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<p>SERVICE Veranstaltungen Restaurantführer Kreuzworträtsel Webcam Zürich Bildschirmschoner</p>	<p>Twelve Days in an Indonesian Jail</p> <p>A member of the NZZ editorial staff, Oswald Iten, was held in the municipal jail of Jayapura, Irian Jaya, from 2 to 13 December. The charge: illegal journalistic activity. Most of his fellow inmates were Papuans fighting for West Papua's independence from Indonesia. Iten witnessed the incredible brutality that marked the prisoners' everyday life.</p> <p>Oswald Iten</p> <p>When the door to the cell slammed shut behind me, the first thing I noticed was the stench of urine and other human excreta. Then I saw, through the dim, humidly hot air, bodies lying on the filthy concrete floor, packed one next to the other like sardines. It was one o'clock in the morning. Someone in the lineup of bodies handed me a cardboard box, so that I'd at least have something clean to lay my head on.</p> <p>The police had taken me into custody the previous day and grilled me for nine hours, because on 1 December I had taken "political photos" ostensibly not permitted by my tourist visa. That was the day on which Papuans fighting for independence from Indonesia commemorated the day in 1961, while the Dutch were still the colonial masters, when a declaration of West Papuan independence was made which was acknowledged by no one else in the world. Since then, the flag with the morning star had been their symbol of freedom, and anyone raising that banner had had to reckon with the danger of being shot by occupying Indonesian troops. President Wahid, who took office last year, has issued a directive permitting limited use of the flag, but the Indonesian security forces, who have been operating with increasing autonomy, had declared that this year's 1 December would be the last day on which the morning star banner would be permitted to flutter unhindered beneath Papua's skies.</p>		<p>Netzstoff: Eine Auswahl von Hintergrund-Artikeln zum Thema Internet</p> <p>Spezialthemen: Politische Literatur Bildung-Erziehung Mensch-Arbeit</p>
<p>MARKTPLATZ Partnersuche Fotoservice Auktionen Flugtickets Swissguide</p>	<p>Poorly Organized Rebels</p> <p>So there I was, in a cell with about 40 other prisoners. Among them were 26 members of the "Satgas Papua," a militia of the independence movement which had established posts throughout Irian Jaya and was responsible for guarding the freedom flag. Despite the ultimatum issued by the police, the militia's top leaders had let themselves be taken by surprise and rounded up like snails - which says a great deal about the Papuan rebels' level of organization. Among the prisoners was militia chief Boy Eluay, son of Theys Eluay, the head of the Papuan presidium (a body of selected leaders advocating independence), and Alex Baransano, city commander of the Satgas in Port Numbay, as the West Papuans now call Jayapura. Mixed in with the dark-skinned Melanesian prisoners were a few Javanese who had come to Irian Jaya under Indonesia's hated "transmigration" (that is, settlement) program and were now accused of some violent crime or other.</p>		<p> Die Buchbesprechungen der letzten 30 Tage</p>
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The members of the Satgas Papua were physically unharmed. That could not be said of all the prisoners. During my first night in the cell, a drunk was hauled in, and the guards punched and kicked him in the face. Almost every night some drunk was brought in to sober up and, this being the month of Ramadan, was treated to special physical abuse designed to leave him with a lasting souvenir in the form of a missing tooth or a broken nose. At first I tried to get the guards to ease up, but they grew angry and completed their violent work in the guardroom near the entrance to the cells. Dizzy from both alcohol and the beating, the victims were then thrown into our cell and released the following morning.

At 4:30 A.M. on Thursday, 7 December, noise from the guardroom penetrated the stuffing I'd put in my ears to help me sleep. At first I thought the guards were doing some rhythmic gymnastics, but it also sounded like blows landing on a body. My fellow prisoners were wide awake, and they tried to hold me back when I went to the entranceway of our cell block. The upper part of the door was merely barred, so I had a view of the guardroom. And what I saw there was unspeakably shocking. About half a dozen policemen were swinging their clubs at bodies that were lying on the floor and, oddly enough, did not cry out; at most, only soft groans issued from them. After a few long seconds, a guard saw me looking and struck his club against the bars of the cell block door. I quickly went back to my usual spot, from where I could still see the clubs, staffs and split bamboo whips at their work. Their ends were smeared with blood, and blood sprayed the walls all the way up to the ceiling. Sometimes I saw the policemen hopping up on benches, continuing to strike blows from there or jumping back down onto the bodies below (which I could not see from my cell).

