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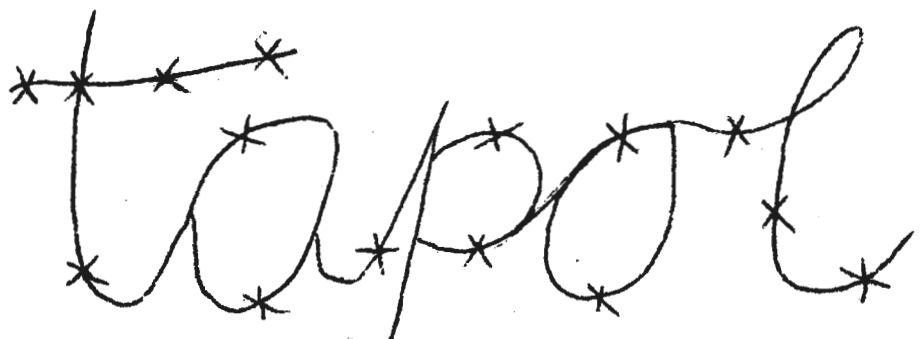
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Pat Walsh



BRITISH CAMPAIGN FOR THE RELEASE OF INDONESIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS

BULLETIN No. 4

April 1974

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CAMPAIGN NEWS

TAPOL AT THE THEATRE

On Sunday 3rd March, over 250 people attended an evening at the Embassy Theatre, Swiss Cottage, London, when a dramatic documentation of the history and present state of political prisoners in Indonesia was enacted. The show was presented by TAPOL.

The cast included Lindsay Anderson, Alan Bates, Tony Blackett, Ron Daniels, Glenda Jackson, Norma Shebbeare and David Stern, and among the sketches was one on the 'numbers game', on the conflicting official tallies of prisoners, as well as sketches based on the personal case histories of prisoners and on interviews between Basuki Effendi (imprisoned film director), Pranudya Ananta Tur (imprisoned writer) and journalists who visited Buru. Miquel Brown sang to the accompaniment of Keith Cooper on the guitar.

The presentation was an excellent introduction to those who were newcomers to the Indonesian scene and a reminder to all of the poignant reality of the situation of tapols and their families.

A DAUGHTER APPEALS FOR HER TAPOL FATHER

On Sunday 17th March, Tari Hibbitt, whose father, Suwondo Budiardjo has been in prison in Indonesia for a total of 7½ years since 1965, spent the afternoon outside the church of St. Martin's in the Fields, Trafalgar Square distributing leaflets protesting against the situation of the tapols. She was interviewed there by representatives of the press, and interviews were broadcast on Radio London, London Broadcasting and Capital Radio. There was a front-page report with a photograph in The Guardian on Monday 18th March, and also a report and photograph in the Daily Mail. The Queen was in Indonesia at the time of Tari's protest.

BRITAIN'S AID TO INDONESIA

The next meeting of the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), the international aid consortium of countries which give aid to Indonesia and of which Britain is a member, will be on 9th 10th May in Amsterdam. TAPOL takes the view that, if the British Government gives aid to Indonesia, it should do so only if satisfied about the maintenance of human rights there. The new Labour Government in Westminster has already decided to halt aid disbursements to Chile because of the ghastly violations of human rights in that country since the junta came to power.

The Chile junta was inspired by the events in Indonesia that led to the military takeover in 1965 when hundreds of thousands of people were slaughtered because of their leftwing views and massive arrests took place. One of the slogans of the Chile junta as it was preparing to take power was, "Jakarta, Jakarta".

If the British Government has taken a decision to halt aid payments to Chile, then it should be consistent and adopt a similar decision with regard to Indonesia.

If you agree, please write to your Member of Parliament and urge him to write to the Foreign Secretary or the Minister for Overseas Development, in time to influence Government policy before the IGGI meeting takes place. The Ministers should be urged to raise the tapol question at the meeting, as the Dutch Minister for Overseas Development, Mr. J. Pronk did at the last meeting.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO INDONESIA

TAPOL has always, since the first announcement of the Queen's visit to Indoëssia, taken the view that it should not have been arranged and should not take place. The visit did however take place between 15th and 22nd March, and was accompanied by a fair amount of publicity about the military regime and about the poverty of people living in the slums of Djakarta, but, sadly, none or almost none about the prisoner problem. It seems that the regime's efforts to keep prisoners out of sight and hence out of mind during the visit have been moderately successful.

