

7204
23p

REPORT OF MEETING OF INDONESIAN COORDINATION GROUPS, AMSTERDAM, 26TH-
27TH OCTOBER 1974

1. OPEN SESSION: Saturday, 26th October

Chairman: Herman van Geuns
Speakers: Jan Pluvier
 Dick Dolman
 Huang Wen-hsien

Opening the meeting, Herman van Geuns (former member of Amnesty International's International Executive Committee with special responsibility for Indonesia), spoke of the constant concern that has been expressed with regard to Indonesia in all the IEC and International Council Meetings for the last five years. Questions such as: is the adoption of individual prisoners harmful? Is our work having any effect? Are our techniques the most effective?

In this context, recent decisions of the International Council Meeting are of interest, and particularly the amendment to the statute (article 1b) which now provides for our "opposing by all appropriate means the detention of any Prisoners of Conscience or any political prisoners, without trial within a reasonable time, or any trial procedures relating to such prisoners that do not conform to recognised norms to ensure a fair trial".

In any event, to work effectively for Indonesian prisoners we need a good background knowledge of the situation and we have therefore arranged this open session to which guests have been invited - in their private capacities - to speak on the present situation in the country.

JAN PLUVIER (University of Amsterdam)

Two dates are particularly important in any study of Indonesia - those of 3rd July 1971 (when the general elections gave the impression that the 'new order' had succeeded in stabilising itself) and the 15th January 1974 (when anti-Japanese riots destroyed that impression).

In fact, the elections of 1971 were just a facade of democracy since the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and other left wing political parties had disappeared. Other parties, such as the PNI and PMI, were allowed to continue but were forced to accept party leaders acceptable to the regime; election manifestoes had to be published in advance; the campaigns of the non-governmental parties only started four months after that of the government party. At the same time there was immense publicity given to Golka - a grouping which was invented by Sukarno but elaborated by the 'new order' and which claimed to be a non-political organisation attempting to crush the old political parties. Much pressure was exerted on voters to believe the Golka propaganda that the old parties were on the way out, politics was a dirty business, etc. In any event, they won 227 of the 360 seats (there are 460 seats in total but 100 of these are appointed - mostly from members of the Armed Forces). This effectively safeguards the government in office.

Immediately after the elections, the number of political parties was reduced from nine to two because of merges.

With regard to the Armed Forces: this now represents a privileged caste in Indonesian society, and whilst in 1957 it represented an important political factor and from 1957 to 1965 it was an important economic factor, it became as from October 1965 the sole power factor in Indonesian society.

The other important date in recent Indonesian political history - the riots of January 1974. These riots were not the first student outbursts. Indonesian students had demonstrated in January 1972 on the occasion of Madam Suharto's 'mini-Indonesia', and again in December 1973 when demonstrations had taken place to protest against the economic policy of dependency on foreign investment - especially on Japan and the United States.

However, the students were not really responsible but rather it was the army which was responsible. There is great rivalry between different factions within the army and so the dissatisfied officers in the army wanted to give vent to their dissatisfaction. The media and the students were obvious tools for manipulation by such disaffected officers. The field officers, who were in close contact with the common soldiers and the poverty stricken countryside, were in dispute with the economic managers of the army. The January 1974 riots were clearly directed against the personal advisers of Suharto and were obviously tacitly backed by the field officers and particularly Sumitro and Kopkamtib. Suharto later dismissed Sumitro and replaced some of his personal advisers who had been criticised. Arrests of former Socialist Party members also took place as a result however.

So it was alleged communists who were arrested in 1965 and now it was the turn of the students in 1974. The students in the 1974 riots had at least the support of the army - that much is obvious. The students are not a political force in themselves and could not even contemplate coming out on to the streets without a push being given them by some of the military. In 1966 the army manipulated opposition to Sukarno and now they were manipulating opposition to Suharto's personal advisers and against Japanese influence. It was only because the students were thus manipulated that they could show themselves. With this, Jan Pluvier concluded that as long as the army considers itself the sole power factor in the country, one can only look forward to one military dictatorship being replaced by another military dictatorship.

