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British Campaign for the Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners

BULLETIN No. 7

October, 1974

TAPOL AND THE INDONESIAN DEFENCE DEPT.

Editorial

On 28th August, the spokesman of the Indonesian Department of Security and Defence, Brig-General Sumrahadi, held a special press conference in order to make a statement about TAPOL, the British Campaign for the Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners.

According to a report in the Antara National News Agency, he stated that "he considered it necessary to give clarifications to the people of a friendly country concerning the London-based organisation called the British Campaign for the Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners". He said also that if proper explanations were not given, it was feared that misunderstandings might be created by the campaign, and went on to accuse Mrs. Carmel Budiardjo, who he said was responsible for the campaign, of actively trying to discredit the Indonesian Government. The pretext frequently used by her in her campaign, he said, was that political detainees in Indonesia were 'inhumanely treated'.

In connection with this attack, we wish herewith to make the following statement:

As its name makes quite clear, TAPOL was established in order to work for the release of Indonesian political prisoners. The Indonesian Government regards this campaign as a deliberate attempt to discredit it. But the Indonesian Government stands discredited in the eyes of so many people by its own policy of continuing to hold in detention without charge or trial many tens of thousands of political prisoners.

The only contribution TAPOL has to make is to ensure that a situation, as yet so unknown to the British public and indeed to the public in many countries, becomes more widely known and that more is done internationally to strive for the release of these prisoners.

There is no point trying to belittle the growing feeling in Britain about Indonesia by suggesting that TAPOL is nothing more than the machinations of a single individual. This is, moreover, a serious slight on the integrity of a number of public figures who have identified themselves with the campaign, including TAPOL's twenty sponsors. TAPOL has never denied its relationship with Mrs Budiardjo and regards her presence in Britain, with her detailed knowledge of imprisonment, as being a useful contribution in developing a campaign.

To argue as the Indonesian authorities are doing that they treat their prisoners humanely is to fly in the face of reality. How can any regime that holds people in detention without charge of trial for years at a stretch claim to

to humane? This in itself is the most glaring form of inhumanity which no amount of good treatment can rectify. While TAPOL is deeply concerned about the deplorable conditions in which the prisoners are held and has published plenty of factual material to document its concern, the main complaint it makes is not about the treatment but about the whole question of detention for political reasons, a fact which Brig. General Sumrahadi makes no attempt to deny.

Finally, many of TAPOL's supporters who have heard about the Defence Department's statement regard it as evidence that TAPOL is beginning to prove its worth. While appreciating this opinion, TAPOL would prefer to regard it as nothing more than a reason to intensify its endeavour. The Indonesian authorities may be afraid of 'misunderstandings developing between Britain Indonesia. In TAPOL's view far more has to be done to ensure a proper understanding in Britain of the true facts about a country that is still so remote and unknown to most British people.

LIST OF TAPOL SPONSORS

Lindsay Anderson, film director
Peter Archer, QC, MP
Dame Peggy Ashcroft, actress
Lord Avebury
Roland Berger, businessman
The Right Rev. Bishop B. C. Butler
The Right Hon. the Lord Caradon
Lawrence Daly, trade unionist
Robert Edwards, MP
Lady Fleming
The Right Hon. the Lord Gardiner
Rabbi Dr David Goldstein
Han Suyin, writer
Glenda Jackson, actress
Joan Maynard, trade unionist
Sybil Morrison, pacifist
Dr Joseph Needham, FRS, FBA
Professor John A. Rex
Alan Sapper, trade unionist
The Rev. the Lord Soper



HARIMAN SIREGAR TRIAL DRAGS ON

The trial of Hariman Siregar, the student leader who is being charged with subversion, has now been in progress for two months. Some observers believe that the trial will be allowed to drag on for some time while the government makes up its mind on whether its political purposes could be best served by a lenient sentence, intended as a paternal warning, or by a harsh sentence intended to convince world opinion of the seriousness of the threat to the regime's security.

Hariman, who was Chairman of the Students Council of the University of Indonesia until the time of his arrest in January this year, is being charged on the basis of two laws: Law No. 11, 1963 which makes acts of subversion punishable by death or life imprisonment, and as an optional charge, Article 107 of the Criminal Code, according to which conspiracy against the State is punishable by 15 years to life imprisonment. Under the first charge, he is being accused of taking actions to undermine and change the course of policy of the State by creating widespread disorder, and so, undermining the authority of the lawful government. Under the second charge, he is being accused of acting with intent to overthrow the government.

