

THE BANTENG AND THE EAGLE:
INDONESIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE UNITED STATES
DURING THE ERA OF SUKARNO
1945-1967

DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The influence of leaders is rarely discussed in International Relations, even though most political scientists believe that a leader is an important factor in a state's policy making process. Most literature that tries to deal with leaders as an important factor also tends to see the leader as an independent entity, rather than trying to put the leader in a context of either domestic or international politics.

This study tries to fill that gap by attempting to understand the influence of leadership in its context, as a power relationship between the individual leader, the domestic political structure in which that leader operates, and the international structure in which the state exerts its influence or is influenced by other states. The main argument of this dissertation is that while both domestic and international structures provide constraints to a leader's freedom of action, leaders can try to push the limits of the structures, to try to manipulate the structure in which he or she operates, and gain political capital that can be used to strengthen his or her domestic position. Moreover, the choices that leaders make can have a significant impact both domestically and internationally. Therefore, the influence of a leader cannot be easily underestimated.

In order to do that, this dissertation will look at Indonesian foreign policy choices in the period between 1945 and 1967 chronologically to show the evolving constraints that Indonesian leaders faced domestically and internationally. This dissertation shows

that Indonesia's foreign policy can not be easily separated from its leader's calculations regarding its domestic politics and how its international policies were seen as a tool to provide additional political capital that could be used domestically.

Competing interests from political parties and interest groups domestically prevented successive Indonesian leaders from making decisive foreign policy. There were also various political constraints that Indonesian leaders faced, such as social cleavages, military roles in politics, the role of religion – especially Islam – in the state which further constrained successive Indonesian leaders.

Internationally, due to Indonesia's strategic location and natural resources, the United States, as one of the most dominant powers in the world, was interested in drawing Indonesia closer to its orbit. This in turn affected the domestic political calculation of Indonesian political leaders, by trying to use the United States to increase their power as either political capital or as a way to attack their political enemies. As the United States commanded a strong presence in Indonesia, either real or perceived by Indonesian leaders, this dissertation places a strong emphasis on Indonesia's relationship with the United States.

Dedicated to my family:

My parents, Jacob Sulaiman and Amih Lokadjaja, and my brother, Daniel Sulaiman

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When I started writing this dissertation as a short paper in autumn 2002, little did I know I would embark on a five year journey of research and writing. As I look back at my very old draft, I am amazed at how much I actually have strayed from my original prospectus. In fact, this is the third incarnation of this dissertation, as I have radically changed both the focus of the dissertation and my understanding of Indonesian politics in this period.

Originally, I thought I would write a survey on Indonesian foreign policy between 1945 and 1998, breeze thru the era of Sukarno who I only considered as a playboy, a powerless figurehead in the middle of a struggle for power between the Communists and the Army. As I started compiling and reading materials however, I realized I had horribly underestimated his influence in Indonesian politics. In essence, one could not understand this period without understanding Sukarno's role in Indonesian politics both positively and negatively. As a result, I decided to focus my dissertation on Sukarno. That was the reason for my first revision.

Even so, I remained convinced that Sukarno's influence before the emergence of his authoritarian "Guided Democracy" in 1959 would not be that great, considering that various scholars had argued that Sukarno's role before that period was absolutely minimal, constrained by his position as a figurehead of Indonesia. As I researched this

subject further, read more biographies, and dove into the thousands of pages of telegrams that thankfully had already been compiled by the historians in the State Department into the Foreign Relations of the United States, I was convinced that again, I was wrong. I had to rewrite a major part of my dissertation, which became the second major revision. Not surprisingly, combined with my teaching responsibilities, it took me five years to finish this dissertation. I would say though, these five years have been worth every single second I spent working on this dissertation.

In my struggle to complete this dissertation, I am heavily indebted to two persons: Professor John Mueller and Professor R. William Liddle. In fact, without them, I would not even have had the chance to work on my dissertation. In 2002, as I struggled in my classes and the department was considering whether to allow me to pursue my PhD degree further, both of them were able to persuade the department to give me the opportunity to write a Masters Thesis. Based on the Masters Thesis, they convinced the department to allow me to continue my PhD. They were also very helpful in pushing me to complete this dissertation when I was lacking in determination.

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Outside the department, I am thankful for the friendship and support from Djayadi Hanan and his family, Jonny and Silvia Harianto, Irwan Jo, Leonard and Yesy Rusli, and Ingrid Yohansha. If I omit anyone from this list, the error is completely unintentional.

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Last, but not the least, I am grateful for the support from my parents, Jacob Sulaiman and Amih Lokadjaja, and my brother, Daniel Sulaiman. Even though my family had some misgivings of my pursuit of my PhD, once I decided to embark on this journey, they encouraged me and supported me emotionally, spiritually, and financially. They have been waiting patiently for eight years for me to finish. It is only proper that I dedicate this dissertation to them.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Vita.....	ix
List of figures.....	xiii
Chapters:	
1. Introduction	
Leadership and International Politics.....	1
1.1. Introduction.....	2
1.2. Leadership and International Structure.....	8
1.3. Leadership and Culture.....	13
1.4. Domestic Politics, Mass Mobilization, and Foreign Policy.....	20
1.5. Methodology.....	30
2. Sukarno's Indonesia	
Setting the Stage (1945-1967).....	36
2.1. Introduction.....	37
2.2. The Dutch and Nationalism in Indonesia.....	37
2.3. Sukarno.....	40
2.4. Mohammad Hatta.....	46
2.5. The Masjumi and the Nahdlatul Ulama.....	50
2.6. The PSI.....	55
2.7. The PNI.....	58
2.8. The PKI.....	60
2.9. The Indonesian Army.....	62
2.10. Problem of Regionalism.....	69
2.11. Indonesian Nationalism and the United States.....	71
3. The Struggle For Survival:	
From Jakarta to Jogjakarta (1945-1948).....	82
3.1. Introduction: the Dilemma of Indonesian Independence.....	83
3.2. Sukarno, the British, and the Dutch.....	88
3.3. Sjahrir Took Command.....	112
3.4. Amir Sjarifuddin: Five Words that Matter.....	151

3.5. Hatta, the Communists, and the United States.....	163
3.6. Conclusion	187
4. Opportunities Squandered:	
From Hatta to Wilopo (1949-1953).....	194
4.1. The Aftermath of the Dutch Second Invasion	195
4.2. The Republic of the United States of Indonesia Period (January – August 1950).....	203
4.3. Prime Minister Natsir (September 1950 – March 1951)	221
4.4. Prime Minister Sukiman Wirjosandjojo (April 1951 – February 1952).....	234
4.5. Prime Minister Wilopo (April 1952-June 1953).....	252
4.6. Conclusion	282
5. Triumph and Tragedy of Leadership	
The Collapse of the Constitutional Democracy (1953-1957).....	285
5.1. The First Cabinet of Prime Minister Ali Sastroamijoyo (July 1953-July 1955)	286
5.2. The Burhanuddin Harahap Cabinet (August 1955-March 1956)	318
5.3. The Second Cabinet of Ali Sastroamijoyo (March 1956-March 1957).....	335
5.4. Conclusion: Was the Collapse of the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia Inevitable?	352
6. Vivere Pericoloso	
The Fragile Balance (1957-1965).....	359
6.1. Prelude to the PRRI/Permesta Rebellion	360
6.2. The PRRI/Permesta: "A Very Strange War"	377
6.3. The Aftermath: the "Middle Way" and the Presidential Decree of July 5, 1959	397
6.4. The First "Confrontation": Irian Barat Revisited and the Fall of Nasution.....	408
6.5. The Second Confrontation: Konfrontasi Malaysia and the Drift to Beijing.....	425
7. The End Game	
The Fall of Sukarno and the Rise of the New Order (1965-1967).....	456
7.1. Early Morning of October 1, 1965.....	457
7.2. Pale Horse	475
7.3. Confronting Sukarno.....	489
7.4. Sukarno's Last Stand.....	501
7.5. The United States' Role in Overthrowing Sukarno.....	508
7.6. Twilight.....	515

8.	What If...?	519
	8.1. Introduction: Counterfactual Analysis	520
	8.2. A Disunited Indonesia: February 28, 1946 (Chapter 3)	524
	8.3. Invasion of Irian Barat: Early 1962 (Chapter 6)	533
	8.4. Civil War of October 1, 1965 (Chapter 7)	542
	8.5. Embracing Malaysia:	
	December 12, 1962 - September 14, 1963 (Chapter 6)	548
	8.6. Conclusion	553
9.	Conclusion	554
	Appendix: Maps, Photos and Editorial Cartoons	560
	Bibliography	598

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
1. Map of Indonesia	561
2. Sukarno	562
3. Hatta	562
4. Tan Malaka	563
5. Soetan Sjahrir	563
6. Amir Sjarifuddin	564
7. Sudirman	564
8. Soetan Sjahrir and Water A. Foote	565
9. Frank Graham and Charlton Ogburn	565
10. Map of the Dutch Held Territory In 1948.....	566
11. Hubertus J. van Mook	566
12. President Harry S. Truman and Dean Acheson	567
13. Coert duBois, Mohamad Roem, and Thomas Critchley	567
14. Musso	568
15. Mohamad Roem and H. Merle Cochran	568
16. "Are you coming in?"	569
17. Emmanuel Marie Joseph Antony Sassen	569
18. Dirk U. Stikker, Dutch Foreign Minister	570

19. Round Table Conference, 1949	570
20. Map of the United States of Indonesia.....	571
21. Raymond "Turk" Westerling	571
22. Mohammad Natsir	572
23. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara.....	572
24. Sukiman Wirjosandjojo	573
25. Dipa Nusantara Aidit, the Chairman of the PKI.....	573
26. Achmad Subarjo.....	574
27. Wilopo.....	574
28. Abdul Haris Nasution	575
29. Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX.....	575
30. Demonstration during the October 17 Affair.....	576
31. Presidential Palace during the October 17 Affair	576
32. Ali Sastroamijoyo	577
33. Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, 1955	577
34. Zhou En Lai, Sukarno, and Gamal Abdel Nasser.....	578
35. Zhou En Lai and Jawaharlal Nehru	578
36. Zulkifli Lubis	579
37. "The Indonesian Sphinx"	579
38. Burhanuddin Harahap.....	580
39. "There is fear, but where is action?.....	580
40. Dwight D. Eisenhower.....	581

41. John Foster Dulles.....	581
42. Allan Welsh Dulles, the Director of the CIA.....	582
43. John M. Allison and Sukarno.....	582
44. "Year End Poker Game"	583
45. Colonel Venje Sumual	583
46. Colonel Simbolon	584
47. Colonel Alex Kawilarang	584
48. Djuanda Kartasmita	585
49. Map of Indonesia's Military Divisions, 1950-1958	585
50. Map of the Territorial Command I (TT I).....	586
51. "John Foster Dulles' Kite".....	586
52. Map of the PRRI Campaign in North Sumatra.....	587
53. Map of the Permesta's Air War.....	587
54. Allan Lawrence Pope on Trial	588
55. Ambassador Howard Palfrey Jones and Sukarno	588
56. "We Like to Show-off"	589
57. Joseph Luns.....	590
58. John F. Kennedy and Sukarno	590
59. Tunku Abdul Rahman.....	591
60. Duncan Sandys.....	591
61. Dean Rusk and Lyndon B. Johnson.....	592
62. Subandrio	592
63. 45 th Anniversary of the PKI.....	593

64. Inspecting the Troops.....	593
65. Marshall Green, Albaran, and Sukarno.....	594
66. General Achmad Yani.....	594
67. Map of Jakarta during G30S/PKI	595
68. Sukarno and Suharto.....	596
69. Colonel Sarwo Edhie	596
70. Time: The Land the Communists Lost	597
71. The New Regime	597

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION:

LEADERSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Leadership is an enterprise. To be successful as a leader is to gain access to more resources than one's opponents and to use them with greater skill. To attack an opponent is to try to destroy his resources or in other ways to prevent him from having access to them or from making effective use of them.

F. G. Bailey¹

Power is not an instrument that its possessor can use with impunity. It is a drug that creates in the user a need for larger and larger dosages.

Robert Caro²

But men are so simple, and governed so absolutely by their present needs, that he who wishes to deceive will never fail in finding willing dupes.

Niccolo Machiavelli

¹ F. G. Bailey, *Stratagems and Spoils: A Social Anthropology of Politics* (New York: Schocken Books Inc, 1969) 36

² Robert Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975) 19

1.1. Introduction

Leadership is always about power. It is impossible for someone to discuss leaders in international politics without discussing power, whether it is the leader's source of power or his or her utilization of power to influence others. In fact, the only reason why leaders exist is because there is power within society to harness, to control, and to utilize in order to accomplish the goal of society, whatever that goal may be.

Therefore it is surprising that there is a lack of discussion on the role of leadership in crafting states' foreign policies. Most theories make no allowance for the influence of leaders, even though most historians and political scientists would agree that leaders can be influential in determining policy choice. The reason is simple: it is difficult to determine how much influence a leader can have in constructing foreign policy, especially in the face of systemic constraints that limit leaders' options.³

Recently, there have been works trying to bring back leaders to international relations, such as Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack's well-known article in *International Security*.⁴ Disagreeing with Waltz's and other scholars' dismissals of the value of individuals in international relations, the authors try to address the reasons for that aversion to studying individuals and make the case that individuals do have considerable impact in international relations.

The problem with this article, however, is its solution to the problem of how to do research on leadership. It is one thing to summarize thirteen hypotheses on the role of individuals in international relations and another thing to actually create a scholarly work

³ Margaret G. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan, "International Decision Making: Leadership Matters," *Foreign Policy*, No. 110, Special Edition: Frontiers of Knowledge (Spring, 1998) 124

⁴ Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Polack, "Let Us Now Praise the Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In" In *International Security* 25:4 (Spring 2001) 107-146

on the role of leadership in international relations, especially when one has to account for the constraints of space in publication and time in trying to study leadership in depth. Consider that most International Relations books rarely delve in depth into a state's domestic affairs, which is critical to understanding the constraints that bind leaders.

Another problem with that article is in *overestimating* the leaders. One cannot help but to observe that both Byman and Pollack are imagining Hugh Trevor-Roper's type of leaders or Nietzsche's "Superman" in their article, able to flout rules and break constraints. In reality, leaders are bound by both domestic and international structure, even though on the other hand, they are also able to change it. Some are able to change constraints rather quickly, some more slowly. There is simply never a case where a leader is so powerful that he or she is not constrained at all.

The goal of this dissertation is to bring the leadership factor back into international relations by putting leadership in the context of both domestic politics and international structure, providing a theoretical framework for our understanding of leadership. The main argument is that the foreign policy goal of a leader is to secure international political resources that can be brought back home as political capital to bolster his or her political power within the state. In other words, leaders focus on domestic politics and use international politics to improve their position domestically.

This argument does not mean that survival of the state, the problem of security, and the structure of the international system do not play any role at all in the calculation of leaders. They remain important as the constraints that limit the choice that these leaders can take. However, each state puts a different weight on "survival." For some states, when the external threat is not that imminent, domestic political consideration

trumps these international factors for one obvious reason: leaders want to remain in power. Moreover, with the United States, as a status-quo power, guaranteeing some sort of system stability, "state death" is no longer as much of a threat as before the Second World War.⁵

This dissertation does not claim to be the first or even the latest word to be written on the importance of leaders in foreign policy decision making. There have been a few excellent works that try to understand the linkage between leaders, domestic politics, and the formation of foreign policy or grand strategy.⁶ What it does contribute to the discussion is to provide a new approach to the study of leadership by trying to contextualizing leaders as agents of change within their own particular structural context. To that end, we look at three important variables: the leaders as agents of change, the evolving role of domestic politics, how domestic politics has been both accommodating and constraining leaders, and the international structure that limits and accommodates foreign policy choices of the leaders.

Due to the nature of leadership, it would be arrogant to claim that it is possible to create a comprehensive theory of leadership. Rather, this dissertation will try to be

⁵ This argument seems to put the logic of neorealism upside down, as neorealists take it for granted that state's survival is paramount and as a result, a state cannot delegate its security to others. However, there are cases where a state believes that its survival would be so important to another state that the other state, notably the United States, actually has the interest not to let this state collapse or be taken over by its enemies. To illustrate this belief, in conversation between Mohammad Roem, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, and the United States Ambassador Merle Cochran in 1950, the former stated that he expected the United States to defend Indonesia in case of Communist invasion, even though Indonesia did not have a military alliance with the United States. This will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

⁶ See Steven R. David, *Choosing Sides: Alignment and Realignment in the Third World* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), Jacques E.C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Melvyn Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) Note: Parker's work focuses mostly on bureaucratic and organizational constraints that face Philip II, which theoretically is a part of the domestic politics discussion.

realistic, an exploration of the role of leadership in politics rather than a comprehensive theory. It will look at the conditions under which leaders transform constraints into political resources that are useful to bolster their political power and how leaders use power to further maintain their position.

In order to do that, the dissertation will look at Indonesian foreign policy during the era of Sukarno between 1945 and 1967. This period is chosen for several reasons. First, Sukarno's Indonesia provides enough variation to make it possible to identify the importance of leadership in international relations. In the beginning of this period, the authoritarianism that would be the pattern of Indonesian politics had not yet emerged. In fact, Sukarno and later Suharto's authoritarian governments were not inevitable. It was only through the political maneuverings of Sukarno, the Army, and the political parties that Indonesia became authoritarian. In other words, there was a possibility that Indonesia could actually avoid its authoritarian "fate." Therefore, Sukarno's Indonesia is a very interesting case to further understand the limits and possibilities of individuals as agents.

Second, the choice of Sukarno's Indonesia also provides stability in trying to understand the importance of a leader. Notably Sukarno himself was the head of state during the entire period and political actors in this period were relatively stable with very low turnover.

Third, this period is surprisingly also marked by variation in both domestic and foreign politics that will be useful in identifying to what degree leadership influenced the formation of Indonesian foreign policy. The domestic political system changed from democracy to weak authoritarianism in this period even as the same political actors remained on scene.

Fourth, Indonesian foreign policy during Sukarno's period was changing. There were times when Indonesia was flirting with the United States, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, neutrality, and all of them at once. Some scholars and many Indonesian leaders themselves attributed Indonesia's "active and independent" foreign policy to its fierce desire to be independent. As noted by Weinstein, one of the experts on Indonesian foreign policy:

In the view of most Indonesian leaders, an active foreign policy was integrally related to independence. In fact, the mere existence of an active, assertive foreign policy was taken as a mark of independence. For many of those who emphasized this, the chief consideration was not so much an expectation of achieving the avowed goals, but more a feeling that passivity connotes acquiescence to circumscribed independence. Partly, this was a matter of demonstrating their independence to themselves.⁷

Such zeal to pursue an independent foreign policy does exist among policy-makers in Indonesia even today. In fact, most of the discourse on foreign policy in Indonesia today is based on the idea of an independent foreign policy. However, the acceptance of an "independent foreign policy" as an official foreign policy was not due to a strong conviction among the policy makers that it was the best policy to choose. Rather, the acceptance was mainly due to real-politics calculation among the Indonesian leaders to secure their positions in a very volatile domestic political environment. In fact, volatile Indonesian domestic politics forced the decision makers to pursue an independent path rather than aligning to one side or another during the Cold War for fear of being accused of not being independent enough.