We felt that the visit would be damaging to the cause of the tapols because it would be interpreted by the regime as, if not actual approval, at least condonation of their behaviour to the tapols by one of the few States which might be expected to maintain standards of democracy and human rights. It will now seem to the generals, the tapols and their families and others, that Britain does not mind how her allies behave in this connection, provided only that they are far enough away geographically. Would the Queen be sent on a State visit to Greece?

We have now seen a report, published in the Indonesian newspaper Kompas (one of those which has not been banned) which fully bears out our forebodings. The Indonesian Ambassador in London, Mr. Rusmin Nuryadin, was reported on February 5 as saying that the visit "constituted affirmation of Britain's confidence in the leadership and administration of President Suharto and in the Indonesian nation..." He said that the visit meant that "Britain recognises the importance of Indonesia's role in maintaining stability in the Austro-asia region". The report also states that the Queen's party would include "the British Prime Minister Edward Heath and his wife," which is an engaging touch of fantasy.

Must the tapols suffer indefinitely to contribute to Indonesia's public image of "maintaining stability"?

AUSTRALIAN CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

Following a national conference on Australian/Indonesian relations held at Sydney University in March a national campaign involving university groups, aid and church organisations and trade unions and seeking important changes in Australian foreign policy towards Indonesia was announced in Sydney and Canberra on March 19.

The conference was attended by over 200 delegates from six Australian states and was addressed by Professor Ernst Utrecht who was formerly a member of the Indonesian Supreme Advisory Council, Carmel Budiardjo, who was herself formerly a tapol, an American journalist and expert on Indonesia, Michael Morrow Dr. Barrie Dyster, an economic historian from the University of New South Wales, and others.

A statement of policy adopted by the final conference session said in part:

"While it can be argued that the stability and goodwill of the Indonesian Government should be an important concern for Australia's foreign policy makers, in reality this goal is frequently in conflict with the real immediate and long-term interests of the Indonesian people.

The existence of more than 70,000 untried political prisoners, the growing poverty of the bulk of the Indonesian people, the distorted pattern of economic development imposed by foreign investment which aggravates, rather than assists Indonesia's immense economic problems, and the conspicuous and pervasive corruption of the military regime, are facts which the Australian Government can no longer ignore.

The first principles of Australian policy must be genuine economic and social justice for the Indonesian people. We can no longer pretend that our current foreign policy is not related to Indonesia's internal problems."

The campaign will seek to mobilise Australian public opinion in support of the following demands:

1. that the Australian government make a strong public statement of its disapproval concerning the plight of Indonesian political prisoners, and take every available opportunity to restate its disapproval, i.e. ministerial visits and meetings of the Inter-Government Group on Indonesia.
2. that Australian economic aid is made conditional upon the release of Indonesian political prisoners as an indication of genuine and economic reforms within Indonesia.
3. that stricter controls be imposed on Australian private economic activities in Indonesia in order to better safeguard the long term economic interests of the Indonesian people.
4. that military assistance to the Suharto government be ended as well as military intelligence co-operation between Australian and Indonesian armed forces.

NEWS FROM INDONESIA

Every week further news emerges that the nature of current arrests is related to the intense disenchantment with economic policies; with the magnitude of foreign investment, the failure to help the poor or to combat inflation, with the uninhibited corruption of Indonesia's present rulers and the wealth of a small section of her population. The Minister for Defence and Security himself admitted much of this when he said during a press conference in February that "inequalities and poverty do indeed still exist in Society; we must admit this. The President himself is giving a great deal of attention to the matter. It is even he who most dislikes seeing such inequalities..."