DICK DOLMAN (member of Dutch parliamentary mission)

As a member of the Dutch parliamentary mission that visited Indonesia from 2nd to 9th September this year, Dick Dolman wished to give some of his personal findings to the meeting. The mission met mainly with governmental officials (the parliament being essentially a facade) including the President, the Vice-President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister for Economic Affairs, Minister of Defence and other generals in his department, Minister of Mining, the Attorney General, the Foreign Investment Board and regional administrative authorities. In addition to the social round of visiting temples etc., the mission also visited social projects, transmigration villages, rice development programmes etc.

Mr Dolman's report was summarised under three headings:

- (1) a Dutchman's impression of Indonesia;
- (2) the prisoner situation;
- (3) political and economic structures.

(1) Visiting Indonesia gives a Dutchman a strange feeling since it is almost a feeling of being at home - more at home, for example, than he would feel in Europe. So many of the population speak and read Dutch and enjoy meeting Dutch people. It is strange to see this in a country which was so oppressed by Dutch colonisation of the country and yet the Dutch are still popular there.

(2) First, Mr Dolman wished to point out that if there are concentration camps in Java, Bali, etc., it was the responsibility of the Dutch. Several people met by members of the mission had been imprisoned under Dutch colonial rule and it was therefore with this sense of common collective guilt that the mission felt it had the right to make an appeal to the Indonesian government on behalf of political detainees.

In view of the fact that Subadio and many other colleagues of the Socialist Party were amongst the prisoners, the mission was concerned about the ethics of going to Indonesia as guests of the government. It was felt however that such a mission might be able to do something for these very people and indeed the parliamentarians met with the Attorney General and all his staff and raised questions about political imprisonment. Without any prompting, one prominent Indonesian official said that political imprisonment was one of the most important problems Indonesia has to face and that help would be necessary from outside in order to solve this problem.

(3) Mr Dolman did not feel as strongly as Jan Pluvier that the Indonesian parliament was such a facade and was as worthless as it is in many other countries. Definitely he felt that it does not and cannot challenge the power of the government, but it is open to be used by opposition groups, with such groups coming to the parliament building to organise meetings etc., (such as the meeting organised to demonstrate against the divorce law which in fact led to the government having second thoughts and amending their original proposals). Thus, Mr Dolman felt that parliament was not very effective but did serve as a rallying forum for the opposition, and indeed he hoped that demonstrations which took place around the parliament building in connection with the Hariman Siregar trial would even bring about the passing of a relatively light sentence on Siregar and mean that the others would go free shortly without any trial at all.

The mission also met with several Indonesian lawyers and Mr Dolman was rather disappointed since he got the impression that the lawyers were very interested in defending those arrested in January, but that they were not interested anymore in the 55,000 still held since 1965.

The Minister of Defence and his staff met with members of the mission and this it seemed was the only meeting that could be termed a complete failure with the Indonesians treating the Dutch parliamentarians as enemies. There was a distinct impression that these Indonesian officials felt rather threatened, which was in sharp contrast with the open-minded and friendly welcome given the mission by the technocrats in government. This welcome led Mr Dolman to the conclusion that the technocrats were not as unimportant as Jan Pluvier had given the meeting to believe. If this is indeed the situation, their influence will only increase since it was obvious to the mission that all those they met were very proud of the growing importance of the country's natural wealth enabling the country to be independent. The mission investigated the question of foreign aid and whether it was going to the people most in need, and Mr Dolman was assured to his satisfaction that though many

people do not really benefit much yet and there are enormous discrepancies in wealth, the situation is nevertheless improving.

Speaking with Indonesians, it was obvious that they did not see political imprisonment as a problem on the same scale as those of over-population, economic development, etc., and it is natural that the government and the people react in this way. In general, the impression received was that when comparing Indonesia of today with the Indonesia under Dutch rule, the country could be said to be moving and it should be the endeavour of those outside the country to keep it moving.

W. HUANG (Researcher, International Secretariat)

Political Imprisonment in Indonesia

Introduction:

According to General Sumrahadi, official spokesman of Hankem (Department for Defence and Security), "there are no political prisoners in Indonesia". (Suara Karya, 1.10.74). He has been supported in this view by Admiral Sudomo and General Mashuri.