Being "independent" became both structure and constraint: structure in that it can be used as a political resource to attack others and constraint because it forces leaders to

⁷ Franklin B. Weinstein, *Indonesian Foreign Policy and the Dilemma of Dependence From Sukarno to Soeharto* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976) 189

follow policy. As a result, even if in reality the government would actually pursue a closer relationship to a particular bloc, the government simply cannot help but to pay lip service to this policy rather than risk giving convenient tools to the opposition to attack and bring down the government.

Finally, this dissertation will also put emphasis on the relationship between Indonesia and the United States. The choice of the United States is based on the fact that the United States has been prominent in Indonesian politics since 1945, and remains so today. In fact, the idea of the United States as one of the major players in international relations was prominent in the minds of the decision-makers regardless of their party membership or in which cabinet they served.

This chapter will provide the theoretical framework for our discussion of leadership by first examining the interaction between leaders and structure in general, whether it is enough to focus solely on structure to deal with the issue of leadership. This will be followed by an evaluation of the Constructivism argument about culture: whether it is possible to analyze leaders across divergent cultures and identities. My argument is that we cannot explain leadership as a projection of culture. Instead, culture works as a constraint to leaders' actions but does not completely dominate leaders as they can use culture as a means of power. Domestic political theories, useful in contextualizing our analysis of leadership, are also discussed. Finally, I will develop a framework for understanding leadership, followed by an examination of how the entire dissertation is structured.

1.2. Leadership and International Structure

Structure is always an important factor in the study of leadership as it provides the constraints on leaders' actions regardless of how important leaders are. In the context of this dissertation, structure is the condition under which leaders operate. Under this definition, there are many examples of structure. Culture, domestic political condition, and social cleavages are just several examples of internal structure within a state. Externally, the Cold War, relative power, and international tensions are part of the international structure. International structure, a state's material capability, and a state's power compared to other states put constraints on states' actions and in turn, limit leaders' freedom of action in the international arena.

In this section, we are going to focus on the international structure. Most theories in international relations focus too much on the international structure. In many international relations approaches, such as structural realism and neoliberalism, the role of leadership is often relegated to irrelevance since system is the most important level of analysis. To understand and to predict behavior in international relations, one need only focus on the systemic level of analysis. The difference in power between states becomes the key explanatory variable impacting domestic politics, so that leadership becomes irrelevant. Kenneth Waltz famously declared:

It is not possible to understand world politics simply by looking inside of states. If the aims, policies, and actions of states become matters of exclusive attention or even of central concern, then we are forced back to the descriptive level; and from simple descriptions no valid generalizations can logically be drawn.⁸

The problem with this argument is that by focusing too much on international structure, we actually make a mistake of putting the cart before the horse: what really

⁸ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979) 65

matters in international relations is the system itself. Even though systemic analysis also puts some emphasis on national interests, that is, the idea that states' interests drive foreign policy. In the end though, the underlying logic will be that the interest of the state is in securing its place at the top of the international pecking order at maximum or survival at minimum,⁹ neglecting the fact that leaders also need to worry about the domestic political implications of their foreign policies.

Moreover, leaders do have freedom of action even within international structure. Leaders can and do manipulate structures around themselves for their political goals. For instance, the tense atmosphere of the Cold War was used at the beginning of the period under study by the Dutch government to reestablish its power in Indonesia after it was ousted by the Japanese. The Dutch further limited the Indonesians' freedom of action by pointing out to the United States that there was growing Communist influence in Indonesia.

At the same time, however, Indonesian leaders also tried to display their anti-Communist credentials to persuade the United States that Dutch actions in Indonesia would only play into the Communists' hands. It is often forgotten that even as these variables constrain leaders, the same variables also have the potential to constrain other

⁹ Several examples of how structural emphasis of international relations drives domestic politics are Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson, and Robert D. Putnam, *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), Randall L Schweller, *Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), Randall L. Schweller, *Unanswered Threats: Political Constraints on the Balance of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), Beth Simmons, *Who Adjusts? Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policy During the Interwar Years* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), Jack Snyder, *Myths of the Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998)

political actors and to expose them to political attacks using these structures. As a result, even within international structure, states still have freedom of action, though their actions have impacts on the structure that will in the end increase or decrease their freedom of actions.¹⁰

From here, it is tempting to argue that successful leaders are people who are able to transform the structure under which they operate into political resources that enable them to get what they want. However, this proposition brings up two problems: the first problem is how to properly show the importance of leadership. Political scientists love to make generalizable propositions. Of course, in order to test a proposition, ideally it is very useful to compare and contrast two or more leaders who operate under similar circumstances. Unfortunately, no leader is born and created equal. Fate is unfortunately not an equal-opportunity employer (like Lady Fortuna as famously lamented by Machiavelli in *The Prince*). As a result, it is almost impossible to find two very similar cases that can be put side-by-side in order to show the importance of leadership.

The second problem is how to know a leader is successful when you see one. While it is very tempting to use the criteria of success as the leaders' ability to transform the structure under which they operate into political structure, evidence is not lacking where such successful leaders were finally overwhelmed by the structure due to

¹⁰ One of the excellent studies on the linkage between leaders and international structure was done by Richard J. Samuels, who tried to analyze leadership by trying to put it in the context of the structure that bound leaders during their time. Part of his book is on the United States' occupation of Italy and Japan. Comparing the reaction of leaders in Italy and Japan, Samuels argues they were able to use the Cold War to shape domestic political arrangement that in turn bound their successors. Furthermore, he shows the limits and possibilities of leaders and outcomes that may or may not be different as leaders in both states decide to pursue their particular approaches. Richard J. Samuels, *Machiavelli's Children: Leaders and Their Legacies in Italy and Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003)

misjudgment, inability to adapt to the changing structure, missed opportunities, or simply for being unlucky at the wrong time.

Take for the example, the British during the Second World War. It is very difficult not to call Churchill a great leader for his stewardship over the British Empire during the trying years of fighting Germany during the Second World War. Yet, he found himself ousted from office even before the war ended. In addition, regardless of his excellent leadership, Churchill's career (and life) was most likely saved only through the United States' involvement after Pearl Harbor. In fact, hearing the news of the Japanese surprise attack which would guarantee the United States' direct involvement in the Second World War, Churchill admitted that he then slept "the sleep of the saved and the thankful."¹¹

More importantly, Neville Chamberlain, his unfortunate predecessor who is often considered today as a weak leader, was unlucky for he wrongly bet that he could appease Hitler and therefore prevent a war that he believed nobody wanted. Yet, almost none of his contemporaries in the 1930s would call Chamberlain weak or an idealist appeaser, as observed by the historian Ernest R. May, "Except possibly for Margaret Thatcher, no peacetime British prime minister has been as strong-willed, almost tyrannical."¹² In fact, Chamberlain's popularity actually skyrocketed after Munich, while Churchill was seen as a warmonger, out of touch with the rest of the peace-seeking population.¹³

Hitler himself regarded Munich as "a crushing defeat" and within minutes of Chamberlain's departure from Munich, he "made remarks bitterly accusing the British

¹¹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (London: Fontana Press, 1991) 356

¹² Ernest R. May, *Strange Victory: Hitler's Conquest of France* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000) 170

¹³ For a very interesting discussion on Chamberlain's ability as a leader, see Graham Stewart, *Burying Caesar: The Churchill-Chamberlain Rivalry* (London: Overlook, 2001)

Prime Minister of having come only 'in order to trick and cheat' him."¹⁴ Had Chamberlain been proven right or Hitler ousted by a military coup inside Germany, we might put him among the pantheon of great leaders who preserved the global peace and prevented the Second World War. Ironically, Chamberlain's choice in appeasing Hitler in Munich actually prevented the military coup inside Germany from happening. France's choice in pursuing a defensive war also quashed German generals' plot to overthrow Hitler.¹⁵

Therefore, we also need to consider the unfolding historical events in which leaders operate as a way to judge leaders' influence. Considering that all leaders are not created equal nor face the exact same structural situation, in order to fully understand a leader's influence on foreign policy, we cannot simply cherry pick parts of the ongoing foreign policy in that particular state. Any discussion of leadership should also acknowledge the historical background in which it operates as leaders' choices affect the structure in which they operate. In other words, we have to look at a leader's foreign policy as a culmination of years of choices, for better or for worse.

However, this does not mean that in order to understand leaders, we have to go back hundreds of years before the period we are discussing. What we need to understand is the historical context that shapes leaders' perceptions and the impact of the choices that they made that shaped the constraints they faced. Focusing on historical context also allows us to observe the structural evolution that in turn affects leaders' perception of the situation.

¹⁴ Stephen R. Rock, *Appeasement in International Politics* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000) 74

¹⁵ As May noted, the generals had been planning a coup before Munich. Even by late 1939, with the generals believing they "had little or almost no chance of success" in defeating France, they debated whether they should take over power from Hitler and create a military dictatorship. May (2000) 74-5, 215-8

1.3. Leadership and Culture

One of the biggest problems in studying leadership is whether it is actually possible to study leaders across cultures. Thick constructivists and researchers focusing on cultural approaches believe that a state's foreign policy is an aspect of its dominant identity. Culture and identity matter and they shape behavior and decisions of leaders in choosing particular policies over others. Therefore, it is debatable whether we can make generalized assumptions about what motivates leaders in their conduct of foreign policy, especially when we are confronted with the question of cultural identity.

There are several notable researchers in this area. Theodore Hopf investigates how the construction of Soviet/Russian identity affects its foreign policy.¹⁶ Hopf believes that identities are evident in society's daily livelihood and in the discourses among the members of the society. The dominant identities in turn affect the construction of foreign policy, as a state's pursuit of a particular foreign policy is based on the state's identity during that particular period. In order to "find" the dominant social identities, one should look at daily behavior and discourse in many different aspects of the society. In his works Hopf tries to find the dominant identities by looking at Soviet and Russian literature. His findings however remain inconclusive and also a bit questionable: it is unclear which identity is dominant, and how you know it is dominant when you see it. However, one cannot ignore that this work does contribute much to the literature of thick constructivism, especially in regards to how identities affect foreign policy.

¹⁶ Theodore Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002)

Other scholars such as Elizabeth Kier look at national political culture as an independent variable.¹⁷ She compares the French and British political cultures and argues that political cultures affect and determine states' choices of military doctrine. Doctrine in turn has an impact on states' foreign policies. The French, for instance, deeply suspicious of the military establishment, try to limit the military's influence even at the expense of military preparedness. This reflected badly during the international crisis in the late 1930s that preceded the Second World War. Thus, political culture limits choice: as a result, each state pursues a different military doctrine, even when there is a more "efficient" or better way to organize the Army. The choice then quite decisively influenced French and British foreign policies toward Germany.

Alastair Iain Johnston's work on the impact of Chinese strategic culture on its foreign policy also provides a very interesting insight into the influence of culture or beliefs on foreign policy decision-making.¹⁸ Johnston looks at the voluminous Chinese literature on the art of warfare and policy-making based on the Confucian-Mencian paradigm, which the Chinese believe is the proper way to conduct wars and foreign policy. On the other hand, there are also voluminous works on Chinese strategic thinking based on cold-blooded *realpolitik* beliefs, where the idea is close to what we usually identify as *offensive realism*, in which human nature is evil and offensive strategies are needed in order to maintain the security of the empire.

Johnston hypothesizes that the Chinese combine both ideas equally into their grand strategy, where it will influence their preference ranking, ordering the steps in

¹⁷ Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

¹⁸ Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995)

which policies should be taken (e.g. appeasement, followed by defensive then offensive policies). He looks at the actual foreign policies that Chinese governments have undertaken (in his analysis, notably the Ming Dynasty and the communists under Mao). The result of his analysis is quite mixed: in many aspects, the Chinese actually did not even behave according to what is specified according to Confucian beliefs, but they behave in most cases according to hard realpolitik calculations – although he does not rule out the influences of the "ideal policy" based on the Confucian-Mencian paradigm since in many cases both go hand in hand. In other words, he believes it remains inconclusive.

Indonesia seems to be a very good case to further test this idea, since there is an abundance of literature regarding Indonesian domestic politics and Indonesian culture. Surprisingly though, there has been very little constructivist work on Indonesian foreign policy, even though Indonesia's position geographically and strategically is very important. Even where there is a substantial literature regarding Indonesian politics and cultures, there is very little interaction between of them.

In fact, most of the constructivists' work on Indonesian foreign affairs focuses on Southeast Asia as a region, notably on the impact of ASEAN as one of the main sources of regional identity. Amitav Acharya, for instance, argues that scholars cannot simply look at states in the Southeast Asia region individually.¹⁹ Rather, a complete look at the region as a whole is required in order to understand how the regional identity is being constructed and in turn the constructed regional identity then affects foreign policy behavior among the Southeast Asian states.

¹⁹ Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London: Routledge, 2001)

Thick constructivists however have made many important findings about Indonesian political culture. Scholars such as Benedict Anderson argue that the Javanese conception of power is dominant in Indonesian political culture.²⁰ Simultaneously, the dominance of Javanese culture in Indonesian politics affects significantly the decision-making process that determines foreign policy. In interviews regarding Indonesian foreign policy, officials often stress that they are doing certain things because *it is the proper Javanese way of doing so*.

The main argument in Ben Anderson's book is that the Javanese conception of politics and power is very different from the western idea of politics and power. For the Javanese, power is basically concrete, homogenous, constant, and makes no distinction between good or evil, legitimate or illegitimate. Basically, power *is*.²¹ Since power is concrete and constant, things happen depending on fate (*takdir*), and the only thing you can do is basically endure it, to bear it without complaint as sooner or later the power will return back to you. This is reflected in Indonesian Foreign Minister Subandrio's cryptic remark that, "Revolution is continuity."²² In other words, there is no sense of change or crisis, as everything will return in full circle. In fact, the words for crisis and revolution have no equivalency in the Javanese vocabulary. The closest word for crisis is *paceklik* and it in itself means *harsh time*, but without any implication for people to quickly move away from the situation. The implication in the word is to endure the harsh time and wait until it is gone.

²⁰ Benedict R.O.G. Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990)

²¹ Ibid. 22-3

²² Ibid. 148

Ben Anderson's idea is quite similar to Clifford Geertz's analysis of other Indonesian kingdoms, in particular the Balinese state.²³ The Balinese share a common political history with the Javanese. In fact in the history of Balinese kingdoms, the Javanese Hindu-Buddhist kingdom of Majapahit is seen as the precursor of contemporary Balinese kingdoms – the Majapahit Kingdom was the civilizing factor. Interestingly, Geertz noted that in Bali, it was said that as these people moved from Java to Bali, they actually lost their caste status by one notch.

Geertz's conception of Balinese kingdoms is that the Balinese kingdoms use tradition, ritual, or in his own word, "theatre," to maintain power, and thus legitimacy. Without the trappings of the splendors of culture, tradition, and rituals, the state will not be able to exist. The existence depends on the trappings. So does the political power that is wielded by rulers of Indonesia. Sukarno's political power depended on his ability to gather the masses, to entrance them with his impressive oratorical skills, and to clothe them in the theatre of Indonesian nationalism and revolution.

Building from both Anderson and Geertz's conception of power in Javanese culture was John Pemberton's *On the Subject of "Java"*, in which he investigates the power of culture and ritual as means of legitimizing regimes that varied from the Dutch-influenced Javanese kingdoms to Suharto's authoritarianism. Culture and tradition are actively used and practiced as means to provide pomp for the regime. Political events become important because these events are "ritualized." In explaining Suharto's New Order, Pemberton noted that, "One of the most distinctive features of New Order rule is

²³ Clifford Geertz, *Negara: the Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980) 9

the remarkable extent to which a rhetoric of culture enframes political will, delineates horizons of power."²⁴

These arguments of course bring into question the entire study of leadership: is it possible to understand leadership without delving further into the idea of the political culture of the state or the structure in which the leader operates? Should not then we limit our study of leadership to a study of political culture? More importantly, is it possible to understand the conduct of leaders in different cultures through the lens of our understanding of power in a "Western" sense?

The answer to the first two questions is no and the third one is yes. One of the biggest mistakes in studying leadership through the lens of "cultural differences" is the fact that we keep thinking of other cultures as so different that we refuse to evaluate them through our understanding of power. While we cannot deny that differences in the context of actions between different cultures do exist, such differences might not be so critical that it would doom the entire enterprise from the start.

M.C. Ricklefs, in his work on the Kingdom of Mataram at Kartasura under Sultan Pakubuwana II, argues that while the differences in culture seem to make the Javanese overtly unique, different from others, in reality, the usage of power, legitimacy, etc. is quite similar to the Western usage of power. Basically, the Javanese kings' search and utilization of power were quite similar to their western counterparts. He further stresses:

This concentration on performance in Geertz's analysis, the tendency to see human beings as thespians on an anthropological proscenium, invites one to respond in theatrical terms. It seems to me that one of the risks in Geertz's 'theatre state' idea – aside from its being historically unsound – is that it invites one to see Balinese and Javanese 'actors' as fundamentally unlike ourselves. It may achieve,

²⁴ John Pemberton, *On the Subject of "Java"* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994)

in other words, a sort of Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*, problematising any exploration of our common humanity.²⁵

In simply focusing on culture as a way to understand leaders' use of power, we might have mistaken the tree for the forest and worse, we might do no justice to these leaders, as we do not evaluate them as vigorously as we should, simply by judging and by attributing their successes and faults to cultural ideals. Worse, we might be trapped in the idea that Third World politicians can not be evaluated using "Western" or "modern" standards. Many years before, Gerald S. Maryanov had warned about this problem:

There is confusion between theory and action—ideologies, as defined by Bergmann—which raises value-impregnated hypotheses to the status of "pictures of reality," with action based on these "pictures" as if they were "givens," or "facts." Principally, I refer to hypotheses about "modernization," "transitional societies," and "political development." My argument is that the modern men of the West, basing their actions on these hypotheses, have consciously or, more likely, unconsciously tried to maintain a monopoly over the right to a claim to the desirable status of "modernity." And, by imposing a Western exclusiveness to that status, they have made it impossible for the modern men of Southeast Asia to achieve satisfaction without surrendering their independent decision-making authority to the West—or at least, without surrendering to the West their right to evaluate the "modernity" of their own decisions.²⁶

In short, these people might actually be quite similar to ordinary "Western" politicians. To the extent that they are similar, we need to evaluate how they act in their structural contexts. Political behavior of Third World politicians cannot and should not be separated from the context in which they operate, as the "context" provides them with political resources they use to bolster their political capital. As Liddle stated:

The political analysis of culture [should be placed] in a framework in which the central focus of attention is the accumulation, mobilization, and deployment of

²⁵ M.C. Ricklefs, *The Seen and Unseen Worlds in Java 1726-1749: History, Literature and Islam in the Court of Pakubuwana II* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998) 346 n34

²⁶ Gerald S. Maryanov, *Conflict and Political Development in Southeast Asia: An Exploration in the International Political Implications of Comparative Theory* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1969) 2-3

resources by social and political actors. Values, beliefs, attitudes, and ways of thinking about politics provide some of those resources and shape other resources in diverse ways. My point is not to deny that culture has an impact on behavior, but rather to suggest that that impact is mediated and shaped by social and political action.²⁷

As we will see in the discussion on the use and the search of power in this dissertation, virtually every Indonesian leader discussed here acted similar to politicians in the United States, Europe, Japan, and other countries. Instead of conducting a "theatre state," they actually acted according to their interests and they were trying very hard to maintain their grip on power.