However this may be, there have been many arrests in poor and rural areas, in Java and the Outer Islands, of farmers, urban workers and officials who are resisting the local manifestations of a rural strategy which threatens their livelihood. In early January about a thousand villagers in the Indramayu area of West Java smashed pipes belonging to the Pertamina State Oil Enterprise which discharges waste from the Munchu drilling into the Sigedand river. The villagers use the water from the river to irrigate their rice fields. In December 1973 farmers in South Sumatra and West Java resisted the compulsory acquisition of their lands for commercial and industrial enterprises, as the compensation offered was ridiculously low. In West Java land which was appropriated for £2 per acre was being resold only a few months later for £13 per acre. Resisters were accused of being Communist sympathisers and one man was jailed in South Sumatra. During a recent drive against alleged communists in North Sumatra 130 civilians were arrested and the Army Commander in charge of the operation, Brigadier Alex warned that there were more arrests to come. To date

In Barabai, Kalimantan, Captain Purnawirana Impat was released recently after being wrongly imprisoned for 10 months. Impat had been arrested after he told the journal "Media Masyarakat" of unfair treatment of the Dayak tribes by Government officials. Dayaks were brought as witnesses against him. It was reported that witnesses were asked to pay money to the public prosecutor under threat of being accused of membership of the banned Communist party.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE ANTI-TANAKA RIOTS

Announcing the arrests of mid-January General Sumitro (then still head of Kopkamtib) said that it would take firm steps against "whoever and whatever social force, no matter what its form, among those who still do not understand the present conditions and who directly or indirectly assist by adding to the present tensions." General Sumrahadi, Head of the Information Centre of the Department of Defence and Security, stated that the purpose of the arrests was to "educate the young generation in particular so that they have the courage to take responsibility for the acts they commit, and, secondly, to make a thorough study of the background to the 15-16 January events."

These statements are both softer in tone than the statements of the Minister for Defence and Security, General Panggabean and of General Sumitro who told a press conference in January that recent student action could be described as an act of "makar" (a legal term denoting plotting with criminal intent to attack or murder.)

But if the immediate reaction to the anti-Tanaka riots was to forbid public servants to accept gifts, hold extravagant parties and use public funds for private purposes, the later reaction after time for reflection was to arrest student and civil rights leaders.

Of 883 persons stated by the new chief of Kopkamtib, Admiral Sudomo, to have been arrested following or during the riots of 15-16 January, 472 were stated to have been caught "red-handed" during the riots, 303 were detained following raids, and 45 were detained under orders issued by the Kopkamtib prosecutor general between 6 January and 16 February. Of this total number of 883 Admiral Sudomo stated in 22 February only 42 remained in detention - of the remainder some have been cleared and some are required to report regularly. The

Admiral gave precise statistics of the people arrested during the riots - 14 students, 83 schoolchildren, 41 youths 253 workers, 28 vendors, 2 becak drivers, 24 "employees" 1 employed person and 24 vagrants - but it is not known who the people still detained are, except that they include an officer in the armed services, and five members of Parliament.

In a press conference to discuss the subject of the detentions Admiral Sudomo said that no force or beatings had been used by Kopkamtib, and that the methods used had been in accordance with the law and democracy. It was not true that Kopkamtib had used arbitrary measures.

Admiral Sudomo outlined the government's views of the 15 January riots. He said that the demonstrations against the Japanese Prime Minister, ostensibly caused by resentment against Japanese economic expansion in Indonesia, was a "mere spark" designed to explode the revolutionary situation prepared long before. The intention was to overthrow the lawful government of Indonesia and to replace the Five Principles of the Constitution (the "Panca Sila" and the 1945 constitution).

Members of Parliament detained

On the matter of the five members of Parliament detained following the riots of 15 January, it was recently stated by the Vice-chairman of the Indonesian representative assembly, the DPR, Domp Soranoto, that the requirements for their detention had been fulfilled under the law, in that their proposed detention had been reported 24 hours beforehand to the President, the Prosecutor General and the executive of the DPR. The Chairman of the United Party, one of whose members is detained, said that it was not proposed to prejudge his case; it would be best if the matter were first left to the government, and then, after he had been taken to court and proved to be in the wrong, the question of his continuing as a representative would be discussed. We can only hope that he and his colleagues will not wait as long as their fellow parliamentarians arrested in 1965; of the total of over 250,000 people arrested in all, only about 300 have ever been brought to trial.

Lawyers detained.

Yap Thiam Hien and Buyung Nasution were detained following the 15 January incident. Both have many friends in Britain who are anxious about their future. It is to be hoped that Mr. Yap's health, in particular, will not suffer in prison; he is 61, and would not benefit, for example, by a stay on Buru, where his colleague, Dr. Suprpto, another elderly lawyer, has been engaged in forced labour for some years.