Thousands of Blows

Thousands of blows must have descended on what was to me an unknown number of people. I thought: That's what it means to "thrash" somebody. By about 5:15 A.M. things quieted down and I heard the sound of water from a hose. But then the orgy of torture resumed, apparently with a new load of prisoners. My fellow inmates told me that a police post had been attacked during the night. At one point, a guard came into our cell and indicated to me that what was going on outside was to be understood as the normal retribution for the death of policemen. The attack had taken place at 1:30 A.M. in the suburb of Abepura, and two policemen and a private guard had been killed in the course of it.

At 7:30 A.M. the torturers went outside for morning muster, things quieted down and I looked over into the guardroom: the floor was covered with blood, as in a slaughterhouse. Some of my fellow prisoners were ordered out to clean the place up. Shortly before 10 o'clock, noise broke out again. The cell block door was opened, and with the ends of their staffs the guards drove about three dozen new prisoners in, whose hair had been marked with white from a spray can, like sheep earmarked for shearing. The newcomers were jammed into a single cell. Then the cell block door was opened again and one body after another was tossed into our already crowded cell, some of them more dead than alive.

Disfigured Faces, Damaged Bodies

Most of them remained motionless where they fell, either unconscious or utterly exhausted. They must have been the men who had been tortured earlier that morning. A mask maker would find it difficult to conjure out of his imagination such horrifically distorted faces and damaged twisted bodies. One of the tortured men was virtually blind and had to be led in by the hand by another prisoner; I couldn't tell whether his eyes had been totally destroyed or were merely swollen shut. The last one to enter was a large man, who fell over the bodies on the floor and lay there groaning horribly. He tried repeatedly to straighten himself up, only to fall back down again. Now and again the faces of guards appeared at the barred window, looking down impassively at the tangle of maltreated bodies. In the back of the big man's head,

there appeared to be a coin-sized hole through which I believed to spot some brain tissue. After nearly an hour and a half of groaning and spasmodic movement, his suffering visibly neared its end. About two meters from me, his powerful body raised itself again and his head struck the wall. A final labored breath issued from him, then his head dropped down onto the cement floor. At last his agony was over. After a while, three lackeys came and dragged the body out.

Later I learned that the man who had been tortured to death was named Ori Dronggi. I saw a picture of his corpse in the newspaper Cenderawasih Pos. The dispatch said that three dead Papuans had been brought to the morgue, and the police stated they had "died in the fighting." I don't know how the other two men died; one of them may have been the second man I had seen with a hole in his head, who had wiped his blood away with the same rag my cellmates generally used in their attempts to keep the toilet clean. I had no longer seen him among the prisoners the following day. (All the men who had been arrested after the attack on the police outpost were released after 36 hours.)

Ori Dronggi was one of 18 men from the highland town of Wamena, all of whom had been arrested in a dormitory near the university in Abepura immediately following the attack on the police post. The chances are he had had nothing to do with the attack; the same was true of the 35 other men who had been tortured (I had counted them the following day). A rumor went around that the police post had been attacked because one of the men on duty there was the one who had torn the morning star flag down on 6 October. About half a dozen Papuans had been killed back then, and in the days after it - and several times that many Indonesians, who fell victim to the Papuans' blind vengeance. As a result of that chain of events, thousands of Indonesian settlers had fled from Wamena and the Baliem Valley. The "negative" balance of casualties was seen as a disgrace for the police; their rage at the people of Wamena had already become legendary, so it was no surprise when, following the attack at Abepura, they chose to take prisoners from that group of people.