In fact, one might argue that their behavior was in part due to their experience of a rigorous Dutch education system that predisposed them toward the Western style of thinking and behavior. At the same time, we have to remember that even though they were Western educated, they were still culturally "Indonesian" and use an "Indonesian" discourse of power in their speeches. An example is the usage of Indonesian tales as a way to create analogies, to drive their points across to their audience and to bolster their political position. However, their conduct was based on real politics in the Western sense and as political scientists, we do them no justice if we ignore this fact.

1.4. Domestic Politics, Mass Mobilization, and Foreign Policy

The question of the role of leadership in international politics cannot be separated from the discussion of domestic politics as leaders also operate within the context of domestic political struggles among interest groups, parties and powerful social cleavages

²⁷ R. William Liddle, *Leadership and Culture in Indonesian Politics* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996) 11

that shape domestic politics. However, most discussions of domestic politics hardly mention the role of personal leadership in shaping the domestic political calculation.

Most works take the political party (or at least the interest group) as the unit of analysis. Such an assumption is understandable: a leader is part of the political elite that comprises a huge and powerful entity called the political party. As a party evolves into a more sophisticated and bureaucratized entity, it could be assumed that the leader is just another cog within the party and that the party has mechanisms to regenerate and to replace leaders. Such arguments however are misleading as some leaders manage to leave a long-lasting impact on domestic politics. Before we discuss that, we should look first at the role of domestic politics in the formation of foreign policy.

Even with Waltz's salvo criticizing the focus on domestic politics in understanding international politics, there is growing interest in looking at domestic political dynamics as a tool in understanding the policy making of a state. Peter Gourevitch argues for the importance of the interrelation between international relations and domestic politics as both affect each other strongly.²⁸ Gourevitch paves the way by pointing out the necessity for students of international relations to understand the dynamics of domestic politics, where specific interests struggle to achieve their goals. In fact, by focusing only on decision-makers' beliefs in gains and losses, we often neglect to take into account that the decision makers also need to safeguard their hold on power.

Other researchers working on domestic political dynamics have managed to suggest interesting propositions. Jack Snyder is one of the most recent researchers who has tried to combine the politics of mass mobilization and foreign policy problems. In

²⁸ Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: the international sources of domestic politics," *IO* 32:4 (Autumn 1978)

Myths of the Empire, he examined domestic political alignments that were disturbed through the effect of industrialization, which created new elite classes and threatened the existing political structure. He argued that political elites, in order to maximize their interests and to increase their power, joined up with several other groups in order to hijack the foreign policy of states. In the process they created a myth that often caused extreme and ultimately inflexible foreign policies.²⁹

He showed that once political elites proceeded to create myths and the population started to believe them, the elites were trapped in their own rhetoric, so that when they renounced the myths, a legitimacy crisis resulted. In his other works, Snyder pointed out further linkages between polarizing crises in democratic transitions to extreme policies: elites were using ethno-religious nationalistic diatribe in order to support their position, to galvanize the masses domestically, and inadvertently pursue hyper-nationalistic policies that led to wars.³⁰ In other words, the political elites' use of mass opinion leads to the creation of extreme and destructive foreign policy.

While Snyder's argument is quite persuasive, there are several problems with his argument, notably the use of the masses to push for an extreme foreign policy and the problem of leadership in the creation of foreign policy. First of course is the question of whether the masses care about foreign policy - or even politics in general. Members of the public simply do not know at all about foreign policy, because they are simply too busy to care about it unless it directly affects their regular lives, as argued by Walter

²⁹ Snyder (1991) 17-18. It is to be noted that Snyder limited his theory of over-expansion to the newly industrialized society. However, in this author's opinion, Snyder's self-imposed limit was not at all necessary, as the necessary condition was *major social changes*, which was part of the effect of industrialization. Therefore, Snyder's analysis could also be applied to newly democratized countries or any other condition that experienced major social changes.

³⁰ Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2000) 32

Lippmann in his *Public Opinion*.³¹ In Lippmann's later book, *The Phantom Public*, he even concluded it was a false ideal to let the public direct public affairs due to their ignorance: "If the voter cannot grasp the details of the problems of the day because he has not the time, the interest or the knowledge, he will not have a better public opinion because he is asked to express his opinion more often."³²

Walter Lippmann's pessimistic evaluation of public opinion is not far off target. Examples can be found everywhere. Mueller, for instance, showed that in 1964 twenty-eight percent of respondents did not know whether Mainland China was a communist state.³³ Another survey in the same year showed that only thirty-eight percent of respondents knew that the Soviet Union was not a member of NATO. In the 1970s, as few as twenty-three percent knew which two nations were involved in the SALT talks.³⁴ Mueller concluded that:

People have in them a strong streak of apathy and are not readily roused to action... they will tend to pursue concerns that matter to them rather than ones that other people think should matter to them.³⁵

Surprisingly, such insights could also be applied to Indonesia during Sukarno's era, a period when many scholars argued that popular mobilization was at its height, considering that Indonesia was engaged in important issues such as the liberation of "Irian Barat" (West Irian), a territory which was disputed between Indonesia and the Dutch. In spite of all the talk about nationalism in Indonesia, people in Indonesia actually

³¹Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Free Press, 1997)

³² Quoted in Benjamin I. Page And Robert Y. Shapiro, *The Rational Public: Fifty years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992) 4. Due to the lack of reliable data from other nations, I will focus with the United States' voters.

³³ John Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1973) 2

³⁴ Page and Shapiro (1992) 9, 11

³⁵ John Mueller, *Capitalism, Democracy, and Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) 162

acted similarly to ordinary apathetic voters in Lippmann's examples, especially when the newspaper circulation was low so that few people knew what was happening internationally.³⁶ In an interesting conversation between Willard A. Hanna, an American University researcher in Indonesia, and a betja (rickshaw/new spelling: becak) driver in late 1959, the latter stated:

Bung Karno³⁷ says I must fight the Dutch because the Dutch are in Irian. But I don't know where Irian is, *tuan* (sir), and I don't want Irian for myself, because I think maybe it already belongs to someone else. All I want is a chance to work and enough rice and maybe a little goat-meat and vegetable to eat and some decent clothes and enough money so that my children can have food and clothes and schooling. Bung Karno says I will have all this, but I must shout *Merdeka* (liberty) and Irian Barat and *gotong-rojong* (work together). So I shout, and everything is the same as before or worse.³⁸

However, this does not mean that mass politics played no role at all. Indonesian politics were also marked by the use of the masses to push for a particular policy. The question, however, is what caused the mobilization given an apathetic public. A part of the answer to this puzzle can be found in the comparative politics literature, especially literature that deals with social cleavages. Social cleavage is an important issue that has a divisive impact within society, such as on the question of the separation of church and

³⁶ In the 1950s, there were more than 24 newspapers in Indonesia. However, the circulation was very low. *Kengpo*, a Chinese-edited Indonesian language, had the largest circulation of 50,000. *Abadi*, the newspaper which was affiliated to the Masjumi, had 25,000 copies. All 24 newspapers in Jakarta had a combined daily circulation of about 325,000 (about 50% within the city) among Jakarta's 2.5 million and a national population of 80 million. In 1957, Hanna estimated that out of the 80 million population of Indonesia, 700,000 had newspaper subscriptions (he counted one subscription for several people), 250,000 attended middle and higher schools, 2,000,000 belonged to the labor union (therefore they had some degree of political consciousness), 1,000,000 members of civil service, 200,000 soldiers, 100,000 policemen, and 100,000 professionals, businessmen, and middle class. These estimates left 76 million or around 50 million people of age sixteen and over uninformed about political developments. See Willard A. Hanna, "'Eternal' At Five and One-Half: The Biography of a Newspaper," *American Universities Field Staff* (August 23, 1956) 3, Willard A. Hanna, "Coups," "Smuggles," Demonstrations and Korupsi: Some Recurring Phenomena of the Year 1956 in Indonesia," *American Universities Field Staff*, January 18, 1957, 14-5

³⁷ "Bung" means "Brother." Using the word "Bung" is similar to using the word "Comrade" in addressing fellow nationalists. Sukarno always insisted of being addressed with "Bung Karno" by fellow Indonesians.

³⁸ Willard A. Hanna, "The Eloquent *Betja* Driver" In Willard A. Hanna, *Bung Karno's Indonesia* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1961) 4

state. Gunther, Puhle, and Diamandouros in their study of Southern European democracies argue that one of the most critical factors that could hurt regime stability in the long term is extreme polarization based on social cleavages (such as religion and race), as such cleavages lead to permanent exclusion of sizeable populations. In their own words:

While most ordinary citizens may not be politically active and may not possess significant political resources, their attitudes, values, and beliefs are potentially relevant to regime stability over the long term. A sizable segment of a population that is alienated from a regime may be mobilized at some point in the future.³⁹

Masses will not respond to the ethno-nationalistic diatribe as described by Snyder, unless they believe that their values are attacked, but once they believe it, they are easily galvanized by the political elites. The ease of galvanizing the masses depends on the depth of social cleavages within the society. The threat of mass mobilization is very high and also very frightening. Mass politics is in essence the ultimate doomsday machine in domestic politics. Burton, Gunther, and Higley noted that once the masses are mobilized, it usually leads to the collapse of either authoritarian or democratic regimes.⁴⁰ Therefore, someone who is able to effectively mobilize the masses holds a strong trump card, and in Indonesia's case, Sukarno's power to control the masses became a very strong foundation for his power.

The ability to mobilize the masses always threatens regimes in transition to democracy or weak authoritarian regimes. In strong regimes, such as a stable democracy

³⁹ Richard Gunther, Hans-Jürgen Puhle, and P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, "Introduction" In Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995) 17

⁴⁰ Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley, "Introduction: elite transformations and democratic regime" In John Higley and Richard Gunther, *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 23

and strong authoritarian regimes, mass mobilization and social cleavages do not matter much, since the political elites are content and their concerns are represented within the regime (or, perhaps a better term for a strong authoritarian regime, silenced). In a stable democracy, the fact that there is a predictable means of leadership transition leads to the contentment of every social group. They know there is a realistic chance that they can take the seat of power. The fear of reprisals, were they to pursue radical policies, also moderates their stance. The moderate stance in turn helps reduce social cleavages and in turn makes everyone essentially moderate.

To some degree, the consensus among elites in soft-authoritarian regimes is similar to that in democratic regimes. The legitimacy of a democratic regime lies in the fact that it is seen as the only legitimate framework for political contestation, so there will not be any political contestation settled, for example, by street brawls or armed coup d'etat.⁴¹ Thus, as noted by Burton, Gunther, and Higley, in this transitory period from authoritarian to democratic regime, where the elite groups in essence sit together to discuss the blueprint of the new regime, the future stability and democratic regime survival are dependent upon broad elite consensual unity.⁴²

The same thing could also be said for both weak democracies and soft-authoritarian regimes: the ability of both to survive is determined by their ability to keep the powerful elite groups contented with the rules of the game.

The problem is whether the elites' consensual unity itself can be achieved. History has repeatedly shown that both soft authoritarian regimes and weak democracies easily succumb to the temptation to break the rules of the game, especially when the rules

⁴¹ Gunther et al. (1995) 7

⁴² Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley (1992) 30-1

themselves are unclear or prone to be broken due to a very high perception of threat from one elite group to another. An example lies in the experience of Spain during the Second Republic period in 1930-1936, when armed factions roamed the streets and the elites seemed to be more interested in ruining their opponents than strengthening democratic institutions. In fact, Manuel Azana, the last president of the beleaguered republic, was far more interested in destroying the political right than reaching a compromise that would salvage the republic, triggering the bloody Spanish Civil War. As Payne bitterly remarked:

Those groups most responsible for writing the Constitution were not themselves committed to the rules which they had just set up. As soon as they lost the next election, they demanded the annulment of its outcome and the opportunity to try again, for their concept of the Republic was "patrimonial," insofar as they would not tolerate it representing policies other than their own.... Lack of consensus about basic rules of the game was a handicap from the very beginning, and some later literature would suggest that basic agreement among elites is more important than sheer level of development in guaranteeing the stability of a new democracy.⁴³

Indonesia in this period also suffered almost the same problem, when the elites were deeply suspicious of the others' intentions and they were afraid of what others might do. As a result, similar to Spain, once these political elites were in a position of power, they purged the bureaucracy of their political opponents. The election then became the focal point of the struggle for survival for the political elites and further destabilized the situation.

From here, we need to factor in the influence of the leaders to minimize the prospect that social cleavages will be used to destroy democracy. In fact, some scholars later attributed Spain's successful transition to democracy in the 1970s to the ability of

⁴³ Stanley G. Payne, *Spain's First Democracy: The Second Republic, 1931-1936* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1993) 376

Spanish leaders to forge elite unity and defend democracy. After the death of Franco, Spain was able to successfully transform itself into a democracy thanks to Adolfo Suarez's ability to consult the political elites on both the left and the right of the political spectrum and to forge consensus among them, and to King Juan Carlos II's willingness to demand that the military return to the barracks after attempting to stage a coup in 1981.⁴⁴ In short, leadership is a neglected variable that can make or break a democracy.

The second weakness of Snyder's theory lies in his lack of explicit discussion on leadership. As Snyder himself admitted, his theory of domestic influence could not satisfactorily explain some problems:

My theory yields weaker, mixed predictions about unitary political systems like that of the Soviet Union or Hitler's Germany. On the one hand, the comparatively unitary Soviet system, whose origins lay in the dynamics of "late, late" industrialization, strengthened the hands of the Politburo oligarchy vis-à-vis parochial imperialist and military interests. As a result the central leadership was able to keep imperialist logrolling in check. On the other hand, in unitary systems dominated by single individual, like Hitler and Stalin, there is no countervailing political force to keep the dictator in check. If the dictator believes in the myths of empire, overexpansion is quite possible. When everything hinges on a single, unpredictable personality, there is no political counterweight to correct whatever strategic myths the leader may happen to believe in.⁴⁵

This dissertation argues that even leaders such as Hitler and Stalin had to be worried about political backlash from their actions. Even as, in theory, both leaders in their prime were unchallengeable, in reality, they experienced constraints in their freedom of action. Their ability to limit political repercussion was based on how well they managed to turn the structures that bind every single political actor into a resource they could use as a source of power and as a constraint to other political actors.

⁴⁴ Gunther, Puhle, and Diamandouros (1995) 12, Richard Gunther, Jose Ramon Montero, and Joan Botella, *Democracy in Modern Spain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) 83-4

⁴⁵ Snyder (1991) 18

Still, in some cases, the safeguard itself was not strong enough and luck played a major role in the survival of the regime. Hitler, for one, in launching what would later be known as the Second World War, was opposed by the German population, leading him to bitterly remark, "With these people I cannot make war."⁴⁶ Even his generals were opposed to Hitler's warmongering to the extent that they were planning to stage a coup. They agreed to invade France only on greatest reluctance and they did not even expect that any of the plans to invade France would result in "a semblance of victory." As the historian Ernest R. May wrote:

The defeat of France by Germany in May-June 1940 was not, then, foreordained. As late as mid-May, events could have turned in such a way that later historians would have been explaining why Germany launched an offensive that failed.... Had German armies suffered serious setbacks, as could easily have happened, Nazi Germany might have imploded. If so, historians would cite as causes the "frightening demoralization" among the German populace (noted by one representative of Fascist Italy), the Wehrmacht's shortcomings in training and equipment, and a combination of recklessness and pessimism on the part of German generals.⁴⁷

Had the German army experienced setbacks in either Poland or France, it was highly possible that all the safeguards that Hitler built to preserve his Third Reich could have collapsed.

Therefore, understanding domestic politics is important in helping us to put the leadership into context. As noted above, not everyone was born equal in term of resources or ability; so leaders, when they appear on the political scene, start from different positions. The question is how much they influence the structure that would otherwise limit their freedom of action. Stalin, for one, would not have faced as many

⁴⁶ John Mueller, *Retreat From the Doomsday: the Obsolescence of Major War* (New York: Basic Books, 1989) 68

⁴⁷ May, (2000) 232, 479-80

political setbacks as Hitler, as Stalin's rule over the Soviet Union was far more encompassing, having conducted far bloodier and more thorough purges among the Soviet populace and its political and military elites (that enabled the Germans to easily break the Soviet's defense in 1940). The cost of psychological paranoia among the leadership is observed by Milovan Djilas in his dealing with Stalin. He concluded:

All in all, Stalin was a monster who, while adhering to abstract, absolute, and fundamentally utopian ideas, in practice recognized, and could recognize only success-violence, physical and spiritual extermination.⁴⁸

As a result, the influence of leadership in domestic political calculation cannot be ignored. It provides the "missing link" in Snyder's theory. By understanding the role of leadership in domestic politics, we can sharpen the theoretical understanding of what drives foreign policy.

1.5. Methodology

To be a leader means there is an agreement among other power holders to recognize an individual as a leader. Sometimes, the motive is altruistic: that particular person is the best suited to be a leader. In other cases, the motive is selfish – to deny others the opportunity to increase their power. Since it is very difficult and beyond the scope of this dissertation to psychologically evaluate each leader and understand the motivation of each interest group, we have to assume that the interest of each leader is in acquiring and maintaining power. Furthermore, if we try to judge the morality or the intention of a leader, it will muddle the entire discussion further without providing any benefit to our analysis. As Morgenthau noted:

⁴⁸ Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1962) 191

Yet even if we had access to the real motives of statesmen, that knowledge would help us little in understanding foreign policies, and might well lead us astray. It is true that the knowledge of the statesman's motives may give us one among many clues as to what the direction of his foreign policy might be. It cannot give us, however, the one clue by which to predict his foreign policies. History shows no exact and necessary correlation between the quality of motives and the quality of foreign policy. This is true in both moral and political term.

We cannot conclude from the good intentions of a statesman that his foreign policies will be either morally praiseworthy or politically successful. Judging his motives, we can say that he will not intentionally pursue policies that are morally wrong, but we can say nothing about the probability of their success. If we want to know the moral and political qualities of his actions, we must know them, not his motives. How often have statesmen been motivated by the desire to improve the world, and ended by making it worse? And how often have they sought one goal, and ended by achieving something they neither expected nor desired?⁴⁹

Therefore, the basic assumption of this dissertation is that the personal motive of the leaders is to get more power and that that leaders will try to keep increasing their power.

In order to gain more power, leaders have to rely on their political assets, such as political allies, racial and religious groupings, familial ties, and appeals to the masses. These political assets in turn inadvertently provide political liabilities, such as competing interest groups and ideological enemies. These political assets also create constraints on the leaders' actions, as leaders need to keep their political allies satisfied.

