sixteen lepers on Buru.

In Camp No. 2, there is a sanatorium which was constructed in 1975 by the prisoners on their own. Reserved only for the critically ill, there were 17 patients there. Coughing the weak cough characteristic of those suffering from tuberculosis, they told me they need PAS (para-aminosalicylic acid) and streptomycin. However, (camp) headquarters does not recognise the sanatorium. The prisoners say that no doctor has ever come. (According to Colonel Karyono, the number of political prisoners who have died since 1969 is 296.)

## Communists

Without exception, every one of the prisoners insisted that he was not a communist. Most said that they have never been told why they were arrested. One prisoner said that he had to be (sic) beaten with a chair because he asked why he had been arrested.

In Camp No. 2, I talked to a young man aged 21 years whose name is Muryani. In 1972, he fell from a tall tree and became hemi-plegic (paralysed down one side). With the help of acupuncture several months previously, he was able to get up, and he walked with the aid of a stick. He said that at the age of nine, his father was arrested and they were both taken to a prison in Central Java. For some reason, Muryani was also branded a political prisoner. In 1969, he was separated from his father and sent to Buru. When I asked him if he would like to return, he grasped both my hands and nodded in the affirmative like a small child. I heard that there were similar cases in Camps No. 1 and 3.

## Homesickness

In Camp No. 4, 179 political prisoners are living with their families. With the objective of getting released political prisoners to migrate from overcrowded Java, the government, starting in 1973, encouraged families by providing one hectare of farmland.

Even when they were put on board the ships, the political prisoners still displayed anxiety on their faces. Among them were prisoners who had been transferred from one camp to another as many as six times. The inmates of the newest camp on Buru, Camp R, said that when they were transported to Buru, they had been told that they were to be released. "This time, it should be for real, shouldn't it?" the prisoners repeatedly asked me.

# PRISONERS MAKE NOTORIOUS ISLAND REASONABLY PROSPEROUS

Guido van de Kreeke, correspondent of the Dutch daily, De Telegraf paid a five-day visit to Buru, earlier than the large group of foreign journalists who visited the island, and reported his impressions in De Telegraf on 17 December 1977.

Following are some quotations from his report:

\* \* \* \* \*

The River Wayapur is like an enormous trap which penetrates the island of Buru. At least 11,000 prisoners have entered this trap in the past seven years. No-one has ever returned. Therefore this first day of Christmas will see a most dramatic event when two naval landing craft will collect 1,500 aged, chronically-ill and non-productive prisoners from Buru and deliver them to Surabaya . . . . The big question is whether the approximately 10,000 prisoners who will remain on Buru in 1978 will obtain total freedom. One government spokesman said: "Their status will be as prisoners and ex-prisoners, but they will remain there, although it will be with greater freedom."

It is certain that the final goal of all activities on Buru is transmigration. It is a word more and more often used when there is talk about relieving the serious over-population in Java . . . . Buru, the place to which some ten thousand prisoners were sent whose sole way for survival was to cultivate the land has therefore become the largest and possibly the most successful development project organised in Indonesia.

However sour it may sound, large areas of wild Buru have, with the help of imprisoned intellectuals, been transformed into Javanese villages. Altogether 3,500 hectares have been brought under cultivation. The prisoners have, by their united efforts, ensured themselves a reasonable existence above that of the average Indonesian . . . . It is certain that the Government will not abandon this development project. Efforts have been made to persuade prisoners to bring their wives over for permanent settlement but they have not met with any marked success. Former farmers who lost their land like to talk about permanent settlement but intellectuals are dying to return to Java.

\* \* \* \* \*

Beside me stands Lieut-Colonel Karyono, the camp commander who says mockingly: "This is no Siberia. There are no search-lights, no machine-gun posts, no barbed wire."

No Siberia! The sweat pours down. No barbed wire! Isn't the wall of the jungle higher than any barbed wire? And what about the story I heard of the 40 men who made an escape attempt, of whom 20 died?

