

I N D O N E S I AI. DEVELOPMENTS SINCE OCTOBER 1969(a) Releases

According to official reports, releases of 'C' Category prisoners have now begun, and a total of 30,000 have been freed in different parts of the archipelago. We have no independent confirmation of this, but most releases have been outside Java - 24,000 in the Celebes alone - and so news would necessarily be difficult to obtain. This implements the Government's October undertaking to release 26,000 by the end of 1969.

It has further been announced that all remaining 'C' Category prisoners will be freed in the course of 1970; it is not known how many this will involve but the real numbers for this Category are clearly greater than the original total (26,000) given last year. One journalist has, however, told us that some Category 'C' prisoners are among those sent to Buru.

No date has been set for legal proceedings for Category 'A' detainees.

(b) Conditions of Release

For an initial period of six months released detainees must remain in one place, and must report regularly to the police. 'They must be good citizens and keep themselves far away from the influence of the remnants of the Gestapu/PKI. And they must assist the Government....in eradicating the forces and ideology of the remnants of the Gestapu/PKI.' We know nothing of their employment prospects, but assume them to be bad. There have been no reports of reprisals by the community against the ex-prisoner, or vice versa.

(c) Conditions of Detention

Reports of chronic malnutrition among detainees continue to reach us. These stress the prevalence of disease caused by long-term under-nourishment.

(d) Resettlement of 'B' Category

The first 2,500 are now established on Buru, and more are expected to be sent there later this year. In December, Indonesian and foreign journalists visited the resettlement areas. The detainees live in several closely guarded encampments, and perform agricultural work during the day. The general conditions, though better than in the camps from which they came, remain those of detention and compulsory labour. In about May, some restrictions will be lifted, and they will be theoretically free; the Government will no longer provide food, seed, implements, etc. It is said that families will be able to join them, but no confirmatory details or date have been given. Even after May, free movement inside the island will be prohibited, and no former detainee can leave it. In effect, and despite the fact that Buru is clearly seen as something of a show place, resettlement is permanent exile; there are indications that similar schemes may be initiated in Kalimantan and other islands.

(e) Aid

As far as we know, no steps have been taken by the Indonesian Government to request United Nations aid. But at an unofficial level, Amnesty has been asked for money for orphans and detainees' dependants; the request comes from the Al Djamyatul Washlijah, an Islamic welfare organisation, and was made at the suggestion

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of the Foreign Minister, Adam Malik. The Indonesian Council of Churches is conducting a comprehensive survey of family need, after which it will presumably act as a major channel for relief.

(f) General Situation

In December, the Government ended the official State of War which has existed in Central Java since 1965. Elections have been announced for 1971, the first since 1955, and substantial administrative re-organisations have taken place in the armed services. Although these can be read as indications of increased Government confidence, arrests of so-called communists and Sukarno supporters continue to take place, while in February popular unrest at price increases, and corruption, manifested itself in the first public demonstrations since 1966.

Since August, the press has debated the prisoners' issue in apparent freedom. One influential student paper has even argued in favour of UN or international inspection of the Buru scheme on the grounds that this is the only way in which to avoid a risk that "these places utilising the detainees do not degenerate into concentration camps a la Dachau, Belsen or the detention camps of the Japanese fascists". Nonetheless, the basic principle that active communists should be detained remains publicly unquestioned.

II. AMNESTY ACTION

Within Indonesia, Amnesty is given much credit for the releases which have already taken place, whether or not this is deserved.

Proposals for action in April - September

- (i) Continued pressure on the lines followed up to now; in particular, approaches should be made to the Governments due to meet in April in Paris and Rotterdam to discuss Indonesian credits and aid.
- (ii) A major increase in adoptions, where possible to concentrate on 'B' Category prisoners.
- (iii) Visit by Amnesty delegate to Djakarta and Buru.
- (iv) The International Executive are requested to consider approaching individual governments (Norway, West Germany?) for small, but ear-marked money for prison facilities and family welfare, to be channelled through an appropriate UN agency. This could act as a necessary catalyst to the provision of UN assistance, and would be given as a major demonstration of responsible concern for the prisoners.
- (v) The need for Red Cross entry to prisons and camps remains urgent: any pressure which might achieve this should be exerted.

Amnesty International,  
Research Department.

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