However, this in turn creates a perception of threat among leaders and their political supporters toward their political rivals. As every leader's interest is in gaining more power, this has an adverse effect on their relations with their political rivals, especially when institutional stability is weak (weak democracies or soft authoritarianisms) as noted in the previous section. In fact, the perception of threat has a

⁴⁹ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (Sixth Edition) (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985) 6

very strong effect, causing those who believe themselves to be on the weaker side to think that they have no choice but to keep fighting and to keep trying to decrease the power of their rivals. On the other hand, those who feel their power was much stronger than their rivals demanded either a concession, such as to have a coalition in which the "strong" elite group would dominate or to risk a complete exclusion. Of course, those who believe themselves to be stronger believe that time is on their side, as their holding of power would further be cemented with an election in which they are sure that they will win. Therefore, they have no willingness to make concessions. As a result, the perception of threat severely limits the ability of leaders to reach out to their political rivals.

Moreover, the structure in which leaders operate always changes, either from the leaders' action or from external variables they cannot control, such as changes in the international system. One cannot ignore the effect of a previous leader's choices. As a leader makes a political choice, the choice will close some possibilities while it will also open other possibilities. Choices also have impact on the share of power among elite groups. The best way to see how the changes in structure interconnect with the leaders' actions is to see these changes chronologically, so we can see how one action that a leader takes at time T will have impact over time $(T+1)$. For this reason, our analysis proceeds chronologically. By focusing on events as they occurred in time, we end up with a robust and in-depth understanding of leaders' choices and their impacts in foreign policy.

The discussions starts by specifying the constraints that face leaders: what were the political situations of that time, how many political resources did the leaders have, who were the political opponents these leaders faced, what were the priorities of the

leaders and finally, why did the leaders focus on these priorities? From considerations of the constraints, we move to the historical discussions of choices that leaders made during their tenure. We also address the external/systemic constraints at the same time.

In order to strengthen this dissertation, a chapter has been devoted to the presentation of counterfactual propositions: what would have happened had a leader chosen a different option than he did historically? The counterfactuals mainly explore how much independence Indonesian leaders had in their political decision-making. In order to answer that, the chapter on counterfactuals explores four cases during this period: two examples of how leaders' decisions had a major impact on the unfolding events and another two on how structure bound the leaders so much that regardless of what their choices were, they would have ended up at the same place, or worse, losing their power.

While there is much skepticism on the use of counterfactuals as a way to test hypotheses, counterfactuals do help sharpen arguments as they force us to understand the structural constraints that leaders face. In essence, counterfactuals provide an in-depth analysis that would have been glossed over in the historical discussion of the leaders and provides a much stronger argument.

This dissertation relied on written accounts of Indonesian politics, such as memoirs, political histories written by experts on Indonesia, and also extensively used dispatches and memorandums that were found in the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS). The use of the FRUS might be controversial, as it discusses Indonesia as seen from Washington and of course, the leaders quoted in the dispatches had every bit of incentive to create a favorable images of themselves to the decision makers in

Washington. Still, the fact that these leaders were speaking candidly as they believed that everything they said was off-record from the public, we can glean some truths from the dispatches. In fact, the FRUS is invaluable for providing insights on Indonesian leaders that were not found in historical analysis that mostly depended on newspaper clippings.

The dissertation is structured as follows: Chapter Two gives a brief summary of various political actors and both internal and external structures in Sukarno's Indonesia. Chapter Three deals with the creation of the Indonesian state during the period of the "struggle for independence" era, when the main concern of the leaders was to achieve international recognition for Indonesian independence. Chapter Four focuses on the transition from the period of "struggle for independence" to the beginning of the constitutional democracy period, when the struggle for influence within Indonesia paved the way for the worsening of the relationship between Indonesia and the United States. The internal struggle for power itself also in the end would lead to the collapse of young Indonesian democracy.

In Chapter Five, we see the beginning of an "assertive and independent foreign policy" directly caused by the preoccupation of the governing elite to shore up governmental prestige in light of various domestic politics problems. Chapter Six covers the "guided democracy" period, in which foreign policy was a tool for Sukarno to balance competing interests between two major political players: the Army and the Communists. Chapter Seven focuses on the fall of Sukarno and the construction of the "New Order" regime under Suharto. Chapter Eight is the counterfactual chapter, where I will pick four cases: two cases where leaders had agency and could make different choices with

different outcomes and two cases where agency was impossible due to the constraints of the structure. Finally, Chapter Nine will conclude the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

SUKARNO'S INDONESIA:

SETTING THE STAGE

(1945-1967)

The century has given birth to a time of greatness,
But the great moment finds man small.

"The Moment" by Friedrich von Schiller¹

I remembered what had been told to me months ago in Jakarta, "Sukarno is the great Darlan,² and we are all characters in his Wayang, his shadow play. We have no existence beyond that which he imagines for us. He directs our actions, speaks for us, conjures up demons for us to fight, shows us visions of glory hardly understood."

Maslyn Williams³

The simplest way to describe Sukarno is to say that he is a great lover. He loves his country, he loves his people, he loves women, he loves art, and, best of all, he loves himself.

Sukarno⁴

¹ Quoted by Mohammad Hatta in his 1960 article, "Demokrasi Kita" (Our Democracy). This article led to the banning of the journal *Pandji Masyarakat* (People's Banners) in which it was published and the arrest of Hamka, the editor of that journal. Mavin Rose, *Indonesia Free: A Political Biography of Mohammad Hatta* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1987) 199

² The correct word is *Dalang*, which means puppeteer.

³ Maslyn Williams, *Inside Sukarno's Indonesia: Five Journeys from Jakarta* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1965) 305

⁴ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: the Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 1

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will provide brief backgrounds of Sukarno, Hatta, and political parties that dominated Indonesian politics between 1945 and 1965. It will also describe the structural constraints in which Indonesian leaders, especially Sukarno, operated, particularly the social cleavages that divided Indonesian society: ethnicity, regionalism, religion, and the role of the Army.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, it will briefly describe the situation during the last years of Dutch rule, followed by brief biographies of Sukarno and Hatta. Next, it will discuss major political parties during the period of 1945-1967, notably the Masjumi, the PSI, the PNI, and the Communists. Following the discussion of the political parties, the chapter will address the problem of the Army and politics, regionalism, and finally conclude with a brief discussion of the relationship between Indonesia and the United States.

2.2. The Dutch and Nationalism in Indonesia

On March 8, 1942, Lieutenant General Ter Poorten, the Dutch Commander in Chief of the Allied forces on Java surrendered to the Japanese, capping a struggle of less than a month that started on February 14, 1942, when the Japanese overran South Sumatra. Shortly after, Governor General Tjarda van Starckenborgh surrendered to the Japanese, ending more than three hundred years of an almost uninterrupted Dutch presence in Indonesia.⁵ When the Dutch returned in 1945 to reassert their authority over

⁵ It should be noted that while the Dutch had been present in what today is known as Indonesia for more than three hundred years, the Dutch were not able to assert full control over the entirety of Indonesia until much later in the 19th century. Before that, the Dutch had only limited influence over various small

Indonesia, they found a vastly different environment than when they surrendered to the Japanese. The entire country was swept up in the euphoria of nationalism.

The idea of Indonesian nationalism was propagated earlier in the 20th century, as the Dutch had stabilized their control over what was known back then as the Netherlands East Indies and created a bureaucracy within the capital in Batavia (Jakarta) and established an education system as a mean to create a class of intellectual natives that would serve the bureaucracy. As Benedict R.O.G Anderson would later argue in *Imagined Communities*, such actions created and established a common identity among the natives:

The new demographic topography put down deep social and institutional roots as the colonial state multiplied its size and functions. Guided by its imagined map it organized the new educational, juridical, public health, police, and immigration bureaucracies it was building on the principle of ethno-racial hierarchies which were, however, always understood in terms of parallel series. The flow of subject populations through the mesh of differential schools, courts, clinics, police stations and immigration offices created 'traffic-habits' which in time gave real social life to the state's earlier fantasies.⁶

Unknowingly, the Dutch government created a common identity for Indonesians out of a mishmash of various and often conflicting ethnic groups and small kingdoms under the suzerainty of the Dutch Governor General in Batavia. By the 1920s, the explosion of nationalism led to the creation of various political parties with various goals, from those that asked for an expansion of political rights among natives while advocating accommodative policies with the Dutch Colonial Authority, to those that demanded outright independence. On October 28, 1928, in a Youth Congress held in Batavia, the Youth Congress declared the three ideals of "one fatherland, Indonesia; one nation,

kingdoms in Indonesia and other parts of Indonesia. Even after the Dutch launched their conquests, many regions, such as Aceh, were not subjugated until the early 20th century.

⁶ Benedict R.O.G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, Verso, 1983) 169

Indonesia; and one language, Bahasa Indonesia," which reflected the conviction of the Indonesians that they belonged to one single entity.

By the late 1920s, however, the Dutch authority had started to crack down on the nationalist movements, exiling and imprisoning many of the nationalist leaders. The crackdown especially intensified in the aftermath of the Communist rebellion in 1926-7. In 1932, the Dutch authority under Governor General Bonifacius C. de Jonge began to deal harshly with the nationalist movements, essentially bringing the nationalists movement to a complete halt, though unknowingly encouraging the growth of the Muslim movements through the repression on the nationalist movements.⁷ The repression would also generate much resentment from the otherwise moderate nationalist leaders such as Mohammad Hatta toward the Dutch regime. Even so, de Jonge's repression was so successful that he boasted the Dutch would rule Indonesia for at least another three hundred years.⁸

His success was short-lived, however, thanks to the Second World War. The Japanese defeated the Dutch quickly and thoroughly during several weeks in 1942, thus shattering the myth of Dutch supremacy. Moreover, the Japanese decided to mobilize both the nationalist and the Muslim movements in Indonesia to help support the Japanese war machine. Among the nationalist leaders that the Japanese decided to cajole and recruit to support its rule in Indonesia, Sukarno was the most prominent.

⁷ Bob Hering, *Soekarno: Founding Father of Indonesia 1901-1945* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002) 231, 250-1, M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia Since C.1200* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) 235-7

⁸ Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: the United States and the Struggle for Indonesian independence, 1945-49* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981) 34

2.3. Sukarno

It cannot be denied that Sukarno was one of the most important political actors in the history of Indonesia.⁹ In fact, the entire period between 1945 and 1967 can be considered the "Age of Sukarno" due to his looming presence and influence during that period. Even after his death in 1970, Sukarno continues to be an influence in Indonesian politics to the present day.

The magnetism of Sukarno was partly based on his colorful personality. While he was a vain, proud, and egoistical individual, he could also be charming, attractive, and appealing. Moreover, he had excellent oratory skills, and he knew how to connect to the masses, speak in the language familiar to them, and share empathy. This enabled him to draw the masses toward him and provide himself with a huge political capital. He effectively used that capital to make himself indispensable to Indonesian politics in this period. Maslyn Williams, an Australian reporter who happened to be in Sukabumi, a town in West Java, when Sukarno unexpectedly visited by helicopter, observed Sukarno's interaction with the crowds:

He wore a dark khaki uniform, the ribbon of the revolution, the familiar black cap, and he carried a baton.... The townspeople in the front row, closest to him, looked awed and uncertain and were worried by the pressure of the crowd pushing them in toward the President. Leaning forward a little, he began to sing a

⁹ One of the first thorough accounts of Sukarno's life was his own autobiography, written with the assistance of Cindy Adams. It was most likely written with the United States as an intended audience in response to the constant criticism of his regime from United States publications. Riddled with inaccuracies, this book nevertheless is a very useful window to observe Sukarno's conflicting personality as someone who was kind, easy-going, and truly concerned with his people, yet at the same time also vain, self-serving, and cared only for himself. Besides Sukarno's somewhat self-serving autobiography, there are several major scholarly works on Sukarno. One of the earliest was an excellent study of his role in Indonesian nationalist movements by Bernhard Dahm, which was first published in Berlin in 1966 and later translated to English in 1969, followed by John Legge's *Sukarno*, which first appearing in 1972, five years after the collapse of Sukarno's regime. Recently there have been several new works on Sukarno, spurred by the collapse of Suharto's regime and the rise of Sukarno's daughter, Megawati Sukarnoputri, as the new president of Indonesia, including a comprehensive biography of Sukarno's pre-1945 period by Bob Hering.

Javanese song, beating time with his hand and encouraging those closest to join in. The crowd took it up but was interrupted by shouting and confusion in one corner of the square where town police and other men were forcing a way through. When they came into the little clearing in front of the President and had formed up in front of him, he held out a hand to greet them: the Bupati, the mayor, the chief of police, the Army commander, and the judge, still straightening clothes changed hastily, making it plain that the visit was unexpected.

These greetings made, they stood to one side. Women in the crowd began to sing again, with men joining in where they could, and the President, the Bung, their brother, their uncle, beating time. He called two little girls from out of the crowd, who hesitated shyly but were pushed forward and in a while, with encouragement and cajolery, sang sweetly although petrified with fright and excitement; when they were done he called them closer and put his arms around them and spoke kindly before letting them go.

I looked at the people close by and saw in their faces such devotion and joy that I was amazed: men and women, faces alive with delight, some crying with happiness, some praying. Whatever doubt I might have had about the power of this man, the gift he has of taking hold of the hearts of his people, the bonds of loyalty that bind them to each other, left me then. I could not believe it to be the evil fascination of a ranting, fanatical demagogue, but the genuine and rare power of a man who has the elements of both greatness and simplicity.

I, a Westerner, might feel afraid that this man can, and in my opinion does, make grave mistakes in the exercising of his greatness; but to his own people, he is almost supernatural, a character out of the Wayang, who comes from heaven in a helicopter, sits before them like a sultan, and tells them what to do.¹⁰

Sukarno himself loved these interactions. In fact, he was addicted to making speeches and the rousing admiration he received from the masses. In light of his hold and sway over the masses, Indonesian politicians came to learn that Sukarno was simply indispensable and therefore it would be wise to not incur Presidential displeasure. Dr. Subandrio, Sukarno's foreign minister and later his First Deputy Prime Minister during the Guided Democracy Period, in a conversation with Howard Jones, the United States ambassador to Indonesia, put it aptly:

¹⁰ Williams (1966) 340-1

"Let me be frank," he said. "Whether we like it or not, Sukarno is an element in situation that must be reckoned with. He cannot be gotten rid of. But Indonesia is bigger than Sukarno, Hatta and all the others." He sketched portrait of Sukarno as a sensitive man, a brilliant orator with strong hold on masses, but a man who loved fleshpots. "Let him remain and have his pleasures," he said.¹¹

Another description about Sukarno came from Allen Welsh Dulles, the Director of the CIA during Eisenhower's presidency, which was written on April, 1958, in the middle of the United States-backed regional rebellion in Indonesia. While the description was very critical, it was surprisingly accurate:

[Sukarno] has all the theatrical techniques of the consummate crowd-pleaser and is in fact a rabble-rouser when he wishes. He has an insatiable desire for public acclaim and wishes to hold all reins of power and to be the originator of all major decision. Yet he refuses to accept definite responsibility and is childishly jealous when anyone else appears to share the acclaim usually accorded him or to assume responsibility which might lead to the loss of any of his power. In one important particular, he has virtually no knowledge of economics and no appreciation of the complex economic problems which afflict the nation. He is vain and pleasure loving to a marked degree.

Paralleling these characteristics is an identification with Indonesia and with a dream of Indonesia as strong, united nation-the home of a prosperous and confident people. In relation to Indonesians, Sukarno sees himself as father, leader and guide, one who must study, interpret, and blend the best and most appropriate of the modern world with the best of whatever he sees as genuinely Indonesian, to create a truly Indonesian nation. This is a superhuman order for one person, or even one generation, but Sukarno's vanity and ego refuse to let him share the work substantially with anyone of real ability.

In addition, Sukarno has led a life of tension which as repeatedly included revolution, insurrection, imprisonment, exile, conspiracy, and attempted assassination. This undoubtedly tends to emphasize and exaggerate many of his personality traits.¹²

Sukarno did have a very interesting background, which enabled him to build his reputation and political influence much later in his life. He was born on June 6, 1901 in

¹¹ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 10, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-60, Vol. 17, 61

¹² Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Dulles to President Eisenhower, April 17, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 115-6

Blitar, East Java from a Javanese father and a Balinese mother. His father, Raden Soekemi Sosrodihardjo, was a teacher and a member of a theosophical society, which placed him among the indigenous elite and allowed Sukarno to have contacts to many influential people who would help shape his thoughts and provide him with useful connections to the rest of the political elite.¹³

His father's status also allowed Sukarno to enroll in a high school in Surabaya, East Java, in which he was one of about 20 Indonesians among about 300 Dutch students. Several contemporaries of Sukarno stated that even though they were in the minority, they did not experience any racism or discrimination from their teachers or from the Dutch students in the high school.¹⁴ In fact, it could be described as an oasis of "fraternite et egalite."

During this period, Sukarno lived in a boarding house belonging to his father's friend, Haji Umar Said Tjokroaminoto. Living with Tjokroaminoto would be very influential to his future, as Tjokroaminoto was one of the greatest figures in Indonesian

¹³ Sukarno would later create a myth based on his birth date to further bolster his claim of legitimacy to power. Sukarno's interesting date of birth (double six) which falls under the sign of Gemini, coupled by the eruption of nearby Mount Kelud becoming in Sukarno's words:

My birthday is double six, June six. It is my supreme good fortune to have been born under Gemini, the sign of twins. And that is me exactly. Two extremes. I can be gentle or exacting; hard as steel, or poetic. My personality is a mixture of reason and emotion. I am forgiving and I am unyielding. I put enemies of the State behind bars, yet I cannot keep a bird in a cage.... Because I am two halves, I can exhibit all shades, understand all sides, lead all people. Perhaps it is mere coincidence. Maybe it is another omen. But those two halves of my nature make me the all-embracing.

Sukarno also claimed that both his parents were of royal lineage. His mother, Ni Njoman Rai, was a descendant of a Brahman caste and part of the Balinese royal house of Singosari, while his father belonged to the Javanese royal house of Kediri. Adams (1965) 17-19

Bob Hering argued that these claims could not be substantiated. Sukarno's mother, while belonging to a higher class than the common people, was not from a high class or royal house. Sukarno's father was only a part of lesser Javanese nobility, not from princely blood or of a status with influence at Javanese courts. Hering (2002) 16-7

¹⁴ Raden Gatot Mangkupradja, Harumi Wanasita Evans, Ruth McVey, "The Peta and My Relations with the Japanese: A Correction of Sukarno's Autobiography," *Indonesia*, Vol. 5 (April 1968)

nationalist movements. As Tjokroaminoto was the chairman of Sarekat Islam (Islamic Union), a nationalist organization, he provided Sukarno with connections to other important figures in Indonesian politics such as Haji Agus Salim, who would later become an Indonesian diplomat during the revolutionary period, Ki Hajar Dewantoro, founder of the educational reform movement, Semaun, Musso, and Alimin, founders of the PKI (the Indonesian Communist Party), and Wahab Chasbullah, who would later become one of the top leaders of Nahdlatul Ulama, one of the largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia.¹⁵

After finishing high school, Sukarno enrolled in Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool (TH, Technical Faculty) in Bandung, close to Batavia. There, he engaged more with nationalist politics, thanks to his excellent oratory ability, and built ties with other nationalist leaders such that a year after he graduated in 1926 as a civil engineer, he managed to create the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI – Indonesia Nationalist Party). The party grew so fast and became such a threat that the colonial government decided to ban it in 1929 and arrested Sukarno on December 29, 1929, which only built his reputation further.