But where are the 11,000 prisoners? I see only a few men walking behind slowly-moving oxen through the rice fields . . . . During the day, I was led through this model Indonesian society. Artists are working in studios. There is a tape recorder with

loudspeakers, and each of the 21 units into which the prisoners are divided has its own furniture-making shop, rice-hulling, carpentry and shops where everything can be bought. But the one thing lacking is the sound of women's and children's voices. Every time I can, I try to talk to the prisoners. Sometimes, right in the middle of the commander's room, someone comes over to me to cry their heart out. And in the evenings, many secret thoughts are confided in me.

"Freedom? We have often heard about that. We first heard about releases from the TV."

In the barrack where the filing system is kept, they are working late into the night. All details, dossiers, photos, etc. are examined. Commander Karyono selects, Jakarta decides. The military say: "Most of them want to stay here. At home they have lost everything, often including their wives. Their former neighbours won't have them back."

An excitable man, Ruspanadi, formerly a harbour-master, said out loud in the middle of the commander's room: "This is a real hell to suffer, especially for the women and children." As he talks, he is watching an American cartoon film on the TV. . . . (He) feels that the situation has improved in the last four years. "And we understand that things can only improve if we cooperate with the military commanders of the camp. But an enforced stay here of eight years is against all humanity."

\* \* \* \* \*

Generously he says: "For Indonesia's healthy development, there must be transmigration. Even this project of Buru must continue . . . . I do not object to living here but I don't want to live here as a farmer. I want to live here as a free man, as an engineer so that I can use my knowledge for the development of the country."

According to him, more than half the people here think like this. "We must do our best to develop this island, with devotion and not without payment, not as slaves but on our own terms."

. . . In Unit R, which no-one from the outside has been allowed to inspect until now, there is a barrack full of tuberculosis patients. They complain bitterly that they don't get enough to eat, nor do they get proper medicine. I heard later that they would all be released. Missionaries and ambassadors also heard about these shortages, but none of the medicines sent seem to have reached them.

In Jakarta, the Dutch Ambassador said that as an official representative of another country, he is not allowed to visit a camp like Buru . . . . He also says that besides the release of 10,000 prisoners, lists will be available for the ambassadors to inspect. . . . .



# THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW:

## "The Struggle for Survival on Buru"

by David Jenkins

### A Summary

David Jenkins, the Far Eastern Economic Review Jakarta correspondent, was among the journalists who visited Buru to witness the prisoner releases. His report was published in the 30 December 1977 issue of the Review. Like the other writers, Jenkins was allowed to observe activities in the camp and speak with many detainees, including some of the "most articulate and most outspoken big-name prisoners." He stated:

"The trip confirmed that there is substance behind many of the allegations that have been made about Buru. Prisoners on the island painted a picture of hardship and adversity in a hostile environment far from their native Java. They told of systematic beatings by military police and soldiers, particularly during the early days of the settlement.

"They spoke of forced labour from sunrise to late afternoon and said that a major part of their rice harvest was taken to feed the battalion of troops assigned as their jailers. They spoke of men who had been driven to suicide by the harsh regimen imposed by military commandants."

Jenkins seemed to feel that conditions on Buru these days are relatively good in comparison with those in prisons on Java. However, he emphasized throughout his report that the prisoners are exceedingly unhappy and homesick, quoting Pramudya Ananta Toer as having said, "We are longing for Java. Only 20 or 30 people would stay if we were all given a choice." The detainees' isolation is heightened because they have little access to news of the outside world, and because the mail service is so slow. Basuki Effendi, the film director, told Jenkins that the last letter that he had received had taken 18 months to travel to Buru from Jakarta.

One of the most important points of the Jenkins report is that all of the detainees whom he interviewed asserted that "it was quite correct to speak of prisoners doing forced labour on Buru." They claimed that no one is paid for the work that is required of them.

"The prisoners' only regular income is from selling eggs or by making musical instruments and toys. A former economics student, arrested in Semarang in 1965 at the age of 22,

said he made Rupiah 200-300 (50-75 US cents) a month selling ducks' eggs to the communal store. This was just enough to buy things like tobacco, cigarette papers, soap and aspirin."