This is a bazarre attempt to dispose of the issue of political imprisonment by simple re-definition. As you know, of the 850 people arrested after the January demonstrations, more than 50 are still imprisoned, and except for Hariman Siregar, all of them are held without trial. But on a far more tragic scale, at least 55,000 people are now passing their ninth year of imprisonment in gaols, in labour camps and on prison islands - throughout the Indonesian Republic.

I shall discuss the dimensions of political imprisonment in Indonesia, the conditions under which the prisoners are deprived of their freedom, and the apparent intentions of the Government regarding the prisoner question.

1965 Prisoners:

As you know, 55,000 people detained since the attempted coup of 1965 are held in prisons in Java, Sumatra, Buru and Kalimantan. These prisoners are divided into three main categories:

Category A prisoners are those which the Indonesian government considers to be clearly implicated in the attempted coup of 1965. There were about 2,500 prisoners in Category A, according to Sumitro in 1972. It is claimed that 800 of them have since been tried in court. The Head of the Jakarta High Prosecutor's Office said two months ago that "all cases related to the communist coup of 1965 will be tackled shortly". Perhaps he was referring to the Category A prisoners only, but he could just as easily have been referring to both Categories A and B prisoners.

Category B prisoners are those who have not been directly involved in the coup and the Government does not have proof against them that would stand up in court. Official figures have tended to vary around a total of 30,000 Category B prisoners. We believe the actual number to be much more, but a precise estimate is difficult because of official uncertainty about many prisoners, whether they are classified in the B or C category.

The government claims that Category B prisoners, if released, would threaten law and order in Indonesian society. The government says it

is going to change the way of thinking of these prisoners, that is to say, by purging them of communist ideology through many years of imprisonment without trial, in labour camps and prison islands. There are about 10,000 Category B prisoners on Buru island alone.

Category C is subdivided into three types:

Category C1 consists of people whom the government regards as less clearly implicated in the coup than those in Category B but nevertheless were in some indirect way involved with the 30th September Movement.

Category C2 includes people who were members of mass organisations affiliated to the PKI.

Category C3 comprises people who were sympathisers of the PKI.

All the sub-categories of Category C are applied by the government to prisoners of those sub-categories as well as to those who have been released. The total number of people labelled as Category C total no less than 750,000 persons. This is according to Kopkamtib officials who are quoted in the articles in the newspaper Merdeka reporting on the inspection of Buru by Admiral Sudomo and his staff a month ago. It is claimed that of these 750,000 Category C prisoners arrested in the mid-1960s, 540,000 people - belonging to the sub-category C1 - have been released. After release, according to rules set by the government, they are not allowed to go back to their former jobs, if these are in military or government employment, but they are supposed to be entitled to their pensions.

If these figures are more or less true, that means there are 200,000 people who are labelled as sub-categories C2 and C3. According to the government rules, C2 people when released were, in principle, allowed to return to their former office, but were excluded from senior positions.

C3 people when released were entitled to full rehabilitation.

Now these looked good on paper, but as we know, there are serious discrepancies to which I shall refer later. For the moment, I shall just point out that the Merdeka report states that "as far as Category C2 and Category C3 are concerned, those who are still in Departments or working in other government offices will all be socialized (the word used is dimasyarakatkan) so that they are not able to endanger the smooth-running of the government and the production apparatus.

We do not know what form this "socialization" will take but at least one implication is that they may lose their jobs in the process. However, our main concern here is with those of all the C categories who are still imprisoned. Now on this there has been the most confused discrepancies in the government's statements:

- In August 1971, the then Attorney-General said that there were 50,000 C category detainees all of whom were to be released by the end of that year, that is to say, 1971.
- In January 1972, President Suharto announced that all (22,000) C category prisoners had been released.
- Now, as Mr Ko Wierenga reports in his very interesting paper, it is officially admitted that there are now in 1974 still Category C prisoners in detention.