Sukarno returned to politics when he was released on December 31, 1931, only to be rearrested the night of July 31, 1933 under the order of de Jonge. Here happened a very interesting event in Sukarno's life that has been rarely discussed: in several letters written between August 30 and September 28, 1933, he begged not to be exiled, pledging

¹⁵ Hering (2002) 77. J.D. Legge, *Sukarno: A Political Biography* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 2003) 40, 63, 65-6

that he would leave politics.¹⁶ De Jonge did not pay heed on the letters, and he exiled Sukarno first to Ende in the island of Flores, then to Bengkulu in Sumatra until 1942 when he was freed by the Japanese.

Seeing the ability of Sukarno to appeal to the masses, the Japanese military decided to install him as its main propagandist. It was a Faustian bargain: Sukarno benefited from being the leader of the nationalist movements, but he opened his flank to attacks from his political enemies and later the Dutch as a Japanese collaborator. In addition, the human cost was tremendous, as one of Sukarno's roles was to recruit people for *romushas*, laborers for Japanese war effort that in reality perform as slaves and ultimately died of starvation and exhaustion. Sukarno himself painfully admitted that fact when he dictated his autobiography in 1964.¹⁷

Still, the benefit from the exposure to the masses and the position of power could not be underestimated. Sukarno managed to build a web of connections and patronage among the Indonesian elite. He was also influential in pushing for the creation of an Indonesian volunteer army (Peta: Soekarela Tentara Pembela Tanah Air/Volunteer Army of Defenders of the Fatherland) which was supposedly to help the Japanese war efforts, but in reality indoctrinated its members with a pro-Indonesian point of view. As someone critical in the creation and indoctrination of Peta, which would later become a major

¹⁶ Hering (2002) 233-5, Muhammad Slamet, "After adoration... disappointment" In John Legge, *Sukarno in Retrospect* (Clayton: Monash University Press, 2002) 6, Ingleson argued that "Sukarno depended heavily on contact with large crowds and support from other people and removed from this had few internal and spiritual resources on which to fall back," leading Sukarno to pledge to the Dutch Governor General to leave politics in 1933 as he was threatened with exile to a remote island. JE Ingleson, *Road to Exile: the Indonesian Nationalist Movement 1929-1934* (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979) 220

¹⁷ Adams (1965) 192-3

component in the nascent Indonesian army, Sukarno (probably inadvertently) had built a powerbase for himself for the future.¹⁸

By the time the Japanese surrendered to the United States in August 1945, Sukarno was the most recognizable political leader in Indonesia with strong sway over the population, and many of Indonesian elites held positions within the government thanks to Sukarno's patronage.

2.4. Mohammad Hatta

While Sukarno was famous as an orator, a dreamer, and a charismatic leader of Indonesian nationalist movement, he had a complete opposite in the dour Muhammad Hatta, who was described by Dr. Subandrio as "rigid, inflexible, competent administrator, impatient with political conceptions, hard working and interested in doing something instead of talking or dreaming."¹⁹

Hatta was born on August 12, 1902 at Bukittinggi, West Sumatra from an ethnic Minangkabau family. A bright student with a natural flair for financial matters, he joined a local branch of the Sumatran Youth group (Jong Sumatranen Bond) as a treasurer, where he built relations with various nationalist leaders. When he left Padang to continue

¹⁸ Sukarno bragged in his memoir that he was the originator of the idea of Peta and he handpicked Gatot Mangkupradja, a fellow member of PNI, to lead it. However, Gatot Mangkupradja in 1968 wrote a letter correcting what he saw as inaccuracies in Sukarno's autobiography, notably on his role in PNI and the creation of Peta. Gatot Mangkupradja stated that he was the advocate of the idea of a volunteer army in 1943 in order to prevent the Japanese from forcing conscription on the unwilling Indonesian population, not Sukarno. Still, it is highly possible that Sukarno would have found this idea to be very useful and would have been influential in pushing the Japanese to accept it. Sukarno also found that he could spread his influence in Peta. As Kahin noted, "Sukarno convinced the Japanese that the Peta could be a good defensive organization only if its rank and file as well as its officers had an aroused national consciousness. Thus, they allowed him and others to speak to the various Peta units...." See Adams (1965) 186, George M.T. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952) 109, Mangkupradja (1968) 115-6

¹⁹ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 30, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 128

his high school in Batavia in 1919, he again became a treasurer at Jong Sumatranen Bond in Batavia, where his draconian efforts in bookkeeping established his reputation as an efficient organizer, unafraid of unpopularity from being so strict in following rules to the letter.²⁰

On August 3, 1921, he left for Rotterdam, the Netherlands, to pursue higher education. There he distinguished himself again as a treasurer, then as a writer with biting attacks on the Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, and finally as one of the leaders of an Indonesian student organization (Perhimpunan Indonesia). There he also met various figures who would be leaders in Indonesian nationalist movements such as Soetan Sjahrir.

When he returned to Indonesia, he was involved in Sukarno's PNI until Sukarno was arrested, leading him to form Partindo (Partai Indonesia – Indonesian Party). In both parties, he acted more as an organizer, leaving Sukarno to handle the masses, until he was also arrested by the Dutch Government and exiled to Boven Digul, an area in Irian Barat (West Irian or West Papua) famous for its swampy and malarial topography. Facing intense criticism from socialists from both the Netherlands and Indonesia, the Dutch Government finally decided to transfer Hatta to Banda Neira in Molucca Islands.

As the Second World War erupted, Hatta was transferred to Surabaya, East Java, then Sukabumi, West Java, where he heard about the surrender of the Dutch. He was then invited by the Japanese government to be part of its propaganda office, even though Hatta himself was an anti-fascist and he was worried that his name was in KemPetai's list of

²⁰ Rose (1987) 11-2

possible people to be arrested or even eliminated.²¹ Hatta accepted, seeing the possibility to use the office to build a nationalist movement that would push for Indonesian independence. Moreover, Sjahrir also pushed Hatta to accept, and, as he would later note, "to [Hatta was] delegated the task of securing funds for us and of facilitating the travel of our workers. He also received our reports and warned us when he heard that something was brewing on the Japanese side."²²

While Hatta might have grudgingly accepted the position of power in the Japanese administration, it could not be denied that he also benefited from such a position, not to mention an association with Sukarno. As Rose noted in her biography on Hatta:

While people delighted in Sukarno's warmth and color, drawing reassurance from his exuberance, they also appreciated the presence of the rock-like, level-headed Hatta by his side. In the spheres of planning and organization, Hatta came to the fore, his industriousness, careful attention to detail, and ability to judge the long-range consequences of an action blending well with Sukarno's romanticism and sensibility towards Javanese cultural straits... Hatta, as was his nature, did not refrain from speaking out bluntly if Sukarno's ideas were, in his opinion, far-fetched, bridling him. Hatta's stern rejection of Sukarno's over-fanciful suggestions acted as a control mechanism, as acknowledged by fellow nationalists.²³

In other words, Hatta established a reputation of being a strong and efficient administrator, in contrast to the romantic and whimsical Sukarno, who detested dwelling too much on details. Moreover, the fact that Sukarno was Javanese and Hatta was Sumatran did matter as it symbolized the Indonesia that comprised of both Javanese and non-Javanese, as acknowledged by Sukarno in his autobiography:

²¹ Soetan Sjahrir, *Out of Exile* (New York: The John Day Company, 1949) 238-9

²² Paul F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997) 13, Rudolf Mrazek, *Sjahrir: Politics and Exile in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, 1994) 222

²³ Rose (1987) 110

I needed him because I am Javanese and he is a Sumatran and in those days I needed everyone with me. For the sake of unity, I need someone from Sumatra. He was the best way to ensure the support from the inhabitants of the second largest island in Indonesia.²⁴

Not surprisingly, the union of Sukarno and Hatta became the symbols of the Indonesian nationalism, the emotion and the rationalism, and the Java and non-Java of the new Indonesia.

When the Japanese surrendered, both Sukarno and Hatta were pressured by the Indonesian youths to declare the independence of Indonesia. Both of them initially refused to do so. However they proclaimed the Independence of Indonesia on August 17, 1945. Both Sukarno and Hatta then were seen as the Fathers of Indonesian Independence.

Still, the fact that both Sukarno and Hatta were involved in the Japanese administration opened them to the accusations of being Japanese puppets. Their influence was diminished in the first year of the revolution when the British arrived in Indonesia to evacuate the Japanese and their prisoners and also to prepare for the return of the Dutch. There were fears that both Sukarno and Hatta would be arrested and tried as war criminals. From within Indonesia, Soetan Sjahrir stressed the problem of having Japanese collaborationists in the Indonesian government.²⁵ Facing these assaults, on October 16, Hatta declared the Proclamation of the Vice President X (Maklumat Wakil Presiden X), creating a temporary parliament and allowing political parties to be formed.²⁶

²⁴ Interestingly, this paragraph only exists in the Indonesian version of Sukarno's autobiography. The English version omitted this paragraph entirely. See Cindy Adams, *Bung Karno: Penjambung Lidah Rakyat Indonesia* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1966) 332

²⁵ Soetan Sjahrir, *Our Struggle* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1968) 29

²⁶ The "X" does not represent the Roman numeral "X." Rather, the State Secretary forgot to bring along his archives, therefore forcing the proclamation to use "X" for "number unknown." Benedict R.O'G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972) 172-3

2.5. The Masjumi and the Nahdlatul Ulama

The first Islamic political movement in Indonesia was the Sarekat Islam (Islamic League), founded in 1912 and led by the western-educated Haji Umar Said Tjokroaminoto and Haji Agus Salim. This movement had such an appeal to the masses, especially reinforced by the charisma of Tjokroaminoto, that by 1919 it boasted two million members and even its own labor union.²⁷ By the mid-1920s, however, there was internal dissent within the Sarekat Islam due to the growing influence of the Communists who had infiltrated the organization, driving it toward political radicalism. Moreover, the Communists were against the Pan-Islamism movement that was a central tenet of the Sarekat Islam. Finally by 1922, the Communists had left the Sarekat Islam, weakening the organization significantly.²⁸

At almost the same time, in 1912, the Muhammadiyah was founded. It is an Islamic organization which rejected the non-doctrinal accretions to Islamic practice and demanded a return to the teachings of Mohammad. By the early 1920s, the Muhammadiyah began to spread rapidly, gaining more influence at the expense of Sarekat Islam. By the late 1920s, the Sarekat Islam's influence had declined so much that its role as the representative of the Islamic community had passed to the Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama.²⁹

The Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is a conservative/orthodox Islamic organization which was first formed as a reaction against the modernists' growing influence in the growth of

²⁷ Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1958) 41-2, Deliar Noer, *Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia* (M.A. thesis, Cornell University Press, 1960) 17

²⁸ Justus M. van der Kroef, *the Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1965) 10-11

²⁹ Benda (1958) 46-7, 54, Noer (1960) 15

the Muhammadiyah. Unlike the urbanized and intellectual Modernist-led Muhammadiyah, the NU was organized and dominated by rural-based charismatic activists, such as *kiai* (religious scholars).

In general, members of the NU were predominantly from rural area of Central and East Java.³⁰ As most of their members were rural and non-intellectuals, the NU was handicapped by a lack of leaders with strong organizational skills. In essence, the NU was an umbrella organization of the traditionalist religious leaders, who wanted to defend their religious traditions in face of attacks from the modernists, not a strong organization with significant central authority.³¹ Not surprisingly, the NU were often demeaned by the more urbanized and intellectual leaders of the Muhammadiyah.³²

The Masjumi came into being when the Japanese in late 1943 decided to embrace the forces of Islam in Indonesia to support its war efforts by merging both the Muhammadiyah and NU into a large organization called the Masjumi (Madjelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia – Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations). After independence was proclaimed, the Masjumi then became one of the first political parties.³³ Within the party, both the NU and the Muhammadiyah were considered the pillars of the Masjumi.

³⁰ Allan A. Samson, "Islam in Indonesian Politics" In *Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No. 12. (Dec 1968) 1001-3

³¹ Andree Feillard, *NU vis-à-vis Negara: Pencarian Isi, Bentuk dan Makna* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999) 10

³² A very illuminating description was provided by Clifford Geertz in his notes from his stay in Mojokuto, a town in East Central Java. In a conversation with a member of both the Masjumi and the Muhammadiyah, the member:

went on to list the various intellectuals with academic titles in Masjumi... and compared this situation favorably with that of NU, which had only *kijajis* and such, and really no educated men. He said that NU was more interested in religion than Masjumi, and Masjumi more in politics. The NU leaders were undoubtedly deep enough in religion, he said, but they didn't know anything about leading a country. See Clifford Geertz, *Religion of Java* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) 149

³³ Kahin further noted that many members of Masjumi decided to call the party "Masjumi" instead of "Partai Rakjat Islam" (Party of the Islamic People) in order to utilize the existing organization of the old Masjumi. The new party took over all the branches of the Masjumi that the Japanese had allowed the Masjumi to set up all over Indonesia. Kahin (1952) 110-1, 156

The NU dominated the Majelis Syuro (Religious Council), whose role was as a legislative body within the party. The Muhammadiyah dominated the executive body within the party.

The Masjumi claimed to be the largest Islamic party in Indonesia, embracing Islamic politicians from every spectrum. In fact, it was a unique conglomeration of radical, traditional and moderate-intellectual Islamic politicians. This unfortunately had the adverse effect of limiting the flexibility of the leaders in order to maintain the cohesiveness of the party, especially after the Dutch finally agreed to leave Indonesia in 1949.

Tension grew between the NU and the Muhammadiyah in the early 1950s, as the NU resented what they perceived to be the Muhammadiyah's growing dominance within the Masjumi. This resentment accelerated after a Masjumi party congress in December 1949 which curtailed NU's power by changing the status of the Majelis Syuro from a legislative to a purely advisory body.³⁴ As many Islamic intellectuals belonged to the Muhammadiyah and these intellectuals dominated the executive body of the Masjumi, the Muhammadiyah slowly gained power within the Masjumi, to the chagrin of the NU.³⁵

The NU reacted angrily. In 1950 Kiai Wahab Hasbullah, in his first speech as the new leader of NU, warned about underestimating the power of the NU by declaring, "NU's strength is similar to cannon, a cannon indeed."³⁶ The situation, however, did not

³⁴ Herbert Feith, *the Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962) 234. Geertz (1970) 147

³⁵ Herbert Feith, *The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-3; A Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958) 40, Samson (1968) 1002

³⁶ Feillard (1999) 45

improve. By 1952, internal dissent between the NU and the rest of the Masjumi was so great that the NU seceded from the Masjumi and created its own party.

Another problem facing the Masjumi during this period was the perception among the rest of the political elite on the power of the Masjumi. Even though the Masjumi tried to position itself as a modern and capable party, the Masjumi's claim to be a party that represented the Muslim adherents who comprised over 85% of the Indonesian population was bound to generate fears in the other parties about the Masjumi and Islamic domination over the rest of Indonesians.

There was also the question of the role of Shariah (Islamic Law) in the Indonesian Constitution. When Sukarno and other Indonesian leaders started to draft the Constitution of Indonesia before independence was declared, there was a push by Muslim leaders to make the new republic an Islamic state. A compromise finally was reached in what would be known as the "Jakarta Charter," where the first principle of the new Indonesia was "Belief in God with an obligation to carry out the Shariah Islam for its adherents." By the time Indonesia declared its independence, however, Hatta was warned by a Japanese naval officer that the Christian groups in Eastern Indonesia were concerned about this first principle. Hatta finally agreed to push for the omission of the phrase "with an obligation to carry out the Shariah for its adherents." It was agreed upon on August 18, 1945 during the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (PPKI/Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia), which was responsible for ratifying the new Indonesian constitution.³⁷

³⁷ Rose (1987) 112, 124-5. See also Mohammad Hatta, *Memoir* (Jakarta: P.T. Tintamas Indonesia, 1979) 458-60

However, many Muslim leaders felt betrayed by the omission of the Shariah from the Constitution and remained unsatisfied even though Sukarno upon the recommendation of the Muslim leaders of the NU decided to rephrase the "Belief in God" to "Belief in a single God" as a compromise.³⁸ As Deliar Noer noted:

No protest was expressed by the Muslim representatives, not even a word disclosing their opinion. Partially their attitude was caused by the feeling that any protest was of no use because of the fact that they were far outnumbered by the other representatives, and partly also by the demand of times which made no thorough and careful discussions and confrontation of ideas possible. The Muslim representatives as well as other Muslim leaders were generally disappointed with the result of the Preparatory Committee, and blamed the secular nationalists for violating the Djakarta Charter. Ki Bagoes Hadikoesoemo, member of the Preparatory Committee... expressed his disappointment with the result of the Preparatory Committee, thereby pointing out that the struggle of the Muslims had not come to an end yet.³⁹

By 1950s, the Masjumi had taken this issue to the forefront of political discourse. Alarmed by the growth of the Communists, supported by strong rural organizations, and confident that they were highly popular, the Masjumi pushed for an early election, confident that they would win it and then would establish an Islamic state.⁴⁰

Unfortunately for the Masjumi, this belief had a role in making other parties alarmed and therefore against holding an election, as everyone was sure that Masjumi would have won an election, with the only question how big the Masjumi's plurality would be.⁴¹ Natsir, the first Prime Minister from the Masjumi, did not particularly help to assuage the fear by insisting on forming his cabinet without the participation of the PNI when the latter demanded some important posts, notably the interior ministry (which

³⁸ Robert Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000) 42

³⁹ Noer (1960) 36-7

⁴⁰ Hefner (2000) 42-3

⁴¹ Feith (1958) 145, van der Kroef (1965) 59

would be critical in preparation for the election and in distributing perks) and later by pushing Regulation 39 of 1950 concerning the rules of the election that were seen as favoring the Masjumi.

Furthermore, the idea of an Islamic state was not appealing to anyone outside of the Masjumi, including Sukarno himself. This sentiment was further strengthened by the perception that the Masjumi to some degree was soft toward or even protecting of the Darul Islam rebellion, which aimed to create an Islamic Republic of Indonesia.⁴² This fear would lead into the creation of an anti-Masjumi coalition by the PNI and other parties, supported by Sukarno, as will be discussed further in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

Thus, in a somewhat ironic sense, the Masjumi was the largest and supposedly the strongest party in this period. However internal dissent resulting from the struggle for power between the NU and the Muhammadiyah, and the fear from others toward the Masjumi's domination of Indonesian politics, wrecked any possibility of the party to completely dominate Indonesian politics during this period. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, one of the leaders of the Masjumi, aptly described the party as "an elephant with beri-beri (tropical sprue)."⁴³

2.6. The PSI

The PSI (Partai Sosialis Indonesia – Indonesian Socialist Party) was a small yet very influential party in the first ten years after Indonesia declared its independence in

⁴² Feith (1962) 211

⁴³ "Beri-beri" is an ailment caused by lack of Vitamin B and B complexes in the diet. It begins with a blistering of the mouth and throat that soon worked its way down into the stomach and intestines until it is impossible to absorb nutrients from food. In Indonesia it was generally seen as indication of having not much to eat. Thus, he was implying a large party with huge potential remained powerless. George McT. Kahin, *Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics and Nationalism* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1950) 2, George McT. Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (London: Routledge, 2003) 67

1945, due to the abilities of its leaders, Soetan Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin. Both of them were also the first and second Prime Ministers of the nascent Republic of Indonesia due to their appeal to the international community, especially the British, the United States and the Dutch, considering that both Sukarno and Hatta were tarred with the accusations of collaborating with the Japanese.

