

INTERNAL: (For AI members only)

AI Index: ASA 21/12/78

Distr.: NS/CO/AD

To: National Sections
Coordination and adoption groups on
Indonesia

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From: Asia Research Department

Date: October 1978

UP-DATED INTRODUCTION TO THE INDONESIA REPORT

Summary

Attached is the up-dated introduction which has been prepared for inclusion in the Indonesian translation of the Indonesia Report, which is to be published in early 1979. It was necessary to have this because, since the original publication of the Indonesia Report in October 1977 on political prisoners in Indonesia, there have been considerable changes in the situation.

The introduction comments on the releases that have taken place since December 1977 and outlines the problems faced by released prisoners. It gives further current information on prison conditions, in particular emphasizing the medical problems of longterm prisoners. There is also information on recent developments in Indonesia which have resulted in the arrest of several hundred students, Moslem activists and intellectuals, some of whom are mentioned in the introduction.

In addition to this introduction being added to the Indonesian translation of the Indonesia Report, it will also be inserted in the English language edition.

Distribution

This circular is being sent to all national sections and to coordination groups on Indonesia.

Recommended Actions

1. It is hoped that sections which have already translated the Indonesia Report will now be able to translate this introduction and print it for insertion into the original translation, so that it is included with every copy of the Indonesia Report that is sent out. Sections that do wish to translate the introduction should inform the Multilingualism Unit of the International Secretariat of this intention as soon as possible.
2. Sections that have not translated the Indonesia Report may still wish to translate this introduction, although alterations to the text would be necessary to delete references to the Report, and use it as a public statement on Indonesia. This may be particularly useful, since it is expected that perhaps as many as 4,000 untried political prisoners will be released from Buru Island penal settlement in Indonesia in December this year and national sections may have to answer queries from the press and others at this time.
3. The information contained in the introduction may be used by adoption and coordination groups for any publicity work they may be undertaking.

prisoners without charge or trial in deplorable conditions for periods of up to 13 years, to remove all employment restrictions it has placed on them. Amnesty International takes this opportunity to renew once again its appeal to the Government to release all prisoners of conscience in Indonesia and to restore to them full rights including the right to employment.

It remains a cause of great concern to Amnesty International that the tens of thousands of prisoners remaining in detention, almost certainly still more than 30,000, are held in conditions of severe deprivation. Although there have been some improvements in the conditions of detainees in recent years, there are still many areas in which prison conditions in Indonesia fall short of acceptable international standards. Forced labour is still common in a number of detention centers, most notably in Buru. The prisoners in this vast island detention center receive no food provision from the authorities whatsoever, and but for their own efforts would literally starve to death. It remains the practice in a number of other Indonesian prisons to force detainees to carry out work for which they receive little or no remuneration.

Whilst Amnesty International is satisfied that nearly all prison and detention centers are now regularly visited by a doctor, the health of many detainees is chronically poor. From information that Amnesty International has received, it is evident that in many prisons 50 per cent or more of the detainees are in need of medical treatment in any one month. In nearly all detention centers the medicines and drugs needed for the treatment of prisoners have to be provided by the prisoners themselves. This places great hardship on the families of detainees, who, deprived of their major bread-winner, are usually in no position to purchase expensive drugs. When a prisoner needs an operation, this is almost impossible unless his family can raise the necessary money. The most common complaints the prisoners suffer from are tuberculosis (up to 50 per cent in many prisons), malaria, hernia (particularly on Buru Island, where this condition is related to working on the fields), high blood pressure, skin diseases, dysentery, eye diseases, heart complaints, hepatitis, chronic rheumatism and haemorrhoids. Cases of leprosy have been reported on Buru and in a camp at Kendari in Southeast Sulawesi.

A striking illustration of the physical condition of political detainees in Indonesia was given during the release of 1,501 prisoners from the island of Buru in December 1977, an event which was well covered in the Indonesian and international press. Of those released from Buru, some had to be carried on stretchers to boats taking them to Java and two died on the journey to Surabaya; 12 of the prisoners had to be taken from the quayside straight to hospital; 196 of them were suffering from tuberculosis, while among 300 others there were cases of asthma, high blood pressure, hernia, jaundice and other illnesses.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned that arrests still continue to take place of people allegedly involved in the 1965 events or who were members or sympathizers of organizations legal at the time, but which have since been banned. In a number of prisons in Central Java some 10 to 15 per cent of detainees have been arrested in the last three years. In most cases it appears that the persons concerned fled Java in the aftermath of the 1965 coup to other islands such as Sumatra or Kalimantan, and on returning to Java after an absence of more than

12 years, have been reported by police informants and arrested. Arrests have been reported of persons whose only offence was to have subscribed for two or three months to the PKI newspaper, Harian Rakyat. In all cases these new detainees are held indefinitely without charge or trial.

Despite the fact that the Indonesian Government has consistently stated that it released all Category C prisoners in 1972, it is clear from evidence that Amnesty International possesses that prisoners from this category remain in detention: among them are many ex-army and airforce personnel who were often detained merely because their commanding officers were considered leftwing, as is the case for example with the approximately 270 detainees still held in Ambarawa in Central Java. Nirbaya prison, on the outskirts of Jakarta, holds many airmen whose arrest and detention was due simply to the fact that they were trained as pilots in an east European country before 1965. One detainee in that prison has been told that his arrest was solely because a fellow student had married a Russian citizen whilst in Moscow and refused to return to Indonesia after the coup. The prisoner concerned has now been in detention for 13 years.

Perhaps the most disturbing recent development in Indonesia, which is not covered by this report, is the large-scale arrests of new categories of people who have been detained in 1977 and 1978, including Moslems, students and members of several ethnic minorities. Supporters of the official Moslem party, the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), have suffered particularly. The PPP has since 1965 emerged as the major focus of opposition to the military government in Indonesia. This was clear, despite heavy pressure from the Government, in the 1971 and 1977 elections. Following widespread student unrest over alleged corruption in the Government and the unopposed re-election of President Suharto, the Government arrested large numbers of students in February and March 1978. In April 1978, a second wave of arrests followed of prominent Moslem figures including Professor Ismail Suny of Muhammadiyah University, Jakarta, Haji Arief Rachman, Assistant Rector of the Jakarta Teaching Training College (released on 17 August 1978), Mahbub Djunaedi, deputy secretary general of the PPP, Soleh Iskandar, a well-known Moslem educationalist, Imanuddin Abdur Raheem, a university lecturer and Secretary General of the International Federation of Islamic Student Organizations and Sutomo (Bung Tomo), a veteran of Indonesia's struggle for independence against the Dutch and a well-known businessman. Amongst other intellectuals detained was W.S. Rendra, Indonesia's best-known poet and playwright, who was arrested on 1 May after he had given a poetry reading critical of the Government. The Indonesian authorities have stated that he is to be charged with "incitement to hatred against the Government" under a law dating from the Dutch colonial period. W.S. Rendra was released on 15 October and all charges against him dropped.

Reliable Moslem sources have indicated that there are at present at least 700 Moslems in detention throughout Indonesia. One case that Amnesty International has presently taken up is that of Sjachril Wahab, a journalist, formerly employed on Indonesia's most prestigious magazine Tempo. Sjachril Wahab has been detained without charge or trial since late 1976. The reason for his arrest was apparently Government concern that he would take a prominent role in local campaigning during the May 1977 elections for the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan. His wife and family are believed to have suffered severely because of financial difficulties since his detention. Another case that Amnesty International has taken up is that of Haji A.M. Fatwa, secretary of the Madjelis Ulama DGI (Council of