The article also documented specific instances of torture and killings by the prison authorities. For example, a detainee stated, "One man who was beaten by his unit commander could not take it anymore and killed himself by drinking insecticide." Other persons alleged that five tapols "were murdered by guards at the Jiku Kecil jail near the town of Namlea following wrongful accusations made by informers seeking exemption from heavy work."

In addition, Jenkins discussed the life faced by families that are quartered in the prison settlement of Savanajaya, stating that they had as many complaints as the single men.

"The way tapols tell it, Savanajaya is a human lobster pot. Once wives and children enter, they may never leave again. Although nominally free, a tapol wife becomes somehow tainted by the alleged misdeeds of her husband, as do her children.

"Savanajaya has no senior high school and young people who want to continue their education on the nearby island of Ambon say they have been refused permission. The commandant of Buru Island, Colonel Karyono, says their requests are still being 'processed'.

"During the visit to the island, there was a disconcerting example of the sort of human distress that can be caused through a combination of inflexible rules and bureaucratic ineptitude. Two families at Savanajaya had been told they could be going back to Java. They were overjoyed. They sold their furniture and packed their bags. They were just about to get on the pony cart to the coast when an official came and said they would not be leaving after all. There had been a mistake, he said. It was not the policy to allow family members to leave Buru.

"Visiting journalists found one of the wives sitting on the floor, sobbing uncontrollably. Her husband, who seemed to have resigned himself to the news said: 'She is broken in spirit. I am afraid she may lose her mind.'"

### TO WHAT FUTURE ARE THEY RELEASED?

At a symbolic ceremony attended by diplomats and foreign correspondents in Sumatra yesterday 886 Indonesian political prisoners were released. They were part of the 10,000 whose release was promised many months ago by the powerful security organization. Many have been more than ten years in detention without trial. Next year 10,000 more will follow and in 1979 a final 10,000. All these are in category B, those deemed to have been involved in the 1965 coup but for whom evidence is insufficient. There still remain 1,925 category A prisoners awaiting trial for their active participation in the coup and another 1,125 of cases still not classified.

It may be wondered whether the Indonesian Government deserves any credit for these releases in face of constant criticism from bodies such as Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists. Even allowing for the figures—which Amnesty believes to be understated—what of the prisoners' guilt? Whatever the Indonesian Government may choose to believe, many outside observers think that the 1965

coup was initiated by a left-wing group of army officers, and not by the Indonesian Communist Party as such. This makes the guilt attributed to any member of that party and many thousands more alleged to have communist sympathies a post-coup assumption and no more.

These are the arguments from the past. What of the future for those released? Have they been given their freedom? We are told that those leaving the camp yesterday appeared apathetic towards their release. And well they might be. A renunciation of their communist ideology and a pledge of loyalty to President Suharto given at the ceremony was not the only thing required of them. They also had had to show that in the camp they were following a way of life in accordance with the approved doctrine of panchasila. Then their families had to accept them back, which many have been unwilling to do lest the security of the family might thereby be endangered. At one women's camp the commandant admitted that 95 per cent of prisoners' families had refused to receive their relatives. And even when families are

brave enough the consent of neighbours is also needed.

When all these hurdles are overcome the prisoner must show that he has a guaranteed job to go back to. The rare few who pass all these tests must still face six months of house detention followed by six months more of restriction to town or village during which weekly reporting to four different government organizations will be required of them. Obviously the majority will fail to meet such onerous stipulations. For them, scattered over the Indonesian islands, are resettlement centres awaiting "volunteers". These are mostly in Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi and those who are from those parts have at least the hope of a life lived within reach of the homes that they could visit. Java has no room to speak of for resettlement. For the majority from that over-populated island resettlement means desolate islands like Buru or such similar settings that Indonesia offers as the tropical equivalent of Siberia. They will get land and material to build a house with but that is not very promising when their new freedom amounts to moving from one camp to another.

Reproduced from The Times by permission

**Tapol**

British Campaign for the  
Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners

TAPOL, 103 TILEHURST ROAD, WANDSWORTH COMMON, LONDON SW18.