The original PSI was formed on November 19, 1945 from a merger between Amir Sjarifuddin's Partai Sosialis Indonesia and Soetan Sjahrir's Partai Rakjat Sosialis (Socialist People's Party). The merger, however, was not completed and the Socialist Party remained divided among factions formed by these two leaders. The division became worse after Sjahrir's cabinet collapsed in 1947, since Amir Sjarifuddin did not help support Sjahrir. Sjahrir himself, in turn, abandoned Amir Sjarifuddin when the latter was under political pressures after the signing of the Renville Agreement.⁴⁴ Amir Sjarifuddin and his faction finally left the party in 1948. Sjahrir's group would lead the party until the party was banned in the late 1950s.

Sjahrir's faction was comprised of intellectuals of elite origins with Western-style education. Moreover, this faction also stressed the need to create disciplined, highly educated and ideologically sophisticated cadres. This attribute, however, made them appear as aloof elitists. As a result, while Sjahrir's group was well regarded as a group of technocrats, they did not appeal to the masses. Not surprisingly, in the election of 1955, the PSI was completely trounced by other dominant political parties such as the Masjumi, the PNI, the NU, and the PKI.

⁴⁴ This will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

In contrast, Amir Sjarifuddin's faction was comprised of people who had less education than Sjahrir's group. It pursued populist policies, and appealed more to the masses, thanks to Amir Sjarifuddin's talents for organizational work and oratory ability. In fact, Amir Sjarifuddin's oratory talent was, according to Benedict R.O.G. Anderson, only second to Sukarno himself.⁴⁵

The inner division within the party became acute after the fall of Sjahrir from the position of Prime Minister due to Amir Sjarifuddin's opposition to the Linggadjati Agreement in July 1947, followed by Sjahrir's rejection of Amir Sjarifuddin's Renville Agreement and the latter's decision to oppose the Hatta government. This led to Sjahrir's faction leaving the party and creating their own Partai Sosialis Indonesia (PSI). PSI-Amir Sjarifuddin, losing its influence in the government, would try to increase its influence among the masses, leading it to move closer to the PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia/Indonesian Communist Party). This calculation would eventually backfire as PSI-Amir Sjarifuddin would be destroyed along with the collapse of the Communist rebellion in Madiun in 1948.

Sjahrir's PSI, on the other hand, would survive the revolution to become an important player in the Constitutional Democracy period, especially due to the fact that most intellectuals in Indonesia belonged to this party. However, these people were a minority in Indonesia. As a result, its influence would steadily decline as it was lacking cadres who could appeal to the masses. Sjahrir himself did not have much oratorical ability and unlike Sukarno or Amir Sjarifuddin, he had "contempt for the masses."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ For more discussion on the comparison between these two factions, see Anderson (1972) 205-10

⁴⁶ Mrazek (1994) 348

Not surprisingly, the PSI was trounced during the 1955 election, losing any leverage it had left. Finally, it would be banned in the beginning of the Guided Democracy for the involvement of one of its leaders, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, in the PRRI/Permesta rebellion in 1958.

2.7. The PNI

The PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia/Indonesian National Party) was formed in 1945. It derived its name from Sukarno's old party during the Dutch period, though Sukarno himself never claimed himself to be leader of this party. Kahin, who was present in Indonesia during the revolutionary period, would write that:

The original mass backing (the party) rested on the fiction that the PNI was "the party of Soekarno and Hatta." It took many Indonesians a year or more to become disabused of this fiction, and some foreign correspondents never were.⁴⁷

Even so, the fact that many of the leaders of the PNI were veterans of Sukarno's old PNI, such as Sarmidi, Sidik, Sartono, and Wilopo⁴⁸ gave Sukarno some sort of attachment to this party. This connection was utilized so effectively that Sukarno in essence became a willing collaborator with this new PNI. Later, Sukarno himself further helped and strengthened the PNI during the Constitutional Democracy period, when he was looking for a stronger political base in the face of what he perceived as a bigger threat from the Masjumi and the PSI. In fact, during the campaigning period in 1955, many of the PNI's propagandists blatantly made the outright claim that the PNI was the party of "Pak Karno" (President Sukarno) and Sukarno did nothing to dispel such claim.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Kahin (1950) `55

⁴⁸ Anderson (1972) 228

⁴⁹ Herbert Feith, *The Indonesian Elections of 1955* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1957) 16

Due to the fact that many of PNI's leaders were Javanese and Sukarno himself was both Javanese and Balinese, the PNI had a strong political presence in Central and East Java and Bali. Many of its members came from the lower rungs of Javanese and other local aristocracies, civil servants, and ex-revolutionaries.⁵⁰ It is highly possible that the attractiveness of the PNI was due to the fact that Sukarno's support for the PNI meant political stability for these people. For the aristocrats, the expulsion of the Dutch meant that they lost their political patron, protector, and source of power, and the PNI was an attractive alternative to fill this gap. For the civil servants, the fact that their job security was often jeopardized with the change of the government made the PNI a very appealing party to support.⁵¹ The ex-revolutionaries, their military jobs in peril thanks to the military rationalization program, relied more and more on Sukarno as their defender, therefore strengthening their affiliation with the PNI.

Although the PNI relied so much on the power of Sukarno, unlike the Masjumi, the PSI, or the PKI, the PNI was lacking a strong central organization. The reason was not clear. It could be presumed that either the PNI did not feel the need to create a strong one as many of its leaders were not as well educated as the leaders of the Masjumi, the PSI, or the PKI, or the fact that the looming presence of Sukarno in the PNI made such an organization unable to exist.

⁵⁰ Feith (1962) 140, 142-3

⁵¹ By 1955 when Indonesia undertook its first election, the government civil service had become strongly politicized as parties made a habit of purging the bureaucracy whenever they were able to get in power. During the First Ali Cabinet, the NU pressured members of the Masjumi within the Ministry of Religion to join the NU or risk political dismissals. This was not an isolated incident. Members of both the Masjumi and the PSI were purged from many positions in the government such that by the end of the Ali Cabinet, many of the positions originally held by the Masjumi and the PSI were held by members of the PNI. Moreover, the fact that the Ali Cabinet had the longest tenure during this period made membership of the PNI for government officials very attractive indeed. See Ibid. 366-373

The lack of strong central organization would be the Achilles' heel of PNI. The rise and fall of the PNI would be closely related to the fate of Sukarno. When Sukarno fell from power in 1967, he brought the PNI down with him.

2.8. The PKI

The PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia/Indonesian Communist Party) was originally founded on May 23, 1920 by Semaun. In the beginning, members of the PKI were working together (or infiltrating) the Sarekat Islam until they were expelled, bringing a significant numbers of members of SI and thus severely weakened the SI. The PKI then was involved in various labor movements and their influence grew steadily until the insurrection of 1926-27, when the Dutch government finally clamped down on the PKI, exiling many of its leaders. The insurrection itself failed miserably due to the lack of unity among the PKI's leaders and the lack of preparation of the party activists.⁵² The PKI was driven underground.

When Indonesia declared its independence in 1945, the PKI reemerged. Following Dimitrov's "Popular front" line, which demanded the Communists to work with the other political parties, the PKI followed the practice of moderation and exercised restraint on extremist nationalism. The returning leaders also obeyed Moscow's line, though they were at pains to play down the Soviet's influence, as stated by Darusman in 1947:

Our Party program is a nationalist, not a socialist program. Our principal plank is to strengthen the nationalist movement and broaden the nationalist front. Socialism patterned on the Soviet model would not succeed in Indonesia.

⁵² Van der Kroef (1965) 16-17

Socialism must adjust itself to local conditions. We cannot copy the Soviet model.⁵³

At the same time, however, Moscow had a change in policy. With the emergence of the Cold War, Moscow pushed for a more offensive posture from the local Communists parties, breaking with the right-wing Socialists. Known as the Zhdanov Line, the doctrine also demanded absolute adherence of the Communist parties to the Soviet camp, though the PKI did not adhere to this line until 1948 after Musso returned from Moscow.⁵⁴ This would partly contribute to the failed Madiun Rebellion of 1948.

After the collapse of the Madiun Rebellion, the Communists were no longer a major factor in the revolution. In fact, Madiun became a blot in the PKI's history, especially after the party reemerged during the Constitutional Democracy period. The PKI, forever tarred with its involvement in the Madiun Rebellion, was also seen warily by other parties. Every political leader viewed the Communists with concern, including Sukarno and Hatta.⁵⁵

The 1950s saw a very slow return of the PKI to the political arena. The fact that the PKI was seen as supported and funded by Communist China did not help the PKI's image at all.⁵⁶ Not surprisingly, the 1950s were also marked by purges of the Communists. The largest purge was executed by the Sukiman Cabinet. By this time, Aidit

⁵³ Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963) 53, 57

⁵⁴ Ann Swift, *The Road to Madiun: The Indonesian Communist Uprising of 1948* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1989) 9

⁵⁵ The fear of the Communists in Indonesia was especially acute in 1950s when the memory of Madiun Rebellion was still fresh. On September 25, 1950, Cochran reported to Washington that:

Sukarno was worried over Chinese infiltration into Sumatra and West Borneo which he had seen on recent trip. Said British Borneo also penetrated by Chinese Communists from Malaya some even landing with jeeps. Indonesian authorities West Borneo concerned since these infiltrants moving into their area from British territory. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to Acting Secretary of State, September 25, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1066

⁵⁶ Brackman (1963) 154-5

rose to power as the chairman of the PKI and attempted to rehabilitate the party and to extend the olive branch to others. He also tried to rebuild Sukarno's trust by proclaiming the PKI's loyalty to Sukarno.

This effort largely failed until the fear of the dominance of the Masjumi and the distrust to the PSI caused both Sukarno and the PNI to collaborate with the PKI, inadvertently strengthening the party so much that the PKI emerged as one of the victors of the election of 1955. By 1957, the PKI gained so much ground in the regional election that the fear of both the PKI's and the Army's dominance in Indonesia forced other political parties to agree to Sukarno's Guided Democracy.

Under Aidit's strong leadership, by the 1960s, the PKI was one of the major political actors in Indonesian politics and its position was so strong both domestically and internationally that the PKI was seen as equal to the Communist Parties of both the Soviet Union and China. In fact, as a schism emerged between Moscow and Beijing, both Moscow and Beijing started to court the PKI, allowing the PKI to be independent from either side. Even so, the PKI would later side with Beijing as Beijing would provide political support and some assistance to Sukarno's belligerent policy toward Malaysia.⁵⁷

2.9. The Indonesian Army

The Indonesian army during Sukarno's era was probably one of the most unusual in the world. It was not a coherent single entity strong enough to completely dominate the political landscape. On the flip side, it was not so weak politically or apolitical enough to willingly operate under civilians. In addition, the civilian government could not control it

⁵⁷ This growing influence of the PKI will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

effectively, as the annual Indonesian budget was unable to cover the entire expenditure of the armed forces, forcing the military to find its independent source of funds, thereby severing it from the civilian's budgetary control. This remains the case even today. Therefore the Army was also considered to be a major political actor especially after the collapse of the First Ali Cabinet.

The reason for such a unique position was due to the origin of the Army itself. The Indonesian army was created by a fusion of three armed entities during the revolutionary period: former Dutch trained professionals (KNIL) that decided to swear an oath of loyalty to the new Republic of Indonesia, the Japanese trained officers (Peta), and the *laskar*, local militia units romantically seen as heeding the revolutionary call which in reality were independent fighting units comprised of youths and thugs. They were, in many cases, simply bandit gangs.⁵⁸

The KNIL faction of the Army were trained as army professionals, and when they joined the revolution, they wanted to mold the new Indonesian army into a disciplined entity with strong central organized structure not unlike other professional armies all over the world. In contrast, the Peta officers, mostly trained as guerilla units, were focusing on the independence of each unit and therefore were lacking in training and capability for staff work. In Nasution's words:

It even happened that a former KNIL officer stated his doubts as to the expertise and military skills of the former Peta officers, who had only received a few months' military training. The Peta men were not slow to reply: "We don't need 'clever' officers, 'international' officers. It is enough for us to have officers from the *sekolah rakjat* [elementary schools] who are sincerely committed and have the courage to struggle."⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: the Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991) 52-54

⁵⁹ Anderson (1972) 233, 239

During the revolution, the Indonesian army was able to stay cohesive thanks to the influence of General Sudirman and General Urip Sumoharjo, even though the *laskars* in general could not be brought under complete control. Still, their control was far from complete: many units remained independent and nominally subservient to the chain of command only due to the charisma of General Sudirman. As a result, the organizational structure of the Indonesian army was never complete and the leaders of the armed forces could only have influence in the scattered divisions either through the personal loyalty of the divisional leaders or through the agreement of the divisional leaders to obey the command.

After the end of the Independence War, the Republican government found itself with a 500,000 man army⁶⁰ comprised of units formerly belonging to the Republican Army, units belonging to the KNIL that remained loyal to the Dutch during the revolution, units belonging to the Dutch-formed federal states, and independent fighting units. Both the Dutch-trained professionals and the civilian technocrats in the government were interested in pushing for "rationalization" of the Army, which would demobilize troops that were no longer useful in peaceful times, forging a professional army, and creating a unified army command. In short, this was an attempt to create a formal hierarchy in the military.⁶¹

Laskars were the first to go: they were not as organized, as politically powerful, and as loyal as both the Republican Army and the KNIL. As early as 1947, their numbers were decimated by the Dutch attacks, even though by 1950, they were still approximately

⁶⁰ C.L.M Penders, *The West Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 184

⁶¹ Feith (1962) 171, Ruth McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army I" In *Indonesia*, Vol. 11 (April 1971) 134, 143

100,000 strong, spread all over Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan.⁶² By the time the Dutch launched their second attack on December 19, 1948, the performance of the Army, notably the Siliwangi Division, outshone them, and they were war-weary as they were forced to live in jungles and suffered from malnutrition, leading to diseases and despondency. They were not helped by the fact that the Army also disliked laskars and they occasionally clashed in order to disarm each other.⁶³

After the Roem Royen agreement that ended the military part of Indonesian struggle for independence was signed on May 7, 1949, most of the laskars simply disbanded: many went back to their old professions as criminals and some later resurfaced in uprisings in East Timor between 1959 and 1965. Others joined the Darul Islam, an Islamic rebellion with strong bases in West Java, Central Java, and Aceh. This rebellion would later be joined by one particularly strong guerilla group under Kahar Muzakar in South Sulawesi with 20,000 men in 1952. The rest were able to join the Indonesian military, including the Siliwangi Division, to suppress the Darul Islam rebellion.⁶⁴

Many of the irregulars ended up joining the Army in staggering numbers, which further bloated the already resource-poor army. One example was the Brawijaya Division of East Java in the early months of 1950. Before the demobilization, the division had grown from 8,000 to 40,000, leading to serious disciplinary problems such as banditry, extortions, corruption, and illegal gambling. The abuses of power were so severe that

⁶² Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: the Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York: The New Press, 1995) 46

⁶³ Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 23

⁶⁴ Cribb (1991) 178, 183, Feith (1962) 212-4

Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX of Jogjakarta, then the Minister of Defense, after some political maneuverings, sacked Colonel Sungkono, the commander of East Java, who was blamed for many of the excesses, and declared that on-the-spot executions would be carried out against corrupt and unruly elements of the military.⁶⁵

The demobilization of both the Republican army and the KNIL were much more problematic. By the terms of the Hague Agreement, the KNIL, numbering approximately 65,000 strong, would have been demobilized or would have been integrated into the Indonesian army. By July 26, 1950, 26,000 units were incorporated into the armed forces, 18,750 had been demobilized, and 3,250 had departed to the Netherlands.⁶⁶

However, despite the agreement, some of the members of the KNIL understandably had misgivings about the treatment that they would receive either after demobilization or after integration into the Army. Their fear was not groundless: the new civilian Indonesian government believed that ex-KNIL soldiers were a Dutch Trojan horse (a dangerous one, considering that they were well-armed, well-organized and battle-tested) and tried either to retire or transfer them into insignificant positions.⁶⁷ This mistrust was further exacerbated by the unwillingness and resistance of the Netherlands officers commanding the KNIL troops to transfer their former soldiers to the Republican Army. They tried to sabotage it by holding up papers and by causing many delays,

⁶⁵ Penders (2002) 200-1, 204

⁶⁶ Kahin (1952) 453

⁶⁷ Ruth McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army I" In *Indonesia*, Vol. 11 (April 1971) 135.

creating the impression among former KNIL soldiers that they were unwanted in the Republican force.⁶⁸

The distrust between both sides resulted in major rebellions in the 1950s such as the Westerling Affair/APRA (Angkatan Perang Ratu Adil/Just King Army) in West Java, Republik Maluku Selatan/RMS (South Moluccas Republic – which was not over until early 1952) in the southern part of Maluku Islands, and Andi Aziz rebellion in Southern Sulawesi.⁶⁹

On the other hand, as briefly mentioned above, there were also feelings within the Indonesian army that the Dutch educated officers were favored over those who served in the Republican army, especially those who joined before the revolution. By 1950, the division between the PETA-trained cadres and the Dutch trained officers still existed. The former was supported by both Sukarno and the PNI, both of whom were also wary of the latter, viewing it as a PSI-dominated military group trying to make the Army the stronghold of the PSI.⁷⁰ The Dutch trained officers, on the other hand, had a cordial relationship with the technocrats in the PSI and Natsir's Masjumi while they were suspicious and hostile to some degree to Sukarno. In fact, they were to some degree the core supporters of Natsir's cabinet.

