

five of the a

karel supit

Age: 55 years
Occupation: Member of Parliament
Date of Arrest: October 1965
Charge: None
Trial: None
Place of detention: Buru Island

Karel Supit was born in Menado, North Sulawesi in 1917. As a young man, he worked in the oil fields at Cepu, East Java. After the proclamation of the Republic in 1945, he formed and led a nationalist guerrilla group in East Java against the Dutch colonial government.

After 1950, he returned to Menado, where he took the initiative in establishing the left-wing trade union federation, SOBSI, in Minahasa and helped to build the Communist Party in the region. In 1954, he became a member of the Party's Central Committee. He was elected a Member of Parliament for the Communist Party in 1955 and became a person of great prominence in his own region.

He strongly opposed the Permesta rebellion against the Central Government which broke out in North Sulawesi in 1957 and was arrested. He was released several months later when the rebellion was suppressed by Central Government troops. Later, he moved to Jakarta to work at the Communist Party Headquarters where he became the head of the Party's International Department.

In 1963, he was appointed a member of the Indonesian delegation to the United Nations Assembly; he also participated in several Indonesian delegations to various international conferences and gatherings.

Following the October 1965 coup attempt, PKI leaders and members endeavoured to evade arrest, but Karel Supit was caught within days. After being held at the Salemba Men's Prison in Jakarta for five years, he was moved to the Buru detention camp in 1969. His wife, Mrs. Lies Supit, had gone into hiding in 1965 knowing she faced arrest because of her work with the pro-communist women's organisation, GERWANI; their children were taken care of by relatives. Early in 1967, Mrs. Supit was also arrested and is now detained at the Bukit Duri women's prison, also in Jakarta. Despite the proximity of his wife, while Karel was still under detention in Jakarta, they were not permitted to meet. Later, one of their sons was also arrested.

When Karel Supit was transferred to Buru he was 52 years old, well over the maximum age of 45 which had been fixed by the government for those to be deported to the island. It is not difficult to imagine that he must, at his age, be finding the rigours of life in Buru a serious threat to his health.

Age: about 38 years
Occupation: Musician and composer
Date of Arrest: August 1968
Charge: None
Trial: None
Place of detention: Salemba Prison, Jakarta

subronto kusuma atmaja

Subronto is a well-known musician. His first job was at the Ministry for Culture and Education, where he eventually became editor of the magazine published by the Ministry. Although he had no formal musical education until he was over 30, he developed a great interest in Indonesian music and helped to organise choral activities in youth organisations at a time when this was still a novelty in Indonesia.

He joined LEKRA, the left-wing cultural organisation, and in the early nineteen sixties rose to prominence as one of Indonesia's most popular composers. Some of his work had a political content. The most popular of all his songs was 'Nasakom Bersatu' or 'Nasakom Unite', popularising the Sukarno Government policy of Nasakom union of the three main streams in Indonesian society, nationalism, religion and communism.

From December 1962 until July 1965, he studied music in East Germany at the Hans Eisler High School of Music, part of the Humboldt University. After graduating, he returned to Indonesia, just a month before the coup attempt.

The new political situation after October 1965 made it impossible for him, as a member of LEKRA, a proscribed organisation, to obtain any form of public employment in his profession. He made his living teaching the piano and the German language and also managed to train a small choir and compose several works, none of which could be performed or published because of the political stigma which was attached to him.

In August 1968, he was arrested. The allegations against him are believed to be connected with visits made to his house by former LEKRA colleagues and the assumption by the authorities that these persons were involved in anti-government activities. Whether or not such allegations were ever substantiated, his position as a member of LEKRA and his fame as the composer of 'Nasakom Bersatu' and other songs popular during the Sukarno era have been decisive in keeping him under detention. Such activities would be classified as 'preparations for an atmosphere which led to the coup' which could make Subronto open to the charge that he was 'directly or indirectly involved in the 30th September/PKI movement'.

10 As far as is known, he is still being detained at the Salemba Prison in Jakarta.