# CATHOLIC CHURCH TAKES A STAND

THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL of the Catholic Church in Indonesia has issued a statement, with the approval of 33 cardinals and bishops, analysing the present anxieties of people in Indonesia. The Council known by the acronym MAWI takes note that there is a widening appreciation of "shortcomings, weaknesses and distortions in State affairs".

MAWI believes that there are three causes for these anxieties: the principle of development now being pursued ignore the human element and concentrate on physical, materialistic and quantitative aspects; the application of democratic principles in the development process is not consistently pursued; and there is excessive bureaucracy and abuse of position with inadequate attention to

the rights and responsibilities of the community.

MAWI's statement has found response among younger pastors, one of whom, reports Tempo (19 November 1977), believes that it may reflect a growing appreciation within the Church hierarchy of the need to accept the new, revolutionary theology requiring the Church to come closer to the people. Another older pastor, Mgr. Donatus Djagom SVD, believes that the statement represents an attempt to evolve a new theology. "This is already being done in Flores (a predominantly Catholic island)," he said. "On the other hand", he said, "it may be a red light for us all. Just see how all sections of society are showing these anxieties: the Moslems, the students and now us."

## Thousands of Students Demonstrate

A DEMONSTRATION OF 1,500 students, carrying banners sharply critical of the government and the economic and social situation, marched through Jakarta on 10th November, watched by thousands of people lining the streets.

The day chosen for this demonstration of protest was Heroes' Day, commemorating the battle for Surabaya waged on 10 November 1945 between British troops seeking to re-establish Dutch rule in Indonesia and Indonesian independence fighters. Many hundreds of Indonesians lost their lives in this battle.

Similar student demonstrations took place in Bandung, West Java and in Surabaya, East Java.\*

In Jakarta, the demonstration commenced at the Jakarta Pedagogical Institute, IKIP, where it was given an enthusiastic send-off by Professor Winarno, the Rector who said he warmly supported student actions based on their own convictions and urged them to struggle on for the cause of justice.

Panzer, anti-riot troops and helicopters were out in force as the students marched in orderly fashion from the IKIP campus to the central campus of the University of Indonesia, the capital's State university. In all, 68 posters were confiscated by security forces and all efforts by the students to get these posters back were unsuccessful. The posters bore such slogans as: "The people need food, not indoctrination!" "Formerly, they fought for independence, now it's for wealth!" "When will the bosses be tackled by the Anti-Corruption Operation?" "The people are starving and the bosses prepare their graves!"

After arrival at the UI campus, the demonstrators were warmly welcomed by the Rector of the University, Professor Mahar Mardjono and other university officials. "We all, of the older and younger generations, are jointly responsible for the development programme", he said, and hoped those in authority would react positively to the student movement. Heroes' Day, he said, was not just an occasion for looking back but also for the older generation to go in for some introspection: were they fulfilling their promises or had the past struggle been only for personal gain?

At this point, someone in the crowd interjected: "Watch out, you could be arrested." to which the Rector replied, smiling: "I'm not afraid of that."

Bandung. Meanwhile students in Bandung held a solemn commemorative ceremony at the Cikutra Heroes Cemetery throughout the night. One event that had, according to Kompas greatly influenced them was the widespread famine which has

recently hit Karawang, a major rice-growing region in West Java.

As Bandung students were about to start their march, security forces tried to stop them. When the students persisted, the troops said they would not be permitted to march if they carried posters. The students went ahead and as they marched, all posters and banners were confiscated.

Surabaya. At a similar demonstration of about 2,000 students in Surabaya, students from other parts of the country were also present. One of the posters carried at the Surabaya demonstration said: "Dissolve all extra-constitutional bodies!"

### Emergency Cabinet Meeting

On the day after the demonstrations, an emergency session of the Cabinet was held, attended also by the governors of all three provinces in Java and by the top military commanders of Java and Bali. An official spokesman refused to answer any questions from the press after the three-hour meeting but only read out a statement from President Suharto saying that the activities of a small section of society must be brought under control and properly dealt with. If not, things could happen which might disrupt the forthcoming Session of the newly-elected People Assembly (Scheduled for March 1978, the main task of the Session will be to elect the President and Vice-President.)