To further complicate the situation, the relationship between the Army and the party was literally a family affair, which resulted in constant interferences from

⁶⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, March 30, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 996

⁶⁹ A good summary of all these rebellions can be found in George McT. Kahin, "Indonesian Politics and Nationalism" In William L. Holland, *Asian Nationalism and the West* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953) 120-8. In addition, the "Trojan Horse" argument was supported by the fact that the Dutch actually intercepted the Indonesian army's dispatches and forwarded them to the RMS defenders, resulting in prolonging the rebellion well into 1950s). See Penders (2002) 199

⁷⁰ Herbert Feith, *The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-3; A Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1958) 112

politicians of the parties in the Army internal affairs. For example, Colonel Bambang Supeno, a firm opponent of the technocrats in the Army, was a distant relative of President Sukarno. Lieutenant Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, another leader against the technocratic group, was a close associate and a relative of Zainul Baharuddin, the most prominent critic of the Army in the Parliament and at the same time a nonparty chairman of the Defense Section of the Parliament. Meanwhile, the technocrat-oriented Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX of Jogjakarta, who was preferred by the technocratic leaders of the Army as the Minister of Defense in both Natsir and Wilopo cabinet, had close informal ties with the PSI. At the same time, Major General T.B. Simatupang, the chief of staff of the Army, was a brother-in-law of Ali Budiarjo, the secretary general of the Ministry of Defense. They both were supporters of the PSI.⁷¹

The political connections had an adverse impact on the rationalization program in the 1950s, especially when it started to have an impact on the ex-Peta officers, who would suffer the most from the demobilization. For one, they correctly perceived the rationalization program to be a threat to their position, since only those with formal military education would have a strong position in the new hierarchy. During the revolution, their effectiveness and reputation were based on their ability to attract and keep followers, and instead of formal education, what was required of them was the strength of the leaders' personality and their ability to protect and to provide security to the followers.⁷²

The "rationalization" efforts in essence would demobilize the bulk of ex-Peta officers and would force officers to undergo extensive schooling or training as most of

⁷¹ McVey (1971) 142-3

⁷² Ibid. 142

these soldiers were badly trained, underfunded, and as mentioned above, undisciplined. Those who refused to adapt were warned that "those who did not meet the requirements for higher positions must be prepared to fill lower positions."⁷³ Though by the end of 1950, the number of soldiers was reduced to 200,000 and only 80,000 irregulars left. By the time Wilopo took office in 1952, the economic necessity demanded further reduction of the numbers of the soldiers.

Not surprisingly, these Peta officers were hostile to the rationalization program. As a result, this period was marked by a struggle for power between the "professional soldiers" against the "Peta officers," and many politicians played a role in this dispute, especially in defending the latter from the rationalization process. The resulting tension between these two camps erupted on October 17, 1952 during the tenure of Wilopo, leading to the fall of the professional army group and ending the rationalization program. However, the Army would later regroup. They were hostile to the politicians who were seen as interested in splitting the Army for their personal gains. As a result, the Army decided to be involved in Indonesian politics as a way to defend their turf against encroachment from the politicians. This attitude would have a major influence in the Indonesian political development after this period.

2.10. Problem of Regionalism

Even though the idea of the independent and united state of Indonesia was supported by delegates from regions all over Indonesia and symbolized by the union of Sukarno the Javanese and Hatta the Sumatran, there remained tension between Java and

⁷³ Sundhaussen (1982) 61

the other islands. For the other islanders, there were fears that the Javanese were dominating the republic politically and economically: for example, funds allocation for public services brought grumblings such as "the roads in Java are generally better than those in Sumatra."⁷⁴

The Dutch utilized this factor in their attempt to retake Indonesia by creating various federal states all over Indonesia. Still, it did not work, as many of the new federal states were lacking in popular support and much of the population remained loyal to the republic. However, when the federal republic collapsed in 1950 due to the federal states' presumably being tainted through collaboration with the Dutch, it did not negate the conflicts brewing between the Javanese and other groups living outside Java.

The split between the Javanese and other islanders was pointedly shown in the factionalism within the Masjumi between Natsir, a West Sumatran who commanded the loyalty of many members of the young generation and intellectuals in the Masjumi and members outside Java, and Sukiman, a Javanese who commanded loyalty among old members of the Masjumi and Javanese members.⁷⁵

The Sukiman group could count on the support of the NU. This good relationship was probably bolstered by the fact that most members of the NU are ethnic Javanese. Sukiman himself enjoyed closer personal relations with President Sukarno and the PNI leaders than Natsir did.⁷⁶ On the other hand, Natsir was distrusted by the NU, and he was instead close to Sjahrir's PSI (Sjahrir incidentally belonged to the same ethnic group as Natsir) and within the Masjumi, the Muhammadiyah.

⁷⁴ Lawrence S. Finkelstein, "The Indonesian Federal Problem" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (September 1951) 294-5, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 54, Legge (2003) 274

⁷⁵ Feith (1962) 137

⁷⁶ Feith (1962) 137

This regional split between Java and other islands was also shown in voting behavior during the election of 1955. The PNI, the winner of the election with 8,434,653 votes (22.3%, 57 out of 257 seats) gathered 85.97% of its parliamentary vote from Java. Similarly, the PKI, the fourth largest party in parliament after the election with 6,176,914 votes (16.4%, 39 seats) gathered 88.6% of its vote from Java. In contrast, the Masjumi only received 50.63% of its votes from Java.⁷⁷ With the NU garnering 45 seats (a huge jump from the 8 seats that it previously held) in that election and the Masjumi rounding out the top four vote getters with 57 seats, the majority of the big parties were representing Java. It was not surprising that fear of Javanese domination became more pronounced after the election. This fear in the end would contribute to the collapse of constitutional democracy in Indonesia, when the regional leaders, tired of the "Javanese dominance," decided to rebel under the banner of PRRI/Permesta in 1958.⁷⁸

2.11. Indonesian Nationalism and the United States

In the period between 1945 and 1967, the relationship between Indonesia and the United States was marked by both mutual appreciation and mutual dislike. Both Indonesia and the United States realized that they needed each other. Indonesia realized that it needed the United States to assist in developing Indonesia after its independence and the United States was also useful as a major force in containing the Communist Soviet Union and China,⁷⁹ while the United States saw Indonesia as a key player in

⁷⁷ In 1954, the population of Java was 51,637,552 persons (66.2%) out of 77,987,879 total for all of Indonesia. Feith (1971) 62, 65

⁷⁸ This will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

⁷⁹ On July 15, 1950, Hatta stressed that the Indonesian government was "exercising increased vigilance against the Communist dangers from within." Cochran also noted that "Masjumi leaders inform Embassy

global politics, especially at the height of the Cold War. Yet both Indonesia and the United States always had a problem of seeing eye-to-eye in dealing with each other. On one hand, Indonesia complained that the United States never understood the domestic problems facing Indonesia, and was frustrated with seemingly slow reactions from the United States to urgent requests for either military or economic assistance. Most importantly, Indonesia resented the United States' attempts to draw Indonesia further to the United States' orbit. On the other hand, the United States complained that Indonesia never took seriously the danger of Indonesia falling to the Communist camp.

The United States realized Indonesia was one of the most important states in the world due to its natural resources and strategic location, and this importance could not be underestimated. The importance of Indonesia was such that the United States put Indonesia as one of the states that they could not lose to the Communists, as noted in a National Security Council Report written in 1955:

Indonesia is important as a country of 80 million people which recently won its independence from colonial rule; as a strategically-located island chain commanding the route between the Pacific and Indian Oceans and between Asia and Australia; and as a world supplier of rubber, tin, copra, and petroleum. The loss of Indonesia to Communist control would have serious consequences for the U.S. and the rest of the free world.⁸⁰

As a result, the United States policy during this period was heavily influenced by its perception of the Communist threat in Indonesia. This fear of the Communist takeover would be used effectively by various political actors in Indonesia in order to bring the

their party realizes Indonesia must eventually take side with US.... Admit however that present US military reverses Korea cause fear at least temporarily among lower ranks of party." Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 15, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1032. On July 26, 1950, Hatta further stressed that the Indonesian government was "strongly sympathetic to United States of America and to their resolve stop Communist imperialism. He admitted, however, that Indonesia fears Russia." Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 26, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1039

⁸⁰ National Security Council Report, May 3, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 153

United States (and its aid) to their side, especially in the volatile domestic political situation in Indonesia.

The volatile domestic political situation had a significant influence on the creation of Indonesian foreign policy during this period. Indonesian foreign policy was used as a tool by political factions to prove their nationalist credentials, especially on two major issues: the problem of Irian Barat (West Irian or West Papua) and the idea of a free and independent Indonesian foreign policy (*politik bebas aktif*).

The issue of Irian Barat became a preoccupation of every single Indonesian prime minister after the end of the Independence War, when the Dutch agreed to leave Indonesia while retaining Irian Barat. By 1950, as the Indonesians started to press the Dutch to leave Irian Barat and the Dutch refused to do so, the issue was suddenly brought to the forefront. It became a rallying cry for Indonesians, a nationalist issue that would be used to hammer cabinets that were seen to be weak against the Dutch, and also conveniently used by Sukarno to increase his nationalistic appeals and to bully cabinets that he disliked.⁸¹

In turn, this political stance affected the relationship between Indonesia and the United States. The United States had always resisted any attempts from Indonesia either to push for a military solution to the issue of Irian Barat or to bring this issue to the United Nations. There were two reasons for this position.

First and foremost, the entire issue was seen from the perspective of the Dutch, one of the members of NATO. As the Cold War unfolded and the Soviet Union seemed to have aggressive designs on Europe, the European theater became the main focus of

⁸¹ The problem of Irian Barat will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

United States foreign policy. Appeasing its European partners became critical in this sense. Moreover, the United States also realized that the Dutch still resented what it saw as the United States' interference in 1949 that ended its presence in Indonesia. Therefore, the United States was cautious not to push the Dutch too far lest it would undermine the Dutch loyalty to NATO, in which the Dutch were seen as a major component.⁸²

The other reason was the growing fear of the Communists' takeover in Indonesia. The Truman Administration, in light of the charges that "the Truman Administration had lost China," had approved a new foreign policy directive on April 25, 1950 called NSC-68 (National Security Council Report 68). NSC-68 essentially argued that the Soviet Union was prioritizing its aim to dominate the world – thus pursuing an aggressive expansionist drive, in contrast to the United States' aim to create a free world.⁸³

Washington further believed that the Dutch control over Irian Barat "would provide better insurance against possible Communist infiltration... than would incorporation of the territory into Indonesia."⁸⁴

Not surprisingly, the Dutch played on this fear of Communism by stressing many times to Washington the inability of the Indonesian government to contain the Communists, such as the fact that the Indonesians allowed members of the Chinese Communist Party to arrive in Indonesia and to disappear among the Chinese community, and even by arguing for the unsuitability of Ambassador Merle Cochran, the United

⁸² Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973) 83, Feith (1962) 156-7, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 77

⁸³ Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969) 374-5

⁸⁴ The Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk) to the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Foreign Military Affairs and Military Assistance (Burns), March 22, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 986

States ambassador to Indonesia who was one of the main supporters of the Indonesians in this period.⁸⁵

In face of this fear of the Communists' aggression, there were worries in the United States that Indonesia was soft toward the Communists, and of course the opening of the embassies of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China in Jakarta in 1950 did not do anything to assuage Washington's anxiety.⁸⁶ Not surprisingly, on August 26, 1950, Cochran complained in a cable to the State Department:

I told Sukarno he and his people were inclined to become too self-satisfied and complacent over their newly acquired sovereignty.... I said they might lose everything in a brief period unless they were keenly alive to the dangers of Communist infiltration in their schools, labor organizations, army, etc.... I said I had come to feel rather badly the past few weeks since it had begun to appear that Indonesians did not desire to have the world think they were even friends of the U.S. I said I had been obliged to "play down" assistance the U.S. was giving Indonesia in the way of police equipment, economic support and the assignment of medical, agricultural, and other technical experts.... I said I realized Indonesia's leaders had some conception of a "third force" comparable to those advanced in India. I thought time would prove, however, that one must take the side one feels is the right one in such a division as that which now faces the world.⁸⁷

Thus, there was a growing annoyance in Washington on the Indonesian position in international affairs: as Washington did not want to lose another state to the Communists, it kept stressing the need to have Indonesia align itself to the United States, yet Indonesia resisted committing itself to Washington's influence.⁸⁸ The reason for this unwillingness will be covered shortly.

⁸⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, Prepared in the United States Embassy in the Netherlands, March 30, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 993-5, Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Coe) to the Secretary of State, April 10, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1007

⁸⁶ Hatta gambled that by exchanging ambassadors with both the Soviet Union and the People Republic of China, he could quiet the opposition from the Communists. Brackman (1963) 140-1

⁸⁷ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, August 26, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1056-57

⁸⁸ Andrew Roadnight, *United States Policy toward Indonesia in the Truman and Eisenhower Years* (New York: Palgrave, 2002) 80-1

Moreover, as time progressed, the PKI grew in strength in Indonesia especially during the leadership of Ali Sastroamijoyo, whose cabinet was also seen unfavorably by Washington as leftist. Therefore, Washington became less and less enthusiastic due to the possibility of a Communist-dominated government of Indonesia holding sovereignty over Irian Barat. As a result, the United States tended to be neutral in the issue of Irian Barat.

For Indonesians, however, the United States' neutrality was seen as favoring the maintenance of the status quo – which was to the benefit of the Dutch. Moreover, many viewed the United States as not an honest broker in this issue, considering that 60% of the stock in one large and valuable oil field at Sorong, Irian Barat, was owned by Americans.⁸⁹ Not surprisingly, in Kahin's interview with Vice President Mohammad Hatta, leaders of Masjumi, PNI, the Socialist Party, and President Sukarno himself between 1954-6, he found a very bitter view of the Indonesians toward what they considered as the United States' partiality to the Dutch position.⁹⁰

The entire problem of Irian Barat in turn helped to increase the support for an independent and active Indonesian foreign policy (*bebas aktif*), in which Indonesia refused to align itself with either the United States-led Western Bloc or the Soviet Union, and instead pursued a politics of independence.⁹¹

⁸⁹ George McT. Kahin, *Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics and Nationalism* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1950) 35

⁹⁰ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 35, 249n.

⁹¹ The link between Indonesia's reluctance to align itself with the United States and the issue of Irian Barat was explicitly stated by President Sukarno in 1950, when he appealed to the United States to support the Indonesian position, which would earn the United States the "lasting friendship and gratitude" of Indonesia. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Acting Secretary of State, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1068. This link also arose during a discussion between Sukarno and John M. Allison, the US' ambassador to Indonesia in 1956. In his memoir, Allison recalled during that discussion, Sukarno mused:

If only the United States would support, in principle, the Indonesian demand that the Dutch open negotiations concerning the inclusion of this territory in the Republic of Indonesia, Sukarno could, he said, relegate the Communists to a position of no importance and no influence in the country. As long as the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were the only big nations to give

This conception of an independent and active Indonesian foreign policy was first proposed by Mohammad Hatta in a speech on September 2, 1948 where he proclaimed:

Have the Indonesian people fighting for their freedom no other course of action open to them than to choose between being pro-Russian or pro-American? Is there no other position that can be taken in the pursuit of our national ideals? The Indonesian government is of the opinion that the position to be taken is that Indonesia should not be a *passive party* the area of international politics but that it should be an *active agent* entitled to decide its own standpoint... The policy of the Republic of Indonesia must be resolved in the light of its own interests and should be executed in consonance with the situations and facts it has to face... The lines of Indonesia's policy cannot be determined by the bent of the policy of some other country which has its own interests to service.⁹²

While Hatta used his speech back in 1948 as a justification for Indonesian foreign policy, this speech was done in the contentious months between the signing of the widely reviled Renville agreement and the Second Dutch Military Action of December 19, 1948. During this period, there were attempts by factions dissatisfied with what they perceived as the United States' favoring the Dutch to push Indonesia to align to the Soviet Union. Hatta, believing that Indonesia's interests would be well served by maintaining good

public support to Indonesian desires, what grounds did Sukarno, have, he asked, to condemn Communists in Indonesia. John M. Allison, *Ambassador from the Prairie or Allison Wonderland* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973) 298

⁹² Mohammad Hatta, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy" In *Foreign Affairs* Vol. XXXI, No. 3 (April 1953) 446. Hatta himself admitted that the policy statement was made in light of leftist opposition. Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung on the other hand claimed that the basis of this policy was founded back in 1947 when Sjahrir in front of Indian Council of World Affairs on March 23, 1947, declared:

We have cultivated that Asian sentiment with such fervor that it is now a powerful force – and a powerful force for good I believe – which wisely used should help us realize not only the vision of ONE WORLD we have been striving for, but also the dream of the oneness of mankind. I am of the opinion what has impelled the nations of Asia to struggle for independence is not only based on truth but also in keeping with dictates of humanity.

From this speech, Anak Agung claimed that Sjahrir had "condemned the polarization of the world into two conflicting blocs, and he advised his fellow Asians not to follow that pattern and to abstain from joining these blocs." Anak Agung (1973) 24-5. The author of this dissertation disagrees with this interpretation, seeing this as more Sjahrir's attempt to gain support for the Republican position before Lingadajati from India than an attempt to create a grand strategy of Indonesian foreign policy.

relations with the United States, rejected this approach.⁹³ However, to admit this would essentially be political suicide. Caught between Scylla and Charybdis, Hatta pushed for the policy of *bebas aktif*.⁹⁴

This issue was brought back to the forefront during the Constitutional Democracy period, especially by Sukarno and PNI, in order to attack Masjumi and PSI which were believed to be too close and too accommodative to Western interests. Since the Communists (and the Soviet Union) were still in the political wilderness from the stigma associated with the Madiun Revolt of 1948,⁹⁵ this policy was the only viable alternative, and also fit with the entire idea of independent Indonesia. Even so, to preempt domestic criticisms, on February 21 the Indonesian mission led by L.N. Palar was sent to Moscow

⁹³ On May 26, 1948, the Soviet Union announced that it had agreed to exchange consuls between the Soviet Union and Indonesia. Hatta replied that according to the Renville Agreement, Amir had conceded that the Dutch would maintain control of Indonesia's foreign relations – a position that was highly contradictory with Hatta's other foreign policy action, which was appointing Haji Agus Salim as foreign minister and continuing the Republic's overseas presences. In addition, Hatta privately assured the American representative that as long as he was the Prime Minister, there would be no exchange of consuls with the Soviet Union. See Rose (1987) 144-5

⁹⁴ Rizal Sukma, reflecting on the origin of Indonesian foreign policy, noted the influence of domestic politics in pushing for the policy of *bebas aktif*. He also mentioned the origin of Hatta's speech, which resulted from demands of the Communist group to side with the Soviet Union, but he stopped short of stating what the author of this dissertation asserts – that Hatta's choice was based on his political calculation. See Rizal Sukma, "The Evolution of Indonesian Foreign Policy: An Indonesian View," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (March 1995) 307-8. Michael Leifer in analyzing Hatta's speech also argued that while the statement constitutes the seminal expression of the ideal Indonesian foreign policy, it was no more than a declaration of non-alignment, as Hatta kept expecting the United States' support for Indonesia's political goal. See Michael Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) 20. On August 15, in a letter to Cochran, Hatta further stated,

Indonesian Government policy while officially "neutral" is in reality a policy against Russia and its satellites. . . . Indonesians did not intend to contribute resources to Russia which would increase strength of that country and its satellites and produce force which might be used aggressively against Indonesia. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, August 16, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1052

For additional information on the Communists' threats that influenced Hatta's speech, see Rose (1987) 147-9

⁹⁵ The Soviet also did their supporters in Indonesia a huge disservice by commenting on January 15, 1950 in the aftermath of the Round Table Conference that "the "government "of Hatta-Sukarno. . . is ready to serve its real masters – the American Imperialists – faithfully and well." Ruth T. McVey, *The Soviet View of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1969) 83

to negotiate diplomatic exchange (Moscow refused to exchange embassies until 1954) and on February 4, Hatta announced that Indonesia was prepared to recognize Beijing as long as the Chinese first recognized Indonesia (China agreed three weeks later).⁹⁶