The indictment of the Prosecution argues that these charges can be made on the basis of a series of activities undertaken by Hariman during the last three months of 1973 and in January 1974. These include his role in drafting and signing the 24th October Petition (see Box), his actions in visiting student unions in various university towns to solicit support for the Petition, various statements he is alleged to have made reflecting his desire to see President Suharto replaced, and his role in organising the protest demonstration on 15 January when the Japanese Premier was visiting Indonesia.

Much of the questioning to which Hariman and the witnesses have been subjected has centred round the 24th October Petition, with the court endeavouring to discover whether the Petition was intended merely to register dissatisfaction and appeal for public support, or as a call to action. The court is trying to prove that, by making an attack on the government's development strategy, the Petition was in opposition to established State policy and was therefore subversive.

The court also attaches considerable significance to a University of Indonesia Discussion Group of which Hariman was a member. The questioning by the court appears to be trying to prove that, as a student of medicine, there was no apparent justification for Hariman to join a Discussion Group which concerned itself with economic and social questions, unless he had ulterior motives. Furthermore, the court has tried to establish a link between Hariman's membership of this Discussion Group and the drafting of the Petition.

Another point over which Hariman has been intensively questioned is the dissemination of 'abusive poetry' through which the movement of dissent expressed itself. Hariman and several of the witnesses have argued that the abuse was directed against the situation, not against individuals.

During questioning, Hariman has strongly denied the claims made in the indictment. He has also vehemently denied that students of the University of Indonesia who participated in the 15 January demonstration under the leadership of the Student Council had participated in destruction of property.

All the witnesses heard so far have been student leaders, most of whom are themselves in detention. One witness, Jusuf AR, refused to testify, saying that he was emotionally too disturbed to do so. He complained that although he had been promised an opportunity to meet his family, this promise had not been kept. When the court warned that refusal to testify in a case of subversion could make him liable, under Law No. 11, 1963, to a 5-year sentence or a heavy fine, the witness replied that he was prepared to take the consequences of his action.

Atmosphere during the trial

Hariman himself has been under severe pressure during the trial. Two twin baby girls, born to his wife recently, died shortly after birth; his wife is also very ill and his father, also in hospital, has had several crises; on one occasion, the trial had to be adjourned to allow the defendant to be by his father's bedside.

Observers attending the trial feel concerned at the way in which the proceedings have been conducted. The court consists of a panel of three judges who subject the defendant to intensive and often hostile questioning. Defence counsel has had occasion to remind the court that, according to Indonesian law, the accused must be presumed innocent until found guilty.

Witnesses who may themselves soon be tried for charges similar to those being made against Hariman, are expected to answer questions under oath without the advice of a lawyer, and may in this way be saying things that would be detrimental to their own interests. When, as indeed has happened during the trial, a witness admits to the court that prison interrogations were held in a 'free atmosphere', he ignores the fact, as any lawyer would advise him, that the very circumstances under which the interrogation was held, namely in prison and under the threat of a charge of subversion, means that the atmosphere is far from free.

Defence Protests Against Publication of Book on 15 January Events

Just a few days prior to the commencement of the trial, a book appeared presenting a very one-sided account of the 15 January events. The book, entitled The 15 January Affair, was written by Marzuki Arifin. It is seen by many as presenting the interpretation of events favoured by General Ali Murtopo whose rival, General Sumitro, was removed from power in the wake of the January events. Murtopo is believed by many to have been responsible for turning the students' orderly demonstration into riots with widespread attack on property. Hariman Siregar figures prominently in the book as one of the persons directly responsible for the events leading up the January incident.

BRITISH STUDENTS URGE HARIMAN'S RELEASE

The National Union of Students of the United Kingdom sent a cable to President Suharto in September protesting about the detention of political prisoners and about Hariman's trial. The cable reads:

"NUSUK, representing over 650,000 students demands the release of student leader Hariman Siregar and all political prisoners in Indonesia."

24 OCTOBER PETITION

This Petition was solemnly signed at a ceremony on the night of 24th October, at the Kalibata Heroes' Cemetery. Signing for the Student Council of the University of Indonesia was Hariman Siregar as the Chairman of the Council.

We Indonesian young people, who are owned by, and the owners of, the country and nation

- (1) must review the development strategy and formulate a strategy which ensures a balance in social political and economic affairs and which is aimed against poverty, ignorance and injustice.
- (2) must free the people from legal incertitude and violations of the law, from rampant corruption and the abuse of power, from price increases and unemployment.
- (3) the institutions for channelling the people's views must be strong and in good working order, and the people's views must be given the widest possible scope and attention.
- (4) we are the ones who have most interest in the future and therefore the future of this State as a continuation of the present is a part of our rights and responsibilities. May God the Almighty bless the path of the Indonesian people.