\* This report is based on Kompas (11 November 1977) and Tempo (19 November 1977)



Student demonstration in Surabaya, 10 November. One poster criticizes the Anti-Corruption Campaign. The other reads: "Foreign loans pile up. Our grandchildren must pay."



# Censorship

## Film banned

A film jointly produced by Indonesian and Dutch film companies which is based on a novel long acknowledged as a major comment on life in Indonesia under the Dutch colonial regime has been banned by Indonesia's Censorship Board.

The film which is entitled Max Havelaar for showing in the Netherlands and Saija dan Adinda for showing in Indonesia is based on the book Max Havelaar by Multatuli, the pen-name of the Dutch writer Doewes Dekker. Dekker was himself a Dutch colonial official who resigned from the service in protest. Max Havelaar, a colonial official is appointed Assistant-Resident in Lebak, a small town near Banten in West Java. There, he comes face to face with the corrupt and exploitative practices of the local aristocracy through whom the Dutch colonial system operates.

The film which is entitled Max Havelaar for showing in the Netherlands and Saija dan Adinda for showing in Indonesia is reviewed and discussed there in the press and film journals. But on April 1st 1977, the Indonesian Board of Censorship announced that the film would not be released in Indonesia unless the producers were willing to make a number of changes. The Dutch director, Mr. Fons Rademakers, has made it quite clear that he will not allow any changes. He declared in an interview (Tempo, 10th September 1977) that the script had received the approval of the Indonesian Ministry of Information. True, he added, an individual had subsequently raised objections but he went ahead because government approval had already been obtained.

The film gives a stark portrayal of the corrupt and brutal practices of the local aristocracy, and the similarities with present-day Indonesia where military officers occupy so many local posts are too glaring to be missed by anyone who is familiar with life in the Indonesian countryside today. The local bupati (regent) orders the seizure of buffaloes from the local population for a feast and abuses the rights of local peasants in many other ways. Max Havelaar complains to his superior in Banten but is ignored. He resigns his post and goes to Bogor, the seat of the Dutch Governor-General, to press his complaint but here too the doors are closed to him, so he leaves the service in disgust.

The love story of Saija and Adinda which also appears in Multatuli's book has become one of the most popular stories of resistance in Indonesia. Saija, a buffalo-boy, protests against local injustice and is compelled to flee for his life, leaving behind his sweet-heart Adinda. After bringing her troubles to Max Havelaar (in this scene, the film departs from the novel where no meeting takes place) Adinda follows her sweetheart to Lampung, South Sumatra only to discover that he has been killed in an uprising, and she too is subsequently killed.

The Jakarta weekly, Tempo which has devoted several long articles to the banning of the film reported on 23rd July, 1977 that before the film was viewed by the Board of Censorship, the Indonesian Ambassador to the Netherlands, Lieutenant-General Sutopo Yuwono (formerly head of BAKIN, the Intelligence Coordination Board) had told the Information Ministry which appoints the censors that the film was 'harmful to Indonesia'.

The Censorship Board, announcing its ban, declared that the ban had been imposed because the film created the impression that colonialism was good and that the people of Banten were exploited not by the Dutch but by the local aristocracy. While some film reviews and commentators in the Netherlands have criticised the film for not portraying the



## Pamphlet banned

A PAMPHLET WRITTEN by Bung Tomo, a prominent figure in Indonesia's fight for national independence, accusing the military authorities of deliberately creating the Jihad (Holy War) Command in order to undermine the Moslem party during the recent elections, has been officially banned.

The pamphlet entitled Himbauan (Appeal) bears the photographs of Admiral Sudomo, Chief-of-Staff of KOPKAMTIB, and General Panggabean, on the front cover and is specifically addressed to them. It claims that the Holy Command is a creation of the Government aimed at linking the Moslem Party, the PPP, with the Darul Islam movement which waged a campaign of terror during the 1950's in support of a demand for the establishment of an Islamic state. One person named in the pamphlet as having tried to incite PPP members to become involved in the Jihad Command is Haji Ismail Pranoto, also known as Hispran, who is actually a member of the military-sponsored party, GOLKAR.