A Witness in Danger?

In the night following the orgy of torture, the guards felt that I should no longer sleep in the cell with the other prisoners, whose number had by now swelled to 124 and many of whom were covered with suppurating wounds. The policemen wrinkled their noses, indicating to me that the Papuans smelled bad. I was told I could sleep in the guardroom - but the countless bloodstains there, even on the bench on which I lay, were a constant reminder of what had happened the previous night. The next morning, Police Chief Daud Sihombing, who also served as superintendent of the prison, noticed that I had not slept in the cell. Furious, he ordered the guards to bring me back there. He also confiscated the mosquito net one guard had brought me. I asked Sihombing if he wanted me to contract malaria. In a voice brooking no contradiction, he replied: "You're no different from the other prisoners. If they get malaria, so will you." From that time on, I feared that I had seen too much and was in danger as an incriminating witness.

Not a hair on my head was touched. In fact, the otherwise sadistic guards went out of their way to be nice to me. But the mistreatment of other prisoners continued. On 11 December I again witnessed a horrible scene. About 2:45 A.M., three new prisoners were brought in. Two of them were badly beaten outside my field of vision. The third Papuan fell right in front of the one-man cell to which Chief Sihombing had exiled me. A booted guard kicked the man in the head; the prisoner's head banged loudly against my cell door, blood spurting from it onto my leg. The guard was apparently fascinated by the head going back and forth between his boot and the bars of my cell door, like some outsized ping-pong ball, so he kicked it a few more times. A second guard joined in with a swift kick to the middle of the prisoner's face, knocking him unconscious. But that still wasn't enough. A third guard, who had been watching the scene

with rifle in hand, now struck the butt of his weapon about five times into the senseless man's skull, which made a horrible sound. I could hardly believe it, but the victim was still alive the next day. He was taken away for interrogation.

"Zero Tolerance"

It was all part of the day's work in an Indonesian prison on Irian Jaya. Superintendent Sihombing was obviously not at all disturbed that I, a foreign journalist, should have witnessed such scenes after being arrested for taking some harmless "political photographs." According to his logic, my identity was as irrelevant as had been the barbaric and transparent behavior of the Indonesian police and military after the referendum on East Timor. In fact, by imprisoning me Sihombing was demonstrating that the policy of zero tolerance toward the independence movement, which had gone into effect on 1 December, also applied to foreigners. Visitors with a temporary journalist's visa are not granted the official Indonesian permit necessary for travel to the interior of Irian Jaya. My case could serve as a warning to other journalists not to travel to West Papua masquerading as tourists. In his autocratic and self-righteous manner, Sihombing gave the press almost daily briefings on my "important case." His goal was to underscore his demonstration of power by bringing charges which could get me a prison sentence of as much as five years. I felt like Sihombing's hostage, my ransom value going up with each passing day. But after 12 days, the man's calculations were upset when Jakarta issued an order for my deportation. To save face, he presented my release to the press as his own act of clemency in honor of the forthcoming holiday of Christmas.

The fact that I was not harmed in the prison at Jayapura was due, among other things, to the swift arrival of Norbert Bärlocher, the deputy mission chief of the Swiss embassy in Jakarta. He traveled 3,800 kilometers to the capital of Irian Jaya in order to extend his protection to me until my deportation on 16 December. But several dozen less privileged prisoners remained back in the cell, with the Satgas militiamen still among them. Their life in prison will doubtless continue to be as I experienced it, marked by violence. Mornings and evenings they hold a one-hour prayer service, conducted by three catechists who managed to keep their Bibles with them. At the end of each service, they all shake hands. The prisoners receive two adequate meals a day from the police, for which they express their thanks by saying grace. And they are allowed a one-hour family visit every afternoon. Each morning, while the police hold their muster, a loudspeaker broadcasts the Indonesian national anthem through the prison bars. At that point, the Papuans in their cells join in singing their independence anthem. Indonesia can never win the hearts of the Papuans with clubs and rifle barrels; it will simply remain the hated occupying power.

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