Indonesian Defence Ministry Admits: TAPOLS USED AS FORCED LABOUR

In our last issue, we reported the statement issued by Brigadier-General Sumrahadi for the Department for Defence and Security denying a press release from TAPOL regarding the use of political prisoners as forced labour. Since that issue, we have received another press report of his statement which refers to additional remarks he made which are, we feel, significant enough to translate, even at the risk of some repetition. The report, which appeared in the Jakarta daily, Sinar Harapan on 26 June 1974 includes the following:

After quoting (or should we say misquoting) the TAPOL as having said that "35,000 political prisoners have been used as paid labour by private companies", Brig-General Sumrahadi claimed that this statement was clearly aimed at discrediting the Indonesian Government.

"Since 1973," he went on, "not a single political prisoner has been used as forced labour." He then continued by quoting Mrs Budiardjo as having mentioned in her "letter" (there was of course no letter by any individual but a TAPOL press release) the example of a Japanese cement plant in Central Java as a place where prisoners are being used as forced labour. The Sinar Harapan then continued:

"Brig-General Sumrahadi said that this was indeed true insofar as, prior to 1973, political prisoners were being used as labour on public works projects. On one occasion in 1970, General Suharto was on an official tour when he stopped his motorcar and spoke with these people who were doing forced labour. But this ended in 1973, Brig-General Sumrahadi declared. 'There are no longer political prisoners doing heavy work or forced labour.'"

The London paper, The Guardian, commenting in its issue of 18 September on this report, has the following to say: "So the conclusion may be drawn that forced labour has been going on for at least three unpublicised years, and we have to take the work of the Army Command that this practice was discontinued last year."

U.K. VESSELS FOR INDONESIA

The British Government has agreed to allow a program to go ahead for British suppliers to construct four naval ships for the Indonesian Navy.

The matter came to light in a letter addressed by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office to Frank Alaun MP who had asked for clarifications regarding a statement made by General Panggabean, Commander-in-Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces (see TAPOL Bulletin No. 6) that Indonesia would be purchasing arms from several Western countries including Great Britain.

"The press report to which you refer was doubtless based on an Indonesian decision made earlier this year to invite British tenders for the construction of four small naval ships. For the reasons outlined above (the written reply by David Ennals to a parliamentary question put by Bob Mitchell on 22 May, see TAPOL Bulletin No. 5) we intend to let the programme for this order go forward.

"I fully understand your feelings about military dictatorships but in this case the considerations mentioned in David Ennals' reply to Bob Mitchell are important and, I believe, hopeful."

BRITISH EMPIRE - NEW (capital) COLONY

The British Industrial Exhibition in Jakarta from 7-13 November 1974 is the first of its type to be mounted in Indonesia and reveals the quickening interest of UK investors in that country. The exhibition is being sponsored by the British Overseas Trade Board with the aim of "familiarising Indonesian businessmen with a range of British products with export prospects in the Indonesian market". The emphasis, as the name implies, is on industrial products, however, and shows the keen interest of British investors in capitalising on the relatively rapid industrialisation now taking place in Indonesia. This has been made possible by the extensive oil revenues now being received by the Government and the virtually autonomous oil giant, Pertamina.

Indeed, the Indonesian Government has specifically asked the British Government to exhibit goods and services to support the industrial projects being undertaken throughout the archipelago, most of the largest ones by Pertamina. This seems somewhat in contradiction with the aims of Indonesia's Second Five-Year Plan, Pelita II, which was designed to increase agricultural production and the social welfare of the people.

Most of the exhibits therefore are capital-oriented and mainly in the engineering field. Over 35 British companies will be taking part, among them the following: Aluminium Wire and Cable Co. (Conductors, Power Cable Accessories), Aveling-Barford Ltd (Road Building Equipment), Decca Survey Ltd (Marine Radar, Navigation and Position Location Equipment), GKN International (Plastics Machine-Welding Equipment), General Electric Co. (Gas Turbines - Electronics), Klippon Electricals (Terminal Gear and Strips), R. A. Lister & Co. (Diesel Engines and Generating Sets), Renold Ltd (Power Transmission Equipment) and Vickers Ltd (Printing Equipment).

SET OF SLIDES ON POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT IN PREPARATION

TAPOL is now preparing a set of slides on political imprisonment in Indonesia for use by people wishing to speak at public meetings. The set will consist of about 24 black-and-white photographs, each with background information. They will be arranged in such a way as to provide the framework for a lecture to be given by anyone fairly well acquainted with the problem.

The set of slides will be offered for sale in our forthcoming issue. We invite readers who may be interested in obtaining a set to inform us by letter so that we may have some idea of potential demand. We shall endeavour to keep the price as low as possible, covering production costs, postage and a small extra fee to cover general expenses involved.

INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR 'NOT HAPPY' ABOUT THE TAPOLS!

General Sutopo Yuwono, Indonesian Ambassador to the Netherlands, does not feel happy that Indonesia has so many political prisoners, or so he told a Dutch newspaper in August. *) The General who, prior to his present appointment, was chief of the Intelligence Coordination Agency, BAKIN, and was thus responsible for the capture and interrogation, with torture, of tens of thousands of political detainees, said that it was only when he came to The Hague that he realised how serious the term 'political prisoner' was for people in Holland and other countries of Western Europe.

Indonesia frankly admits that it has political detainees, he said, and tries when necessary to explain why they are being held. This is an internal matter for Indonesia, but Indonesia is always willing to exchange views about the problem with anyone. The detainees were now being tried and efforts were also being made to evaluate their political aims, said the Ambassador. With regard to the process of justice for them, he said that "the evaluation of their aims forms part of their processing". This is a clear admission that when the Indonesian authorities speak of 'processing' this may in some cases mean trials, but for most it means checking their politics.

While asserting that the detainees were being provided with the means for improving their lot, the Ambassador admitted that this did not do away with "the uncertainties of their lot". On the other hand, the security of the State and nation demands that Indonesia does not give an opportunity to communists to take over State power.

(* -- Interview with a correspondent of Algemeen Dagblad, Amsterdam, as reported in Empat Lima, Jakarta, 29 Aug.)

SOCIALIST GOVERNMENTS KEEP QUIET ON TAPOL QUESTION

Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, who made a tour of East European countries to discuss new credit and investment agreements, has admitted that he was expecting to be asked about the political prisoners detained for nine years without trial or charges. This is clear from an interview he gave to Tempo (28 September 1974). The relevant part of the interview runs as follows:

Adam Malik: ... Although our politics and economies are quite different, these socialist countries understand Indonesia's present situation. In fact they saw our outstretched hand as an effort to reduce these differences.

Tempo: So, they didn't make an issue of the political prisoners, for example?

Adam Malik: Not at all. I was ready with my answer if they had raised this question. But they had enough understanding, it appears, to refrain from discussing this very complex question.

TAPOL wishes to take this opportunity to express its warmest appreciation to the Institute for Research in Art and Technology, Michel Julian, Jim Perry, Chris Smith and Richard Fuller. Without their able efforts and long hours, the Bulletin would not have been possible.

AUSTRALIA AND INDONESIA

An appeal for the release of Indonesia's tapols was published in The Australian, Australia's only nationwide daily, as a prominent large-sized advertisement on 14th August, just a few days prior to Indonesia's National Independence Day on 17th August. The statement which is sponsored by a large number of leading trade unionists, trade unions and individual supporters makes the following call upon the Whitlam Government:

"To inform the Ambassador of the Indonesian Republic that the Australian people want the release of all political prisoners.

To appeal to the Indonesian Government to honour its obligations as an ILO member to permit freedom of operation of the Trade Unions.

To cease the training on Australian soil of Indonesian military officers in techniques which serve to assist in political repression at home.

To halt the programme of military aid which helps the existing military government to maintain its dictatorial position and ensure that other Australian aid is used to help the people and not sidetracked to further enrich corrupt officials.

To establish control over Australian investment to ensure that it does not destroy smaller local industries or aggravate the problems of unemployment."

The signatories conclude by saying that a democratic and prosperous Indonesia would contribute to peace and stability in South-East Asia.

AUSTRALIAN PROFESSOR CONCERNED ABOUT INTENSIFIED REPRESSION IN INDONESIA

In a letter on 12th September to the Australian daily, The Age, Professor Herb Feith, professor of politics at Monash University, Melbourne, expressed his belief that the Suharto Government has become more harshly repressive in 1974. The letter was written in reply to an article that had appeared in the paper a few days previously. Professor Feith rejected the argument that conditions in Buru are certainly good and in many cases better than those of rural Indonesia. "Thanks to their own often back-breaking efforts, the Buru prisoners now eat enough to meet basic nutritional needs. In this respect their conditions are very different from those in most of the gaols and camps in Java. But the majority of them continue to urge their wives to reject Government suggestions that they follow them to the penal island."

Professor Feith is concerned in particular at assertions that things have been getting better as far as political imprisonment in Indonesia is concerned.

"The truth is that the Suharto Government has been more harshly repressive in 1974 than in any previous year. That has been particularly clear in its arrest of lawyers, civil liberties leaders, academics and students in the wake of the January 1974 riots and the tight restrictions subsequently placed on universities, student organisations and the press -- restrictions that have produced an extraordinary demoralisation among Indonesian intellectuals of all political hues. It has also been evident in the widespread re-arresting of former prisoners held between 1965 and 1971-72."