Reporting on the banning of Bung Tomo's pamphlet, Tempo (19 November, 1977) also reports that former Darul Islam members have become members of GOLKAR, and one former DI leader, Ateng Jaelani, now a businessman living in Bandung is quoted as saying: "I have already criticised the government because some former DI leaders have been 'given guidance' by BAKIN (Central Intelligence Agency)."

Lieut. General Widodo, Supreme Commander of the Java-Madura Territory, declared in an interview with Tempo (19 November, 1977) that 240 members of the Jihad Command were in detention and that the cases of 46 of these were now ready for trial. These trials would be held, he said, after the trial of the student Fahmi Basya, arrested in October 1976 for allegedly planning to assassinate President Suharto.

When asked by Tempo whether those who were now under detention included low-ranking members of the Command, Lieut. General Widodo made the following reply:

"If we were to be consistent and arrest all those who are involved, this could affect thousands of people. But we are just in the process of releasing PKI prisoners, and now having to make new arrests. This could lead to new problems. So we are only arresting the prime movers of the organisation."



role of Dutch exploitation more sharply, it is generally acknowledged that the film is a faithful portrayal of Multatuli's work where the central focus was on a local situation which led to Max Havelaar's protest and on the condemnation of a colonial system that operated through the feudal gentry. It is as Tempo says, anti-feudal as well as being anti-colonial.

Asked by Tempo why he had wanted to make the film, the Dutch director, Fons Rademakers said that the theme of injustice was present in all his films. He had long cherished an ambition to film Multatuli's book, and during a visit to Indonesia in 1970, the Indonesian Information Minister had urged him to go ahead with this idea. Through this film, said Mr. Rademakers, "I wanted to show injustice, to portray the cries of protest which are still heard everywhere today. Multatuli's protest is still very topical."

continued from page 3

In other words, Amborawang is presented as part of KOPKAMTIB's "genuine effort... to return detainees to society". Detainees will be given two hectares of land and materials to build a two bedroom house, water buffaloes and chickens and the necessary seeds as well as free agricultural tools to get their farms into production.

Fortunately, TAPOL was able in its last issue to publish material of a rather different nature about this self-same camp, Amborawang. From information which became available to us, certainly not from the official sources on which Jenkins relied for his Amborawang report, we learnt that the tapols there are being employed to fell trees for sleepers supplied under a contract concluded between the local military authorities and the State rail company, and for a contract concluded by military officers with a Taiwanese timber company. Far from tapols being beneficiaries, our sources revealed that tapol labour "has become so profitable to local military authorities that some military functionaries are trying hard to get their own 'allocation' of tapols".

Another section of Jenkins' report, relating to the Bulu Prison for Women in Semarang, reveals how uncritically Jenkins has accepted much of what he was told by the authorities. From Bulu, he reports no first-hand accounts of tapols' views but says only that "all but two or three of the women in the camp have been rejected by their families and have nowhere to go." Our information sharply contradicts this. The women tapols now being held at Bulu Prison consist of tapols who were transferred there last December from Plantungan Labour Camp. Far from having been rejected by their families, the tapols in Bulu have been denied permission to receive family visits. In fact, some of the families concerned felt a certain relief when they heard of the transfer, assuming that it would make visits easier because of the inaccessibility of Plantungan Camp. But all requests for visit-permits were, at least up to May this year, refused. The names of many of the tapols now being held in Bulu are known outside Indonesia, and their families have certainly not rejected them.

In a section on numbers and classification, David Jenkins commences with the startling assertion that "Indonesian officials know precisely how many people they are holding". (He is probably alone of all foreign observers who is prepared to accept government figures without question.)

On the various categories, he reports that A Category tapols (those awaiting trial) would soon be screened to see "if there are people who are no longer worth trying". One official estimated, he said, that 50-70% of the 1,925 A Category tapols would end up in the B category. "It will certainly make it a lot easier for us if they are classified as B", the official said.

In addition to the other categories normally referred to in material about the tapols, the B, C and X categories, Jenkins refers to yet another category, the Y Category which, he says, serves the same function as category X (the 'interim classification') But the Y category is "for people arrested since 1976. There are 221 people in this category".