Apparently the territorial commanders had been given the power to decide on the implementation of release of C category prisoners in phases, and obviously these commanders did exercise their power in their own ways. According to Ali Said, the Prosecutor-General, "it is quite possible that one territory might have reached its target before another, but," he nevertheless maintains, "it is certain that

ultimately in 1975 everyone must have solved this problem". For the moment, we know that there are certainly Category C1 prisoners, probably C2 prisoners and possibly even C3 prisoners still in detention.

Meanwhile, it was confirmed by the Prosecutor-General that there are still people being arrested. Also people who have previously been released are being arrested again, allegedly for being involved in criminal offences.

Since even the Prosecutor-General himself cannot be certain as to the numbers of C Category prisoners still held, we must assume for the moment that the numbers are not small.

Moreover, we should note that release is in itself problematic for the former prisoners because in practice he faces real difficulties in finding employment because of official restrictions, and the constant possibility of re-arrest.

Conditions:

Conditions in political prisons and prison camps vary, but without doubt the predominating quality is very bad. On the one hand, we find that conditions are comparatively satisfactory in those very few prisons that hold well-known prisoners or high-ranking officials or senior military officers. Examples of these are the Military Prison in Jakarta and Nirbaya prison. But these are very much exceptions. Elsewhere it is different. In Salemba, for example, we have accurate and detailed descriptions of appalling conditions. Each prisoner is now given only three teaspoonfuls of rice a day. Prisoners grow spinach on a vegetable plot and this is virtually the only vegetable they eat. On average, one prisoner out of eight receives supplementary food from relatives and this he shares with others. Prisoners in desperation capture cats and rats for food. The prisoners are often subject to harsh treatment and deprived of their supplementary rations. There is extreme overcrowding of the 2,000 prisoners held there.

As another example, in Plantungan Women's Camp, in Central Java, the women prisoners receive $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of rice or other staple once a day, with less than two spoons of vegetables. Those that can supplement this from the little money they obtain from relatives or from making things for sale. There is a high incidence of breast cancer. In Buru the true picture is very different from the government's recent public relations presentation, and the diet is very poor. The prisoners are by now quite accustomed to eating rats, snakes and other things to supplement their diet. A reliable estimate is that 10 per cent or more are now suffering from one form of disease or another. The most widespread are tuberculosis, muscular deficiency, intestinal disorders, malaria and other illnesses. The hospital is primitive and in an appalling condition. There is no equipment for surgical operations, no X-ray machines, and the supply of drugs and medication is absolutely minimal.

Generally, similar bad conditions apply for the great majority of the political prisoners. Never enough food, unhealthy living conditions, leading to a high incidence of tuberculosis and other diseases.

Forced Labour

There is also evidence that the government is trying to solve the prisoner problem by making them sources of profit, or to use their

euphemism, "dimanfaatkan", to make the prisoners useful. Political prisoners are used for draft labour in Bayolali (near Salatiga) and Ungaran (near Semarang) in Central Java. It is reported that political prisoners are being drafted in construction of an oil pipeline in central Java, from the port of Cilacap on the south coast, to Cirebon in the north.

There is a cement plant being built on the notoriously-bad prison island of Nusakembangan, off Cilacap, involving prisoner labour. This huge project is being set up by two Japanese companies, Onoda Cement and Mitsui, together with an Indonesian company.

The International Labour Organisation is concerned about the general aspects of this problem, and has asked the Indonesian Government to report on the implementation of ILO Convention 29 on forced labour, in particular forced labour by untried political prisoners.

Although Buru was known as tempat pemanfaatan (i.e. work camp), it is now to be called an instalasi rehabilitasi (rehabilitation centre). So although dimanfaatkan is apparently a good thing in the eyes of the government, they are shy to admit it. Thus Brigadier-General Sumrahadi explained in June that prisoners have indeed been put to work for private companies. But, he says, this was true only up to 1973. On one occasion in 1970, Brigadier-General Sumrahadi tells us, President Suharto was on an official tour when he stopped his limousine and spoke with these people who were doing forced labour. But all this ended in 1973, according to Sumrahadi. Now, he says, there are no longer political prisoners doing heavy work or forced labour.