DANNY BOY

(Written a few months ago by a tapol in Jakarta)

Oh Danny Boy the time the time is flying,
From hours to weeks through months the years go by,
And in the dark the men the men are dying,
And women kneel in prayer and softly cry.
But come the day when walls no longer hide you,
And evil tongues are hushed and truth command,
The you'll be free and justice stand beside you,
So we will live in peace in this our lovely land.

(Sung to the tune of Danny Boy)

'LABORATORIUM' FOR TAPOLS IN WEST KALIMANTAN

The Commander of West Kalimantan Territorial Command, Brig-General Seno Hartono, has announced plans to establish a special camp as a 'laboratorium', where the prisoners will be subjected to 'treatment' by specialists, including psychologists and social workers.

The camp will be established in Ketapang, the most southerly part of West Kalimantan, as far away as possible from the area bordering on Serawak which continues to be a serious trouble spot for the military regime.

Brig-General Hartono is quoted by the weekly, *Tempo* (17th August), as saying that following the suppression of the New Style PKI in the border-area at the beginning of this year, during which a communist leader, S.A. Soyfan, was caught and shot, the work of maintaining security in the region has become far more arduous. With all the political prisoners under detention since 1965 and the new prisoners caught during military operations early this year, "we are being kept extraordinarily busy," said the General. "It isn't possible for us simply to kill them, and if we continue to hold them in detention, how much would this cost us?"

"We must keep these prisoners as far away as possible from the border-area and they will be placed in Ketapang . . . Ketapang will be a kind of 'laboratorium' and is intended as part of a plan to restore security in the border-area (a plan to establish a Panca Sila bulwark within the next ten years). "We must be quite free of PKI infiltrants both physically and ideologically."

The commander would not state how much was to be spent on setting up the 'Ketapang laboratorium' but only said that Kopkamtib had approved the plan and that work on the project would soon commence.

If costs are a problem and the General feels disinclined to murder the prisoners, one would think the option of releasing them might be considered. But this is clearly not so. The 'Ketapang Camp' must now be added to the list of detention camps where political prisoners will be 'dimanfaatkan' (made use of) by the military in ways which may for some time still be kept secret from the outside world.

Meanwhile, according to Colonel Soegondo, Vth Assistant at the West Kalimantan Military Command, a total of 527 prisoners were taken captive during operations in the region recently. This figure probably does not include the political prisoners who have been under detention in the area since the initial arrests after 1965. The number of tapols to be sent to Ketapang may therefore well exceed one thousand.

NOW OFFICIALLY ADMITTED THAT MANY 'C' CATEGORY PRISONERS STILL AWAIT RELEASE

A statement that "Category 'C' political prisoners will be restored to society by the end of 1975" has once again revealed that past declarations by Indonesian officials about the release of category 'C' political prisoners are quite worthless.

The statement was made at the end of August by Lieutenant-General Widodo, Commander of the All-Java Defence Command. He said that so far, only the 'C-1'

category prisoners had been released. This clearly contradicts many statements made in the past two years, among others by President Suharto himself, that all 'C' category prisoners have already been released.

From Lieutenant-General Widodo's statement it is clear that there are at least three sub-groups within category 'C', as he also refers to 'C-2' and 'C-3' political prisoners. The 'C-2' and 'C-3' prisoners should not, he said, be permitted to work in vital enterprises, particularly the plantations and telecommunications. He stated that those within these categories who were at the moment working in these sectors would have to be removed.

Widodo's statement appears to be making two apparently contradictory points: firstly that category 'C-2' and 'C-3' political prisoners have not yet been released, and secondly, that many of them were working in 'vital sectors' which is not permissible. It adds yet another puzzling instalment to the cynical numbers game that Indonesian officials have long been playing with regard to political prisoners.

His statement also revealed another aspect involving serious discrimination against released political prisoners for he states that in West Java, for example, ex-detainees are issued identity cards of a different colour than those issued to other members of the community. This method, he admitted, causes a psychological barrier. He commended instead the method used in East Java where identity cards were of the same colour but those issued to ex-detainees bore a certain mark of distinction which was only known to officials. This method may appear to be more discreet but it clearly opens the way to all kinds of abuse and few people who know anything about the Indonesian administration would believe that such secrets can anyhow be kept.

REMISSION OF SENTENCES . . . BUT NOT FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS

Sentence remissions were granted to 11,190 convicted criminal prisoners in Indonesia on the occasion of Independence Day, 17th August. Over 2,000 were granted immediate release, and the remainder had their sentences cut. But not a single political prisoner was granted a remission.

