whether their husbands were alive, or they just got tired of waiting. Many prisoners and their families lost houses and other property that were taken over by military personnel. The chances of getting anything back are remote. Then, too, many prisoners have no idea of what kind of reception they will receive when they are released. Can they expect real freedom from a society whose government has treated them as it has for so long? Will they be able to get a job? Probably not. Some ex-prisoners try to deal with the situation by maintaining official residence in one county but living and working in another county where government officials and neighbors are not aware of their political background. This can work if a friend who lives at the person's official residence can be counted on to deliver the frequent summonses. But it is not hard to understand why some of these newly released prisoners might choose to live in resettlement camps, where their neighbors will also be political suspects like themselves, instead of trying to reenter the mainstream of Indonesian society.

Perhaps upwards of ten thousand Indonesian families migrate each year from overcrowded Java and Bali to outer islands under the government's transmigration program. There are also special transmigration settlements for retired military personnel. The resettlement areas for ex-political prisoners are physically not unlike the transmigration settlements. Each family is given a simple house and two hectares of land. But there the similarity ends. The transmigration areas for the general public have little government security apparatus. Resettlement areas for ex-political prisoners have tight security.

Just how tight the security in resettlement areas really is was indicated by a recent article in Tempo, Indonesia's weekly newsmagazine. It reported that a prisoner by the name of Sukarmo had been living with his family in a prison camp on the island of Buru. They were informed that they would be among the 10,000 prisoners released in December. But then Mr. Sukarmo was called and informed that the announcement that they would be released had been a mistake. Needless to say, the news was cruel and shocking. But the point is that, according to Tempo, the place where this family is now being detained is itself a resettlement area! Obviously there is no more freedom of movement in or out of this resettlement area than in any other place of imprisonment.

Whether the released prisoners go to the resettlement camps or back to their old communities, one thing is tragically clear: The freedom they will experience upon release will be very compromised, hardly worthy of the name of freedom. The vision of "getting out" for Indonesian political prisoners has become badly tarnished. For years to come they will be summoned, watched, and harassed.

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