David Jenkins confirms that tapols are never told of their classification. "There is no point in telling them," he quotes a KOPKAMTIB official as saying. "They are all communists." Besides, this official is reported as having added, if they knew of their classification, it might create tensions in the camps. "If you knew that you were classified A and that your friend, whom you knew to be a more senior communist official was B, you might be resentful. For that kind of reason, it is better that they don't know."

After the Jenkins article appeared in the Far Eastern Economic Review, Sarah Leigh, TAPOL secretary, wrote a

reply which was published in the December 2, 1977 issue. She pointed out the same discrepancies which are reported above, amongst other things disputing KOPKAMTIB's claim that there are only 31,461 political prisoners, a figure which the Review readily accepts. The editors answered by accusing TAPOL and Amnesty International of "unquestioningly" supporting the "spurious" figure of 100,000 detainees.

In addition, in the same issue there appeared an article by Jusuf Wanandi, a senior Indonesian analyst, which outlined his government's position on the human rights question. He attacked both Amnesty International and TAPOL, going so far as to falsely state that TAPOL member Carmel Budiardjo is a member of the British Communist Party. Along with the noble sentiments and empty claims of Mr. Wanandi's article there were revealed two previously unknown facts. He stated that nine hundred prisoners will be released from Buru Island to return to their homes this December, and also that the Indonesian government has signed a new agreement with the International Red Cross, allowing that organisation to conduct "regular visits to the places of detention, as from January 1978."



## Underground Groups Discovered

MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN Java claim to have discovered and broken up two underground organisations run by old and new generation PKI followers.

One is called "Sapu Angin" and is described as being ostensibly concerned with social affairs, some of whose members appear to have a special interest in genealogy. One "Sapu Angin" member was named as Irawan, a recently released political prisoner, possibly B category. Some members had been held for questioning, Colonel Leo Ngali, the officer in charge of Intelligence Affairs for the Java-Madura Military Territorial Command said recently, but none was being detained.

The other organisation was called "Sangga Buana", said to be concerned with mysticism, hypnosis and the art of self-defence. One member named is Resigutama, a ludruk (folk drama) artist, now 24 years old whose father was killed in Babat, East Java during the massacres in 1966. Six members of Sangga Buana have reportedly been arrested, all of whom are said to be ex-PKI.

### Tapols' Wives Also Suspect

Colonel Ngali described these groups as part of the PKI's tactic of working through "organisations without form" or OTB (organisasi tanpa bentuk). "We have on a previous occasion discovered a similar movement; in this particular case, it was an arisan (collective savings) group of wives. It turned out that the members of this arisan were all wives of PKI people who were still under detention. This occurred in Jogjakarta and is also OTB." (Tempo, 12 November, 1977)

In an interview with Tempo (19 November, 1977), Lieutenant-General Widodo, Supreme Commander of the Java-Madura Territory, said that the two organisations, Sapu Angin and Sangga Buana, were being run by former PKI activists. The latter in particular, he said, consisted of people whose relatives had been murdered in 1966. He admitted that there was a generation growing up now that was "seeking revenge", mostly people in their mid-twenties. Among those who had been arrested, he said, some were of the older generation and more ideologically-inclined, but the younger ones were "more interested in revenge than in ideology".



continued from page 1

Act. The amendment states the aid cannot be given to countries which violate human rights unless the US Administration obtains assurances that the aid will be used for "needy people". This amendment has led to a delay in new authorisations of food aid just at a time when the rice situation in Indonesia is critical. Indonesia now publicly admits that it needs to import 1.6 million tons of rice during the five months from November 1977 to March 1978.

To comply with the human rights amendment and end the delay in food aid supplies, Indonesia has had to provide a guarantee that the food or proceeds from its sale will be used for "needy people". In giving this guarantee, Indonesia has in effect "acknowledge(d) that it violates human rights as the US sees them". (New York Times, 19 December 1977)

This certainly highlights the kind of pressure under which the Indonesian military authorities are now operating in regard to the prisoners.