When announcing the decision to grant remission, the Department of Justice stated that there were altogether 16,880 criminal prisoners being held in Indonesian prisons, excluding those in Ambon and Medan for whom figures are not available (but who probably amount to only a few hundred).

This means that political prisoners grossly outnumber the criminal prisoners being held. Even according to the Indonesian Government's currently-held figure of 36,000, they amount to twice as many, and according to TAPOL's figure, which too may understate the problem, political prisoners amount to more than four times the criminal prisoners being held.

EX-TAPOLS BEING RE-ARRESTED

Widespread publicity has been given in the Indonesian press to the re-arrest in August of three ex-political prisoners of the 'C' category in the district of East Java. According to a statement by Admiral Sudomo, the three men were caught in connection with a robbery during which, it is alleged, they were trying to collect funds to finance an illegal communist group. People with similar backgrounds have also been caught in Kendal (Central Java).

Sudomo used this announcement as an opportunity to warn that communist remnants still pose a potential threat to the country. He said 'armed gangs' were known to be operating also in Banten (West Java), Cirebon (Central Java) and Purwakarta (Central Java). This and other reports indicate that ex-tapols of the 'C' category are now being re-arrested.

KOPKAMTIB CHIEF INSPECTS BURU

The Chief-of-Staff of Kopkamtib, Admiral Sudomo, made an inspection tour of Buru Detention camp during the early part of September. He was accompanied on the trip by journalists from several dailies and from the national news agency, Antara. Brig-General Sumrahadi, spokesman of the Department for Security and Defence, was also in the party.

We now await the reports that are bound to appear shortly in the Indonesian press about the Buru camp, the camp which is better known internationally than any other camp or prison.

ALL PRISONERS TO BE TRIED SHORTLY?

The Head of the Jakarta High Prosecutor's Office in Jakarta, Mr Soegiri Tjokrodirdjo, has been quoted in the Indonesian press (Indonesian Times, 26 July, 1974) as saying that "all cases related to the communist coup of 1965 will be tackled shortly". All public prosecutors, he said, who are in charge of political cases have been instructed to submit dossiers of those involved in the abortive coup attempt for trial as soon as possible.

It remains to be seen how the Indonesian courts which have handled far less than a thousand political cases in the past nine years now propose to handle tens of thousands of cases 'shortly'. Even accepting the Indonesian Government's current figure of 36,000 political prisoners (which is probably half the actual figure), the courts would need to handle one hundred cases a day to get through the whole lot in a year, or ten a day to get through in ten years.

Political Clearance Certificates: TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE

A senior Police officer, Colonel Suwarno, Chief of the Information Bureau of the Police Force, announced on 11th July this year that political clearance certificates, known as Surat Bebas G. 30. S (certificate of non-involvement in the 30th September Affair) are no longer required for those applying for jobs, both in the private sector as well as in the state sector. They continue to be required, he said, for persons wishing to move from one part of the country to another and for persons joining the Armed Forces.

Considering that similar announcements have been made in the past and appear not to have been put into practice, it remains to be seen whether this will be the case again. And, as is evident from the following excerpts which we have taken from the Indonesian press, the applicability or otherwise of this vicious means of political surveillance is still a very complex matter and Colonel Suwarno's announcement does not necessarily mean that the surveillance is now being relaxed.

Medan Daily Editorial

Sinar Indonesia Baru, a Medan (North Sumatera) daily, commented at length on the announcement on 23rd July from which we take the following excerpts:

"The 30th September Non-Involvement Certificate creates the impression that the holder was definitely not involved even though the certificate contains the words: '...no guarantee against activities at any time' and '...according to investigations so far'. So we can see that the certificate which creates the impression that the holder was not involved in fact doesn't mean a thing.... At any time, investigations could be made if there were indications of a person's involvement. Thus, the position of someone holding a certificate is quite the same as that of someone without one

"The impression these certificates create of non-involvement is in fact being utilised by those who are involved! They make desperate efforts to get these certificates, by any means, including money.

"This means that the value in security terms of these certificates is falling. These certificates, originally intended to help the security efforts to cope with the PKI remnants, have now become a mere formality....

"Col. Suwarno's announcement, which we hope will also apply here in Medan, should, we hope, step up our vigilance against the latent danger from the communists because the unnecessary impression created by these certificates will have to be eliminated. This means that the authorities are now free to suspect anyone without being hampered in any way by a person's possession of a certificate."

Three weeks later, the following reader's letter appeared in the columns of the Jakarta daily, Kompas, on 15th August:

"On 5th August, I went to the Bandung Komtabes (Town Military Command) to renew my 30th September Non-Involvement Certificate and my good-behaviour declaration. To my astonishment, I was told to obtain a new declaration about my non-involvement in the 30th September movement as well as a statement of good behaviour from my local neighbourhood association. I was astonished because six months previously the officer at Komtabes had told me that I did not need to get new declarations but could get a new non-involvement certificate simply by presenting the original or a copy of the letter I had previously obtained.

