

the prisoners speak

"We strongly urge Amnesty International to continue and intensify its activities to protect the interests of all political prisoners in Indonesia in accordance with Amnesty International's principles of human rights and its objective of protecting those who are deprived of justice and human dignity, or who have been victimised by abuses of the law.

"The practice of arbitrarily assigning a 30th September/PKI Movement label to any person has become a powerful tool in the hands of the authorities to enrich themselves at the expense of the political prisoners and their families...."

"... Unofficial sources have informed me that my classification has been changed from 'C' to 'B' category.... As a matter of fact, a prisoner's classification can be changed at will by any team which has some authority in this matter. For example, my status has suddenly changed to category 'B' and perhaps, after the last interrogation....I might become category 'A' or 'X'!"

From a letter sent out of prison by a political prisoner who has been adopted by Amnesty.

JAVA

ON FORCED LABOUR

The project is owned by a company of which the Military Area Commander and his family hold the majority of the shares.

"The prisoners are allowed to have their families with them but the majority prefer not to because the local population look upon them as social outcasts and there would be no future for the wives and children. The political prisoners live in wooden barracks and their labour can be used in other places as well. Now and then, families send food but only a part reaches the prisoners. There is a serious shortage of medicine and proteins.

"The daily wage is Rp. 15 (\$0.04) which is spent mainly on soap and tobacco (the cigarettes are shared). When the prisoners fall ill, they are sent to the local military clinic but there is little in the way of medicine and medical facilities.

"To most political prisoners, the monotonous camp life is very

depressing. They work seven days a week from seven in the morning till five in the evening with an hour for lunch. Sometimes they work in the evenings too, from seven until ten o'clock, with floodlighting.

"They live very isolated lives, and there are no radios or newspapers. They have hardly any contact with the local population...."

"They get hardly any material aid from outside and have to buy their own clothes and shoes from their wages of Rp. 15 a day....."

Interview with a prisoner 1972

SUMATRA

LIVING CONDITIONS AT A MILITARY PRISON

"Blocks A and B are each used for four persons and sometimes for five, whereas according to the regulations, they should only be used for two. From six in the morning till five in the evening, the detainees remain within the confines of an area 2m by 8m. From five in the evening till 6 in the morning, they remain within the confines of an area 2m by

4m, where they have to eat, sleep, urinate, etc...."

"Detainees are allowed out only to fetch water and food, to obtain medical treatment, to get religious instruction, for interrogation or, when permitted, to meet relatives.

"Food is provided twice a day and amounts to two handfuls per person for each meal. Vegetables consist of only boiled cabbage and nothing else....Beverages consist of boiled water only, given twice a day.... The water for bathing and washing and other purposes is dirty. Only when it rains heavily is there any clean water..... During the hot season, the prisoners confine themselves to washing their faces and eating-utensils only, and the water is very muddy. The medical facilities are extremely unsatisfactory. If a detainee falls seriously ill, his fate is in the hands of the Almighty. A fee of Rp. 25 (\$0.06) must be paid for injections, but where can the political prisoners get the money from?"

"Besides direct experiences, I saw many things that were diametrically opposed to the principles of humanitarianism and the law, and heard the sufferings and grief-stricken moans of the political prisoners both with regard to their own sufferings as well as those of their families and children living outside. But who hears or wants to hear, who sees or wants to see their sufferings and moans except God, the Almighty and Most Merciful?"

Released prisoner's letter 1972.

AND THE WIVES' VIEW

"Tell Amnesty to keep fighting. The Army has promised to help me but it is only to enrich themselves. They talk and talk as they please; false promises, false inside information, all fabricated by themselves. Still many arrests, still many re-arrests and still many cases of torture, especially committed towards arrested common soldiers and lower-rank officers. Let Amnesty International go on."

From a letter sent to a relative abroad by the wife of a political prisoner.

"I feel there should be some rules (or laws) for political prisoners the world over, which somehow could give them and their families a certain feeling of security. I think revolutions against existing governments will