In late February Admiral Sudomo had a meeting with representatives of the Advocates Association of Indonesia, who expressed their hope that the investigation of their colleagues' cases could be speeded up and they could be released if there were no grounds for longer detention. Since then, however, we

PRESIDENT SUHARTO AND THE ROLE OF THE PRESS

Since the riots of 15-16 January in Djakarta the following newspapers and journals have been banned; Harian Kami Abadi, Indonesia Raya, Djakarta Times, Pedoman, Nusantara, Suluh Berita, and Putra Indonesia among the dailies, and the weeklies Pemuda Indonesia, Wenang, Mingguan Mahasiswa Indonesia and Express. Some of these had their printing permits only revoked, not their publication permits and may perhaps appear again; these include Pedoman and Express.

Permits for three new newspapers in Djakarta are to be issued, but anyone wishing to work for them who previously worked on one of the newspapers which has been banned will need to get a certificate of non-involvement in the events of 15-16 January from the Kppkamtib, on top of the certificate of non-involvement in the events of October 1965 which everyone in Indonesia needs to get any job.

A report of a speech made by President Suharto at the 15th National Congress of the Indonesian Journalists Association which took place last November in East Java reads rather oddly in the light of these recent events. He was then reported as having said that in order to attain development targets "it was important to improve the exchange of views through a free, sincere, frank and responsible two-way communication, and journalists and the press had a big role to play in improving the exchange of views and strengthening the principle of democracy."

The Indonesian authorities are not too pleased with the attitude of the foreign press to the activities of Kopkamtib after the 15th January incident. Kopkamtib's new chief of staff, Admiral Sudomo, was reported on 22 February as saying that there had been news published by some of the foreign press which, he said, had the character of interfering with Indonesia's domestic affairs. He said that Kopkamtib's activities were always founded on the basis of the laws in force, and, in connection with the people still in detention under the January 15 riots, that "their families continue to be given an opportunity to meet them, and that they are also told the place where they are detained." In that case they are a great deal more fortunate than the great majority of tapols, most of whom have of course been detained since 1965 without news of their families.

THE TAPOLS -- CASE NOTES

Yap Thiam Hien

No other arrest has provided so clear an indication of the new mood of the Indonesian Government as that of Yap Thiam Hien, who was Chairman of the Board of the Ecumenical Fund for Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Indo-China, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Indo-China of the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, and a member of the Council of the International Commission of Jurists. Mr Yap has won an international reputation for the defence of civil liberties and upholding the law under two successive and quite contrary Indonesian regimes. He has been effective to a degree that only those who commit themselves wholly to their work can be. Small and thin, he has been an immovable boulder in the path of the Government. His style is not to organise demonstrations of dissent, but to monitor the Government's legal performance. He has constantly urged leaders to set an example to the people by ending corruption and ostentatious living.

Being of Chinese origin he had to walk delicately in a country where national economic frustration could so easily turn into a Chinese pogrom. Under the Sukarno administration he was known to be anti-communist and resisted efforts to orientate Baperki (the Organisation of Chinese Citizens of Indonesia) towards China. His ~~inactivity~~ ~~activity~~ was confirmed when he defended Baperki in the late 1960's under the present government. He also defended Sukarno's Foreign Minister Subandrio. Like all Indonesians who are seen as any kind of threat to the Government he has been accused of involvement in the September 1965 events. While working on a famous case, known as the "bouncing cheque case" in 1967, he accused high officials of extortion and was arrested on New Years Day, 1968, charged with involvement in the events of 1965. The public protest which followed his arrest led to his release in six days. He was later rearrested on charges of slandering high officials and given a sentence of one year's imprisonment, which was later suspended. The officials and the judge at his trial were all transferred from their posts shortly afterwards.

This year, as vigilant as ever, Yap criticised the proceedings under which hundreds were arrested after the Tanaka riots. It is believed that he was arrested to deter other critics. Following the arrests of January 16 of Adnan Buyung Nasution and H.J. Princen (Chairman of the Institute for the Defence of Human Rights) Indonesia's three best known defenders of civil liberties have been removed from the scene.

Hariman Siregar

Hariman Siregar, Chairman of the Students' Union of the University of Indonesia, was arrested on 17th or 18th January because of his alleged involvement in the anti-Tanaka riots. In the months prior to the visit of the Japanese Prime Minister he had been emerging strongly as a voice of student protest against corruption and the denial of social justice to the poor in the pattern of development that was emerging.