I would therefore like clarifications on the following points:

- 1) What actually are the regulations regarding the 30th September non-involvement certificates? In practice, these certificates are required even to continue one's school education even though according to a statement made by Kopkamtib, clearance certificates are no longer needed for this purpose.
- 2) If a new declaration is demanded every time from one's neighbourhood association, this should mean that finger-printing and archives are not necessary.
- 3) It is a public secret that differential charges are levied in acquiring these certificates, dependent upon whether a person wishes to obtain the certificate speedily and without difficulty."

POLITICAL PRISONER ON TRIAL IN ACEH

Abdul Gani Muhammad, who is described as a leader of the PKI in the North Sumatera region of Aceh prior to the 1965 events, is now on trial before the State Court in Banda Aceh. The trial commenced on 26 August. The accused is defended by two lawyers, Abdullah Achmad SH and Amiruddin Wahab SH, both of whom were appointed by the State.

The accused is charged with trying to change, undermine or distort the State ideology of Panca Sila and to overthrow or undermine state authority or the lawful government by spreading hostility, splits, disruption and disorders.

These charges are all related to the activities of the defendant prior to the events of October 1965 when he is said to have been involved in preparations being made by the PKI in Aceh to respond to the coup that was organised by Army officers.

The defendant is being charged on the basis of Law No. 11, 1963 against Subversion as well as Article 110, paras 1 and 2, in connection with Article 107 paras 1 and 2 of the Criminal Code. This trial is typical of the trials of a number of district PKI leaders in many parts of the country that have taken place during the past few years. In all cases, verdicts of guilty have been passed and sentences have ranged from 20 years imprisonment to death.

OCTOBER WEEK IN BRITAIN

For the first time, an October Week is being organised in Britain to commemorate the first mass arrests that took place in Indonesia during October 1965, in the wake of the abortive coup.

Activities have been concentrated on informing people about the question of political imprisonment in Indonesia, about which there is such widespread ignorance, not only here in Britain but also in many other countries.

The Week will commence with a Seminar on 19th October which will be addressed by several speakers who are well-informed about current developments in Indonesia. The speakers are: Malcolm Caldwell, lecturer in S. E. Asian history at the Univ. of London School of Oriental and African Studies, Professor W. F. Wertheim (Emeritus) who has written a number of books on Indonesian sociology and was until recently Head of the Anthropological and Sociological Centre for South and South East Asia in Amsterdam; Richard Payne, economics lecturer at the Croydon Polytechnic, and Carmel Budiardjo, ex-political detainee for three years.

For two nights running, a dramatised documentation entitled Nine Long Years will be presented at the Cockpit Theatre, London. The drama presents scenes of political imprisonment based on letters from prisoners, interviews by foreign journalists and statements made by Indonesian officialdom about the question.

On 24th October, a Public Meeting is to be held at the London School of Economics New Theatre at which the speakers will include Stan Newens, Member of Parliament in the 1974 Parliament and candidate in the October elections.

In preparation for the Week, several feature articles have appeared in the press, including student and trade union journals and the large-circulation popular London weekly magazine, Time Out. An exhibition of photos and other display material will be appearing in the window of Dillon's University Bookshop.

PURGE OF CIVIL SERVANTS CONTINUES

A widespread purge of civil servants and government employees regarded as having been 'involved' in the 1965 abortive coup is now under way in Indonesia. The purge, which is one of a series that have been carried out since 1965, was launched by an order of Kopkamtib in 1974 according to which all government offices and companies must 'cleanse' their staff of 'C' category people by the end of 1975. This applies to people who are alleged to have been members of various trade unions and organisations which were banned in 1965. The following are some purges reported recently in the Indonesian press:

According to the Indonesian Times, 17 July 1974, 707 elementary school teachers in West Java have been dismissed from their jobs in the past few months for alleged 'involvement' and another 183 are currently 'under investigation' and are shortly to be replaced.

In East Java, 673 employees of the State Electricity Company, PLN, were dismissed on 29 June this year, according to a report in Sinar Harapan, 7 July 1974. They were people who had been classified as 'ex-PKI' and therefore of the 'C' category. Ir Sujudi Surachmad, head of the East Java division of the Company said that since the beginning of 1973, 900 people had been dismissed. This accounts for 30 percent of the Company's total work force in East Java, he said.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant-General Widodo, Commander of the All Java Defence Command, has declared that "Indonesia's Armed Forces have been intensively purged of communist and 1965 movement elements and influences". He also said: "We must be alert against any dangerous issues that may entrap us."

