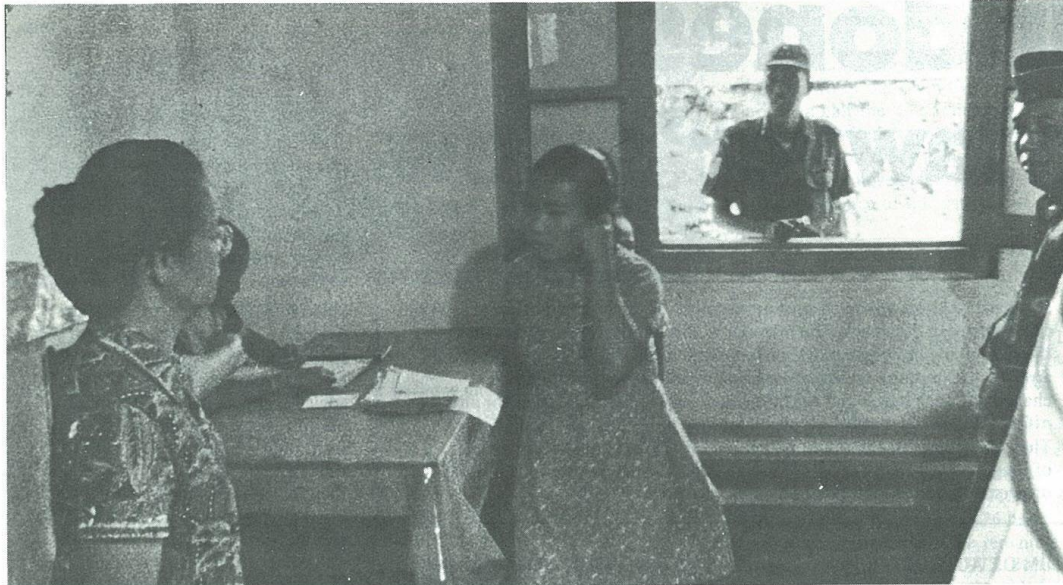


dopted prisoners



Siti Suratih (in front left) working with fellow-prisoners in Plantungan.

Age: 45 years
Occupation: Nurse
Date of arrest: 1966
Charge: None
Trial: None
Place of detention: Plantungan women's detention camp, Central Java.

siti suratih

Mrs. Siti Suratih was born in Central Java. After completing her education, she joined the nursing profession, obtaining excellent qualifications. She continued in her profession after her marriage to B.O. Hutapea, a communist from North Sumatra who became a member of the Party's new Politbureau established under Aidit in 1949.

Siti Suratih herself was never attracted by political activity and did not join any mass organisation. She had four children and continued to work as a nurse, moving to Jakarta together with her husband, where she obtained work at the Central Army Hospital. She became chief-nurse at the Maternity Ward.

After the abortive coup in October 1965, she was dishonourably dismissed. Since she herself had never been politically active, it is clear that her dismissal was because of her marriage to a leading communist.

For a year or so after the coup, she lived in very difficult circumstances. She had no contact with her husband who had gone underground and had to care for her children alone. She was under continual harassment because of her husband's position; the military kept a close watch on her to discover whether she would be contacted by her husband.

She was arrested in 1966 while her husband was still in hiding and her interrogation was concerned only with her relations with him. None of her relatives was able to take care of three children still with her, and she was, therefore, compelled to take them with her to the detention camp where they stayed for several months. When she was transferred to the Bukit Duri women's prison in Jakarta, she was not allowed to have her children there and had to leave them behind at the detention camp in the care of other prisoners, to await the forthcoming visit of relatives in the hope that they would take the children home. The children are now at school in Jakarta and are staying with their aunt.

In 1968, her husband was killed during an attack on a centre of communist activities in Blitar, East Java. In 1971, Siti Suratih had still not been officially informed of her husband's death. For the major part of her detention, she was believed to be a category 'C' prisoner and was expecting early release. However, in mid-1971, she was transferred to the Plantungan women's detention camp in Central Java, and so deduced that her classification had been raised to 'B'. Her transfer may also have been because she was required to work as a nurse. Shots of her appeared in a film made by a Dutch TV unit of the Plantungan Camp (the accompanying photograph is taken from that film); she is shown treating prisoners.