But, as I have said, the evidence shows that it goes on, and perhaps on an increasing scale.

January 1974 Prisoners

Of the prisoners still under arrest in connection with the Tanaka demonstrations of January this year, it may be said that the conditions under which they are held are relatively better than those of the 1965 prisoners. We hear that they may be released after one year in prison if they are not charged and tried in court. Only Hariman Siregar has been tried. Thus far, the prosecution has presented its witnesses. There has been an attempt by the authorities to make the legal procedure of the trial appear respectable. To prosecute this Protestant student leader, they appointed a prosecutor who is Protestant and the presiding judge is also a Protestant. All the rules and niceties of Indonesian legal procedure have been more or less followed. However, the 1963 Subversion Law is extremely wide and imprecise, so that it is very difficult to avoid falling within its grasp. And the penalties of death or long imprisonment are, in terms of ordinary concepts of justice, quite outrageous.

It should be noted that, despite apparent procedural niceties, there were serious deficiencies, such as the fact that Hariman only met his defence lawyers in court and had only one private session to brief them. Moreover, the defending lawyers are handicapped by the fact that lawyers were not protected by professional privilege - that is to say, they could be forced to divulge what their client tells them. The absence of professional legal privilege is the practice in Indonesia. This may have affected seriously the ability of Hariman's lawyers to be briefed

by him and to advise him of his rights.

It is possible that several others may be brought to trial. We shall see whether the Indonesian government would release them if it does not give them fair trials as has been promised.

When we express concern for the appalling conditions under which most of the prisoners live, and do everything we can to try to improve their conditions, we must not forget that our main duty is to continue to demand their unconditional release if they are not given fair trials.

The Indonesian government tries to justify the continued imprisonment of the 1965 prisoners by a mixture of arguments. One of them is that the prisoners are a genuine threat to security and that this position cannot change. Now obviously even the Indonesian government would not claim that this applies to C category prisoners, since regarding the latter they say only that rehabilitation is necessary, without going on to say that rehabilitation is impossible.

So this mainly applies to A category prisoners. Now in 9 years the government, according to its own claims, have tried only 800 prisoners. There are an estimated 4,000 A category prisoners in prison. At the same rate, despite all the promises such as the one made in July this year, at the same rate of trials, it would take another 45 years before the last A category prisoner is brought to trial.

As for the prisoners of category B, since they cannot be genuine unchangeable threats to security, the Government argues that it is afraid that if they are released, they could face personal danger from revengeful elements in Javanese society, and must therefore stay in prison for their own protection.

This is not a reason but merely an excuse, and it is not good enough. Since 1965, the government claims to have released more than 600,000 prisoners. While some individuals may - and probably were - killed or were the victims of private vendettas, no large-scale reprisals took place in any part of the Republic. Not only were none reported, but the government has not been able to point to a single example where mass reprisals happened.

Clearly, regarding both the A and the B category prisoners, the government should release them or give them fair trials. But with the C category prisoners, the position is quite ridiculous as well as tragic. By President Suharto's own insistence, they should have been freed by the end of 1971, because he must have been clear in his own mind that they were neither a security threat or exposed to personal danger after release. From January 1972 until now, there has been the pretence that all C category prisoners have been released. Now we are told that it was really up to the judgement of territorial military commanders, of whom some are fast but others are slow. And people who are not a threat or in personal danger by the President's own judgement must wait until 1975 before they are released, if the promise is to be believed in view of past experience.

In this context, we should note that there are factors which could affect release, such as the employment of prisoners on projects which bring profit to military commanders, the demand for bribes while in captivity and for release, and the extensive expropriation of the properties of prisoners. Each of these factors can affect the decision of local commanders.

In conclusion, we must try wherever we can to protest against and to try to improve the condition of the prisoners. But we must not allow ourselves to forget that our primary duty is to work for the fair trial or release of the prisoners. The excuses given by the government do not stand up to careful examination, and they cannot be accepted at face value.