A week before his arrest Siregar and 33 representatives of Student Councils in Indonesia saw President Suharto and put questions to him. Siregar said later that the President "did not answer some questions at all."

SPOTLIGHT ON CONDITIONS

LETTER FROM A TAPOL'S SON

We have recently received the following letter from the son of a tapol in Salemba Prison. The boy left Jakarta only four months ago and is now living abroad:

* * *

First I want to tell you about the brutal torture employed by military toughs. Only a few months before I left, I was told about these things and I'm sure they still happen today. I heard about the situation when my father was at the Jakarta Military Prison (RTM) in Many tapols are tortured to get them to confess that they were members of the PKI and were involved in the October 1965 affair. Almost every interrogation is accompanied by torture.... This goes for people being asked to appear as witnesses in trials as well as for young people and they even torture the elderly, the weak and the sick.

The political trials are all rigged. News published by journalists about these trials is quite unreliable.... Often, if a witness gives testimony that exonerates the defendant, he does not return to the prison where he is being held; the very next day, he re-appears in court and gives testimony that conflicts with what he said on the previous day. Clearly something happened in between. In one case, a witness was warned that something would happen to his family if he gave evidence helpful to the defendant.

The kinds of torture they use are: beating with wood or rattan on all parts of the body, whipping, crushing toes or fingers under the legs of a table on which several soldiers are sitting, immersing the prisoner in boiling water, forcing people to drink or eat filthy water, including their own urine or excretion. Many have been crippled by their torturers; some have lost their minds and gone completely mad.

In Salemba, the punishment for a tapol who 'violated discipline' is transfer to Block N, to an isolation block or to the block where criminal prisoners are held. In the latter case, they are badly treated by the criminal prisoners who deprive them of their food and clothing.

When my father was moved back to Salemba, things there were far worse than they had been before.... These days, on Thursdays for instance, only about twenty people come with food for the prisoners.*) Any tapol who receives food from outside will certainly have to share it with at least six or eight others. Many have no clothes left at all and must rely on fellow-prisoners who have families that are still able to bring them something.

The medical situation is very serious. Tapols without families or whose families are unable to buy medicines have a really bad time. Many who need medicine can do nothing about it and their illness just deteriorates. Their only hope is from families who are still able to help, but there are far too few of these and far too many who need to be helped. It is extremely difficult to get transferred to the Military Hospital. A transfer comes only when the prisoner is very seriously ill.... About four months before I left Jakarta, a prisoner died because he

*) Food parcels may be sent three days a week, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. There are over 1,500 tapols in Salemba.

was too ill by the time they transferred him to hospital. In fact, he had never been examined during the 5½ years he had spent in jail - right up to the day of his death.

Government promises to release prisoners are absolutely unreliable. About the middle of last year, there was very good news. One officer said that by the end of 1973 the detention problem would be at an end; and there were signs at the time that this would indeed happen. Many of the older and ailing prisoners were transferred to a single block and were told that they would soon be released.... One of them was a man who was 85 years old and he was indeed released last August. But by the time I left Jakarta, they had all been transferred back to other blocks and nothing more was heard of that good news. Some young prisoners were also promised that they would be released and were told to trace relatives who could take them in after they left prison; but when I left Jakarta, they were still in prison.

There were a few tapols released from Salemba in September but they discovered that their wives had remarried and refused to take them in. So they returned to the prison to seek work on a project connected with the prison. I think there were three people like this....

* * * * *

EX-DETAINEES FORCED TO WORK FOR ARMY

News from an independent source about the difficulties of ex-detainees immediately after their release confirms what the tapol's son described in his letter above. A group of women tapols who were released from prison in Jakarta at the end of last year have been compelled to seek work with the Army because they can find no relatives to take them in and are now homeless. Some are being employed to make clothes, others to do various other jobs. They get no salary at all, only two meals a day and a floor to sleep on. As homeless ex-detainees who would find it virtually impossible to obtain non-involvement certificates required to get a job, they are compelled to accept these intolerable conditions.