- We view the Indonesian Government's efforts to convince world opinion of its good intentions towards the tapols as a significant development in the campaign for the release of Indonesia's 100,000 untried political prisoners. International pressure has clearly begun to influence Indonesia.

But all the information we have received in the past weeks and months shows that behind these elaborate and much-publicised events there is a tragic reality. Most of the prisoners will end up in labour camps, while those who do actually return home will be subjected to close supervision and considerable harassment.

There is a greater need now for intensified pressure to ensure genuine release for all the prisoners immediately.

## EAST TIMOR AND IRIAN JAYA: DETENTION AND ATROCITIES

IN IRIAN JAYA, the Indonesian army has continued its campaign against the separatist Provisional Revolutionary Government of West Papua New Guinea. Sources claim that 600 families are being held captive in the Merauke Jail, with others in a nearby army camp. There are also reports of nearly 400 prisoners in the Jayapura Jail, many of whom are being subjected to torture. In addition, 200 miners at the American-owned Freeport copper mine have been incarcerated for allegedly aiding the guerilla movement. However, most disturbing is the report that Indonesian soldiers have been killing civilians in the Baliem Valley. An Indonesian spokesman has denied this, stating that the deaths were the result of "an outbreak of tribal war... among primitive tribes in Irian Jaya."

From East Timor it is alleged that the Indonesians have established a concentration camp near Atumbua in West Timor, close to the border with East Timor, where various methods of torture are being employed. On December 2 the Indonesian authorities reiterated their determination "never" to allow investigation teams (including the International Red Cross) to visit East Timor. This reflects their desire to isolate the territory from the outside world, so that little will be known of the atrocities continually being committed by Indonesian troops.



## LAST MALARI TAPOL RELEASED

DRS SJAHRIR, the last of the tapols held in connection with the student unrest of January 1974, referred to as the Malari incident, was released from Nirbaya Prison on 21 November after spending three years ten months and three days under arrest. He is one of the three Malari tapols to have been

tried and was given a six-and-a-half year sentence.

His release followed a family request that he be granted leave of absence to get married.

His release was officially stated to be conditional upon his "not running away and not placing difficulties in the way of any investigations" (Tempo, 25 November, 1977).

## Subscriptions

To cover increasing costs and our expansion plans, we have decided to raise the subscription rates for the Bulletin. This will only affect the rate in sterling; our dollar subscription rate has been maintained at an earlier exchange rate for the two currencies and will not be changed

New rates: UK and Europe £3.00 (US\$5.50)  
(6 issues) Overseas (airmail) £4.00 (US\$6.75)

Please make cheques payable to TAPOL. TAPOL account no. 40987493, National Westminster Bank, 27 Bellevue Road, London, SW17.

All foreign currency cheques should be endorsed on the reverse side with the words: 'as made payable to on the front'.

Please address all correspondence and subscription enquiries to: TAPOL, 103 Tilehurst Road, Wandsworth Common, London SW18

TAPOL campaigns for the release of Indonesian political prisoners and is a humanitarian organisation. It is not associated with any political groups, either in Indonesia or abroad, and is supported by individuals and organisations of many shades of opinion.

## LITERATURE AND OTHER MATERIAL FROM TAPOL

### Indonesia, the Prison State

16pp. pamphlet with photographs 10p each

### Indonesia, Unions Behind Bars

16pp. pamphlet on the detention of trade unionists and the suppression of trade unions. Foreword by Jack Jones, Chairman of the International

Committee of the British T.U.C.

10p each

### TAPOL badge

designed in three colours

10p each

### The Bloodbath That Was

reprint of the 1967 book by Dierdre Griswold on the massacres of 1965-66

80p each

### Ten Years' Military Terror in Indonesia

containing 15 articles on social, economic and political aspects of post-1965 Indonesia

£3.00 each

### TAPOL Posters

in two designs

50p each

### TAPOL's song on cassette.

A song composed by a tapol, now popular

inside and outside the prisons. Recorded by

a pop group in Jakarta

£1.00 each

All prices are exclusive of postage. Overseas readers should make adequate provision if they want orders sent by air.

Reductions will be given on bulk orders of TAPOL material.

Address your orders and enquiries to TAPOL