Lieutenant-Colonel Solichin of the Jakarta

Kopkamtib has announced that three political prisoners are 'shortly' to be brought to trial. They are: Oei Tju Tat lawyer and Minister of State in the last Sukarno Cabinet, Karim D. P., journalist and chairman until October 1965 of the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) and Miss Sulami, Secretary of the women's organisation, Gerwani.

Incidentally, the documents regarding Karim's case were handed over for prosecution nearly a year ago at which time a statement was made that his trial would take place 'shortly'. Presumably, by the standards of the Indonesian military authorities, who have held so many prisoners for nine years, one year is a relatively 'short' period.

Books on Indonesia

For those of our readers who read Danish, one valuable book that has recently come to TAPOL's attention is Indonesien by Poul Erik Jensen. In only 77 pages, Jensen offers a good statement of the historical roots of the present situation in Indonesia and a useful analysis of the 1965 coup and since. Though brief, Jensen discussed the plight of the political prisoners and the socio-economic-political factors that contribute to their continued detention. A useful bibliography is also provided.

(Pub: Demos - Grønnegade 37, 1107 Copenhagen K., 1971)

Just off the presses is a new publication, Repression and Exploitation in Indonesia, published by the British-Indonesia Committee. It provides an excellent analysis of political and economic developments in Indonesia under the Suharto regime. It contains six contributions by different authors.

The first article documents the adverse effects of the Government's economic policies on the Indonesian people, and the results of the increasing dependence of the economy on foreign investment and loans. This is followed by a penetrating account of military corruption during the 1971 elections, and the repressive measures by which the military holds on to political power.

An article on the suppression of the Trade Union movement since the 1965 coup provides a highly original account of events in an area that has been neglected by most commentators on Indonesia.

The history and present status of political imprisonment is fully documented in an article written by an ex-political prisoner. Another contribution summarises major developments in the struggle against dictatorship since 1965.

The booklet concludes with an analysis of the various ways in which British investment has increasingly given economic support to the Suharto regime since 1965.

Overall, it provides an excellent popular introduction to events in Indonesia since the coup. It is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the background from which political imprisonment developed and is perpetuated by the Suharto Government.

(Copies: 21 Solon Road, London, SW2. - 50 pence)

GLOSSARY

tapol: abbreviation of tahanan politik, meaning political prisoner. This word is now widely used in Indonesia.

Kopkamtib: abbreviation of Komando Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban, the Command for the Restoration of Security and Order, the Army Command in charge with political security and directly responsible for arresting and detaining the political prisoners.

surat bebas G. 30.S: certificate of non-involvement in the 30 September movement. G. 30.S is the way in which the coup attempt of 1st October is described in Indonesia. The movement itself used this name although the attempt was actually made on 1st October.

Panca Sila: the Five Pillars of State Ideology. These are: Belief in One God, Nationalism, Humanitarianism, Democracy and Social Justice.

TAPOL INDONESIA



**FREE THE 70,000
POLITICAL PRISONERS
HELD SINCE 1965 WITHOUT TRIAL**

Specially produced by TAPOL in connection with 'October Week', this poster is available to Bulletin readers and supporters in Britain and internationally. Measuring 20" x 30," it is strikingly silk-screened (by our own hands) in 3 colours (black, ochre yellow face, red slogan) and costs 45 pence + packing and postage. Choice of 3 slogans: 70,000 held nine years -- free them now; Remember the prisoners as U. K. aid continues; Student leader on trial for life. For our foreign friends in the expanding campaign, the lower space is left blank so any slogan in any language can be inserted. Order yours now while they last.

WHAT IS TAPOL? This is the Indonesian word for political prisoner, and it is the name we have taken for our organisation, the British Campaign for the Release of Indonesian Political Prisoners, and likewise for our Bulletin.

WHAT'S THE BACKGROUND? Young readers and many others may have forgotten the blood-bath of October 1965, when the Indonesian Army under General (now President) Suharto overthrew the government of President Sukarno, and carried out one of the worst slaughters in history - when somewhere between half a million and a million people were killed.

AND TODAY? Nine years later, there are still some 70,000 political prisoners held without trial, some of them allegedly members of organisations now banned but perfectly legal prior to the Suharto takeover. Many prisoners were not even members of banned groups. At best, the tapols are living under unbelievably horrible conditions. At worst, they are subjected to torture, starvation and denial of medical care. The release of these prisoners is TAPOL's main concern.

ANY QUESTIONS? If you have any questions concerning the historical background, we shall be glad to answer them.

Please address subscriptions and correspondence to:

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