* * * * *

RELIGIOUS INDOCTRINATION FOR TAPOLS - EVEN THIS IS TOO RISKY

Some months ago, the Indonesian Department of Religious Affairs sent an indoctrination team to the Huru Detention Camp to provide 'religious guidance' to the prisoners. One of the tasks of the team was to evaluate the degree of knowledge of the tapols about religious doctrine and practice; the prisoners were given tests on several aspects of the Moslem religion. Some, like the well-known writer, Pramudya Ananta Tur, scored zero marks, while there were a few, including a member of the PKI Central Committee who scored one hundred percent!

A report of the team's activities and findings is published in the Jakarta magazine, Tempo on 23rd March, 1973. One of the team's conclusions was that religious education provided so far to the tapols had been fragmentary; what they needed was a comprehensive view of religion.

The report then continues as follows:

To our subscribers in Australia

Our profound regrets that you are receiving the enclosed issues late. This is due to a misunderstanding about the distribution of the Bulletin in Australia. The matter has now been clarified, and you will in future receive your issue immediately upon publication, direct from London.

"Instead of continuing with the former system of education under which the rate of progress achieved was very slow, lectures were given dealing with practical topics; for instance there were lectures about a book on the Moslem religion written by Professor Hasbi Ash Shiddieqi and these were followed by questions and answers. At first there were doubts about introducing this system of question and answer about the material of the lecture because officials of the Religious Affairs Department had been told that this might be too risky.

"Although this method was greeted enthusiastically, it was felt to be inadequate as a way of getting to know their real state of mind. The best method would have been to have discussions and consultations but this was prohibited by the Camp Commander although a written request had been submitted for permission. There is after all still a great danger of ideological matters being aired."

* * * * *

MORE CAMPAIGN NEWS

AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONISTS CALL FOR FIRM STAND ON TAPOLS

Trade unionists in Victoria, Australia have adopted a resolution calling upon the Australian Government to issue a strong public declaration of the trade union movements deep concern over the continued detention of political prisoners in Indonesia.

The resolution, which will be on the agenda of the Executive of the Australian Council of Trade Unions on 13th May states among other things: "The Australian trade union movement has a tradition of solidarity with the Indonesian trade union movement which was manifested particularly during the boycott imposed on the transport of Dutch troops and equipment to Indonesia soon after the Indonesian Republic was established in 1945. It is deeply dismayed that the Australian Government is strengthening its ties with the present Indonesian regime despite the brutal repression of trade unionists and progressives in that country."

It appeals to the government "to make it quite clear to the Indonesian Government that the Australian people are not prepared to go on supporting a regime with economic assistance while it continues to carry out such brutal repression in flagrant disregard for basic human rights."

* * * * *

SPOTLIGHT ON POLITICS

PARTIES IN THE PAY OF THE GOVERNMENT

Following the 'simplification of political parties' which forced all parties to merge into two - Development Unity Party (Moslem) and Democracy Party (Nationalist and Christian), parties are now required to concentrate solely on economic development and not to involve themselves in politics. Having agreed to do so, these two parties and the military sponsored party, Golkar, are to receive financial aid from the State, meaning that they need no longer rely on their membership for finance. With the new State Budget, they will each receive Rp 2,500,000 a month (£2,500) plus Rp 30,000,000 (£30,000) to finance the costs of their national congresses!

SOVIET DISSIDENT PLEADS FOR AMNESTY FOR INDONESIAN TAPOLS

The well-known Soviet physicist and dissident, Academician Andrei Sakharov, sent an appeal to the Indonesian President on 4th April, for a general amnesty for all Indonesian political prisoners. The Appeal states, in a slightly abridged version:

"I have received information produced by Amnesty International about political prisoners in Indonesia. I consider this information to be in good faith and dictated by a purely humane concern for the fate of tens of thousands of political prisoners, the majority of whom have not been sentenced or charged.

"I appeal to you and through you to the Indonesian Government to declare a general political amnesty. I consider I am justified in turning to you with this request because in my own country, I and likeminded people have invariably favoured an amnesty for all political prisoners and those detained in psychiatric hospitals for political reasons.

"The human act of an amnesty never threatens a country's political stability. On the contrary, it will certainly promote a relaxation of social and international conflicts, in that country as well as far beyond its borders. I am convinced of the great moral and political significance which an amnesty would have, not only for Indonesia but for the whole of mankind."

Press reports state that the Indonesian Government has replied to Sakharov saying that it cannot release the prisoners as this would be dangerous for the country's security.