- - - - -

QUESTIONS

In addition to the differing opinions on interpretation voiced by participants in response to the speeches, a few clarifications and additions were made in the course of question time, and the essential points are noted here:

- (1) Official labour unions in Indonesia were banned and those which still exist are government controlled and often under the jurisdiction of military personnel.
- (2) In his remarks with regard to the lawyers' apparent disinterest in the cases of the 55,000, Dick Dolman did not mean to infer criticism and indeed, had heard rumours of bravery from lawyers on behalf of their clients, but found that their feeling seemed to be one of complete despair and lack of hope for an improvement in the situation.
- (3) Jan Pluvier agreed with Carmel Budiardjo that although the student riots of January were obviously manipulated by factions within the army, such manipulation should not be over-emphasised: manipulation would not have been successful had there not been a feeling of discontent already within the student movement. It was felt important to clarify this point since some people had suggested that the students arrested in January were merely tools of the army and therefore not political prisoners in the proper sense.
- (4) Professor J Verkuyl asked to make several suggestions for effective Amnesty action on behalf of Indonesian prisoners and they can be summarised as follows:
 - (a) Strengthen church channels and social help for prisoners etc., via Amnesty. Both individuals and whole communities could be helped in this way;
 - (b) organise pastoral help through the religious communities;
 - (c) on the political level: the Indonesian government accepts that the continued detention of B prisoners is legally indefensible and unacceptable from the humanitarian point of view, but there is a deep fear that the release of prisoners will result in enormous problems of rehabilitation. J Verkuyl himself heard of the killing of two released prisoners and although he respected the fears of the government, he felt that this was rather a rare occurrence and was over-rated by the government.

- (d) make the Indonesian government more aware of world-wide concern on this issue.
- (5) Rehabilitation: several people having visited Indonesia recently confirmed similar experiences that the whole question of released prisoners having difficulty in being integrated back into society seems to be greatly exploited by the government without having any particular basis on which to ground its fears. Equally the government, were it to wish to do so, could play a decisive role in preventing such reprisals - or thoughts of reprisals - taking place, but it does not seem to wish to do so.
- (6) Carmel Budiardjo was then invited to take the floor since she had several points she wished to raise:
- (a) the reason the Indonesian government wanted to keep so many prisoners was simply to keep them there as a warning to any would-be opponents;
- (b) Carmel felt that prisoners and their families always live in hope that something or other will happen to change their situation - at the elections, next national day, and so on. Amnesty should, of course, always take into account the opinions of the families and the prisoners but should always be equally aware of this tendency on the part of people to live in false hope and thus to put at risk any outside attempts to help them with campaigns, etc.;
- (c) with regard to the sensitivity of the Indonesian government to international pressure, Carmel pointed out that apart from the notable exception of the Netherlands, Indonesia had not been exposed to the criticism it deserves. There is a lack of real information about Indonesia on an international level and the situation has had nothing like the media coverage given to Chile, etc. Tapol (the movement represented at the AI open meeting by Ms Budiardjo) had shown up the susceptibility of the government to pressure by being made the subject of severe criticism by the authorities. The word 'tapol' has even been dropped now because of international pressure. We must embarrass the authorities by publicising the fact that these prisoners have been there for nine years and that in all that time the government has been unable to deal with the problem they pose. Indeed, this inability to cope with the problem only highlights the lack of sophistication of the regime, and we must therefore step up the campaign to awaken the rest of the world to the situation in Indonesia.
- (7) H Colje was also asked to take the floor after his request to do so. He had come especially to this meeting at the request of the WCC representatives working in Indonesia and who were particularly involved there with political prisoners. They had asked that he transmit to AI the concern that individual prisoners should not be adopted by Amnesty. Harm had been allegedly done to prisoners with them being moved, in some instances, from C to B category.

The Chairman closed the session in thanking H. Colje for giving the meeting this message which would very obviously have to be given more serious consideration during the coming days.

He then went on to thank particularly Carmel Budiardjo and J Verkuyl who had given the AI representatives some concrete proposals for actions to think about, and expressed his appreciation for the participation of all those present. Finally, especial thanks were expressed for the interesting and thought-provoking addresses delivered by Jan Pluvier and Dick Dolman, and they were both presented with copies of Politieke Dissidenten (a Dutch Amnesty publication).