Moreover, the fact that the policy was supposed to be created during the height of the Revolution also gave the necessary symbolism and political capital to the advocates of this policy: the idea of independent Indonesia, which in the beginning was limited to the *de facto* and *de jure* independence from the Dutch, was extended into the idea of an *independent* foreign policy. By not committing itself to any side during the Cold War, Indonesia could maintain its identity and safeguard its independence from both internal and external threats.⁹⁷

Considering that in this period the idea of national independence and Irian Barat were major political issues for every party, it would be political suicide for any prime minister during this period to try to pursue a very close relationship or even a defense agreement with the Western Bloc, as Cochran wrote in his report to Washington on June 7, 1950:

I believe the (Hatta) government would be embarrassed by a bilateral agreement (with the United States) which would commit it to mutual defense obligations.... With the Indonesian press generally critical of the present government and with the recent wave of anti-colonialism, Hatta's position in this particular instance, as well as the position of any future government might be seriously endangered if the Prime Minister endeavored to draw Indonesia into a published agreement of the type the U.S. has negotiated with full-fledged allies in Western Europe.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ L.N. Palar, in a news conference on April 18, implied that by establishing relationship with the communist states, domestic Communists' opposition in Indonesia would cease. Brackman (1963) 140

⁹⁷ Brackman (1963) 141, Russell H. Fifield, *the Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945-1958* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1958) 121

⁹⁸ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Acting Secretary of State, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1028

By the middle of September, Cochran concluded that the policy of *bebas aktif* was simply a device to avoid worsening domestic division.⁹⁹ He was right that the volatile domestic politics in Indonesia did force the government to push for the policy of *bebas aktif*. However, he underestimated both the political and the psychological needs to maintain this policy. The more the United States pushed to abandon this policy, the more the Indonesians clung to it since the U.S. interferences in Indonesia's position both domestically and internationally ran counter to the very idea of independence. They were also a huge political liability that was not seen lightly and in fact would cause the collapse of the Sukiman cabinet.¹⁰⁰ The ultimate irony is that Cochran might have been an excellent person to diagnose these problems: however, he was a very bad doctor in curing the disease due to his inflexible attitude in pushing the Indonesian government to essentially discard the policy of *bebas aktif*.¹⁰¹

This policy of *bebas aktif* in turn reinforced another dilemma facing decision-makers in Washington. One of the biggest complaints of Indonesia was the seemingly indifference in Washington toward the urgency of Indonesian economic situation, especially after the transfer of sovereignty in 1949. Indonesia at this point had expected the United States to throw in massive economic assistance,¹⁰² probably similar to the

⁹⁹ Roadnight (2002) 85

¹⁰⁰ McMahan (1981) 320-1, Around September/October 1950, Natsir's Indonesian government privately stated that while it desired alignment with the US, it could not risk provoking the Communists, lest they bring down the government. Roadnight (2002) 86. This will be discussed in Chapter 4

¹⁰¹ Kahin, himself a target of Cochran's contempt, argued that in the middle of McCarthy's Red Scare, Cochran believed that he would have advanced his career if he could have induced Indonesia to abandon its nonalignment policy and to join the American camp. Kahin and Kahin (1995) 34

¹⁰² An example of this expectation could be seen in a conversation between Cochran and both Sukarno and Hatta, where they hoped "for ExIm credit greater than 100 million mentioning specifically 500. They have in Ind rehabilitation projects which they think warrant and necessitate utilization foreign capital to this extent. Both realize however Export Import Bank has responded generously and along sound business lines in limiting initial credit to 100 million." Kahin (1952) 442, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Acting Secretary of State, May 18, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1023

European Marshall Plan. The problem was that the United States Congress, whose authorization was needed, was not willing to participate, especially after the urgency of the situation had passed. As Melvyn P. Leifer noted, as far back as in 1947, William L. Clayton, the Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs, stated that the Americans had to be "shocked" into action. Leifer further observed:

Congress seemed no more eager to take positive action than did the American people. The [American] Republican [Party] victory resurrected the specter of economic nationalism and political isolationism.... Their concerns with overseas development were limited; their willingness to incur shortages or postpone tax reductions was nonexistent. They were still committed to America first, and their antipathy to foreign entanglements and financial sacrifices was pronounced.¹⁰³

Therefore, in order to persuade Congress to spend more money to assist Indonesia, the United States needed to bring Indonesia closer to the United States orbit.¹⁰⁴ As mentioned above, this in turn caused more resentment from the Indonesians.

In a nutshell, for Washington at the height of the Cold War, Indonesia's desire to stay independent was seen as a major problem, especially as the newly rehabilitated Communist Party grew stronger. Washington grew more alarmed after the 1955 election that showed a very strong performance of the PKI. To further reinforce the urgency of the situation, both the Masjumi and the PSI, which were backed by Washington, failed to garner significant shares and even the PSI was completely trounced. As a result, the United States under the leadership of Eisenhower and Dulles grew more alarmed at the prospect of Indonesia becoming Communists, and started to pursue a hostile foreign policy in regards to Indonesia. This policy would later culminate in covert support of the PRRI/Permesta rebellion.

¹⁰³ Michael Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) 145

¹⁰⁴ An example of this dilemma was the Mutual Security Act problem that will be discussed further in Chapter 4

CHAPTER 3

THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL: FROM JAKARTA TO JOGJAKARTA (1945-1948)

Leadership is badly needed by the general public in the midst of its revolution; a leadership that is strong and visible is the kind of leadership that is needed and suitable to the fighting spirit of the public aflame with patriotic fire.

Tan Malaka¹

As long as the world power structure remains imperialistic and capitalistic..., we will certainly be in and enveloped by the Anglo-American environment of imperialism-capitalism, and, however much we try, we will not be strong enough of ourselves to smash that environment to obtain complete independence for ourselves.

Soetan Sjahrir²

As you know the slogan of the Republican Government (during the revolution) is, 'All is running well.' It is the one item with which we can impress the Allies so that they'll see we are capable of self-rule.

Sukarno³

¹ George McT. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952) 174

² Herbert Feith and Lance Castles, *Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970) 444

³ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: the Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 233

3.1. Introduction: the Dilemma of Indonesian Independence

On August 15, 1947 in a middle of a deadlock in negotiations between the Dutch and the Republic of Indonesia, the Office of the Legal Adviser in Washington, in response to Dean Rusk's questions whether the Republic of Indonesia "constitutes a 'state' in the international sense" concluded that "Indonesia is not a state in the sense of being an international person." In order to justify its conclusion, the legal department provided five necessary qualifications on what constitutes a state: that the state must have people, a fixed territory, an organized government, capacity to enter into relations with the outside world, and finally, the inhabitants "must have obtained a degree of civilization, such as to enable them to observe... those principle of law which are deemed to govern the members of the international society in their relations with each other."

Out of five qualifications, the legal department declared that Indonesia did not meet the third and the fourth qualifications, which were the "organized government" and diplomatic recognition. On the third qualification, the legal department justified its decision due to the fact that "the Netherlands... does not... recognize it as the legal authority for (Java, Madura and Sumatra), and does not admit that the authority of the Netherlands no longer exist." On the fourth qualification, while the Arab States had recognized Indonesia diplomatically, the legal department argued that "the recognition by a few small states is overshadowed by the failure of the major nations and the majority of the smaller nations to extend recognition."⁴

This tortuous logic reflected the problems facing both the United States and Indonesia that arose from the Indonesia's Declaration of Independence on August 17,

⁴ Memorandum by Mr. Ben Hill Brown, Jr., of the Office of the Legal Adviser, to the Director of the Office of Special Political Affairs (Rusk), August 15, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1030-2

1945. From the United States' perspective, Indonesia's declaration of independence posed a serious dilemma. On one hand, the United States had portrayed itself as the promoter of the third world's interests and defender of the nationalist aspirations of the Third World. Therefore, the United States had a moral obligation to help the Indonesians. In fact, the Indonesians were expecting the United States to come to their aid, as Hatta stated six days after the Declaration of Independence:

World War One... saw the birth of a new idea summed up by the word "self determination." The author of that idea was the late President Woodrow Wilson. That concept took firm root in the minds of the subject peoples, and it was on this central issue that they based their struggle for freedom...

The six-year war just concluded saw history repeat itself. Both sides proclaimed high ideals; but it was the Atlantic Charter which succeeded in holding all men's minds in thrall.

For, does not the Atlantic Charter carry the solemn assurance of the Big Powers that they "recognize the right of all peoples to live under a government of their own choice?"⁵

On the other hand, this American aspiration ran afoul of the interests of the colonial powers, notably both the Dutch and the French, who were not keen on losing their colonies after years of privation and humiliation being subjugated by the Germans during the Second World War. The United States realized that their support was needed in rebuilding Europe and later, in keeping the Communists out. The United States simply could not afford to offend these colonial powers. Moreover, the United States realized that the colonies such as Indonesia would be very useful in helping to fill the coffers of Europeans, as noted in this instruction from the State Department in 1947 when there were turmoil between the Dutch and the Indonesians:

⁵ Paul F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997) 3

Dept desires speediest acceleration of trade between all of Indonesia and rest of the world. This desire of long standing now heightened by tremendous burden imposed on US ability to supply consumer goods under Marshall Plan. In this connection, for your info, careful estimates recently completed by Dept disclose indispensability of NEI [the Netherlands East Indies] as supplier of food and other commodities to meet needs under ERP [European Recovery Program].⁶

As a result, the United States was reluctant to completely support the independence aspirations of the Indonesians. Indonesia was too useful for the reconstruction of the Netherlands and, more importantly, the focus of the United States' attention in the years after the Second World War was in Europe, not in Asia.

The United States' dilemma was further exacerbated by the lack of good diplomats who knew what was going on in Indonesia. Its perception on Indonesia was heavily colored by biased reports written by Walter A. Foote, its pro-Dutch Consul General,⁷ who believed that the government of the Republic was full of extremists and 95% of population was "apathetic towards politics and desire only right to return to work in peace."⁸ The United States looked at the nationalist leaders as "politically immature, diplomatically inexperienced, and ideologically unreliable."⁹

As a result, it was not surprising that the United States policy during this period was biased toward the Dutch, who managed to reinforce the idea, thanks to Foote's reports, that the Republic was simply unfit to govern itself properly and lacked popular support. Thus, even if the Republic was recognized as a state, it would be against the

⁶ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, December 31, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1100

⁷ Arnold C. Brackman, an American journalist posted in Indonesia during this period, would later declare that Foote's behavior "embarrassed and offended the sensibilities, if not the political awareness, of consular officials." Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York: Praeger, 1963) 61

⁸ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, June 19, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 953

⁹ Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 165

United States' interest to give it the formal recognition it wanted since it would not bring stability to this region. Not surprisingly, the Office of Legal Adviser was reluctant to declare Indonesia as a state.

It was not until late 1947, when Foote was replaced by Charles Livengood and successive new diplomats such as Frank Graham, Charlton Ogburn, Coert DuBois, and later H. Merle Cochran arrived in Indonesia and brought new perspective to the State Department that the United States started to get a much clearer view of what was going on in Indonesia. Even in this period, however, the United States remained unwilling to support Indonesia due to what Washington believed was growing power of the leftist/Communist groups in the Republic. It was only after Hatta cracked down on the Communists in 1948 that the United States started to view the Republic favorably and only after the Dutch invaded the Republic unprovoked on December 1948, leading to public outrage in the United States that the Truman Administration decided to pressure the Dutch to end its dominion in Indonesia.

On the other hand, the Republic also realized that it needed international recognition in order to continue to exist. This calculation was heavily influenced by the fragile domestic politics in the Republic, where the elites could be roughly divided into those who supported *perjuangan* (armed struggle to achieve independence) and those who preferred the pursuit of *diplomasi* (negotiation and seeking for external recognition). Here, Sukarno's role was critical: his choice in supporting the diplomatic faction made Indonesia choose the path of diplomacy.

While in 1945 the option was still open for the Republic to push for armed conflict, by 1946, as the Dutch had become established in Indonesia, the Republic

realized that it had to stay on the path of diplomacy as the perjuangan path was no longer feasible. Moreover, domestic consideration mattered greatly: as many people grew disillusioned over the deadlock in negotiation, the government realized that only a breakthrough in the diplomatic path would guarantee its survival.

Therefore, the Republic had no other choice but to gain as much goodwill as possible from the international community, especially the United States. It perceived that support from the United States was critical for the struggle against the Dutch, even though so many Indonesians were wary toward the United States due to what they perceived as the United States' support for the Dutch, first by the transfer of the United States military surpluses to the Dutch troops and later through the Marshall Plan and in Indonesia.¹⁰ This in turn would affect the diplomatic policy that the Republican leaders pursued in this period.

¹⁰ Kahin (1952), 402-3. In a radiogram to President Truman, Sukarno complained, "Asiatic goodwill toward Americans... is endangered by the fact that the Dutch continue to wear U.S. army uniforms and canteens marked 'USA.'" Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: the United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945-49* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981) 102. John M. Allison, who would later be a U.S. ambassador to Indonesia, in 1945 still a junior officer in the State Department, noted that Washington was seriously concerned about this perception that on October 13, 1945, the (US) embassy in London was instructed

to make representations to (the British) Foreign Office regarding the use of American lend-lease trucks in Indonesia which still bore U.S. markings. Washington didn't want to have anything officially to do with action against the Indonesian nationalists. It did not seem right for [the US] to be furnishing the British with equipment with which to do a nasty job they didn't relish while [the US] refused to take any public responsibility. John M. Allison, *Ambassador from the Prairie* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973) 100

Kahin during his trip in Indonesia in 1948 reported that even at this point, the Dutch still ignored the United States' requests to remove all US insignia. See George McT. Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (London: Routledge, 2003) 31

3.2. Sukarno, the British, and the Dutch

On August 17, 1945, Sukarno and Hatta declared Indonesian independence. The day after, the new makeshift parliament¹¹ declared them as the first president and vice president of the new republic. From Indonesian point of view, this was a logical step to take: both Sukarno and Hatta were highly popular and they were probably the most readily recognized figures to the Indonesian masses.

Both of them were famous during the Dutch era as figures of Indonesia nationalistic movements. In Sukarno's case, he was probably one of the best and most gifted orators in the world. Their position was further enhanced during the Japanese era, when the two headed Japanese propaganda machine to garner support from the Indonesian population. Sukarno himself was actively helping the Japanese by recruiting people to join *romusha*, Japanese work gangs to build military infrastructure such as roads.¹²

In return for Sukarno's collaboration, the Japanese put the entire propaganda machine at Sukarno disposal, giving Sukarno visibility and a huge advantage in terms of popular recognition. This fact was painfully evident to other contenders for Indonesian leaderships, notably Sjahrir and Tan Malaka. Both of them in the beginning refused to sponsor the declaration of independence or to accept Sukarno's legitimacy as the President of the nascent republic. In Sjahrir's case, he was also concerned that Sukarno's image as a Japanese collaborator would hurt the Republic's position with to the Allied

¹¹ Memberships of this parliament were based on an earlier Japanese-appointed committee for preparation for Indonesian Independence (*Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (PPKI)).

¹² In his autobiography, Sukarno was defensive on his involvement with Japanese authority during this era. The number of people dying in *romusha* was notoriously high, something that Sukarno painfully admitted. However, for him, the Japanese era was seen as a time for painful sacrifice, which would end with Indonesian independence. See Adams (1965) 192-3.

forces. However, after their tours following the proclamation of independence to gauge popular moods among Javanese population toward the new government, both Sjahrir and Tan Malaka grudgingly admitted that Sukarno did command huge popular support and it was impossible for either of them to take over the leadership of the Republic from Sukarno.¹³

Sukarno's position as Indonesian leader, while in the beginning unchallenged among Indonesians, started to weaken when the British arrived several weeks later on September 8, 1945 followed by a military mission on September 16, 1945, led by Rear Admiral Patterson, deputy to Admiral Mountbatten.¹⁴ The British involvement in Indonesia was based on three main objectives: to expatriate the surrendered Japanese troops, to release all Europeans interned during the Japanese occupation, and to maintain law and order.

In the beginning, Indonesia would fall under the jurisdiction of the United States' MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area Command (SWPA). The British however, distrustful of the United States' intentions to the European colonies as Franklin D. Roosevelt was pushing for the decolonization process, decided to demand of the

¹³ Kahin (1952), 147-9. Sjahrir admitted Sukarno's popularity in his memoir written during the revolution and he also noted how ready the youths to obey Sukarno's commands. See Soetan Sjahrir, *Out of Exile* (New York: The John Day Company, 1949) 260-2. According to a memoir of Rosihan Anwar, an Indonesian journalist, Sjahrir told Tan Malaka when the latter asked him to support him to replace Sukarno, "If you are only ten percent as popular as Sukarno, we would consider making you the President." See H. Rosihan Anwar, *Kisah-kisah Jakarta menjelang Clash ke-1* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1979) 24-5. Sukarno in his autobiography published years after the end of revolution bragged about his ability to "connect" with regular people and to understand the gravity of situation during this period. He especially singled out Sjahrir who he saw as did nothing during the Japanese period and even during the revolution. See Adams (1965) p. 210

¹⁴ Idrus Nasir Djajadiningrat, *the Beginnings of the Indonesian-Dutch Negotiations and the Hoge Veluwe Talks* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1958) 21

Americans that they include Indonesia in Britain's area of command. The British believed that the United States did not understand the British position regarding to its colonies and essentially wanted to drive the British out of Asia.

As early as in 1942, Winston Churchill, in response to the United States' push for decolonization, exclaimed that he did not become the king's first minister "in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."¹⁵ This statement would be followed by his outburst during the Yalta conference when the issue of trusteeships came up, as noted in the minutes of the meeting on February 9, 1945:

The Prime Minister interrupted with great vigor to say that he did not agree with one single word of this report on trusteeships.... He said that under no circumstances would he ever consent to forty or fifty nations thrusting interfering fingers into the life's existence of the British Empire. As long as he was Minister, he would never yield one scrap of their heritage.¹⁶

Churchill was not alone in his suspicion toward the United States' intentions. In 1943, Maberly E. Dening, a British Foreign Service officer, complained to his counterpart from the United States that the Americans seemed to think that "the British Empire's only purpose was to sustain the lifestyles of the fabulously rich 'holders of rubber, tin, and oil shares' in London, Surrey or Devonshire." He further declared that the United States' handling of Asia was "ham-fisted," "Anglophobic," intending to push the British out of Asia by mounting a "smear campaign" that belittled the Great Britain, and attributing the worst of motives to the British actions overseas.¹⁷

¹⁵ McMahon (1981) 65

¹⁶ Sixth Plenary Meeting, February 9, 1945, Livadia Palace, *FRUS*, 1945, The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 844

¹⁷ Frances Gouda and Thijs Brocades Zaalberg, *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia: U.S. Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920-1949* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002) 115

It was not only politicians who had this attitude. The British military also believed that the very survival of the British Empire and other European empires was threatened by the United States, as noted in a paper prepared by the British Joint Planning Staff in April 1945, "It is desirable that the French and the Dutch should deal with us rather than the Americans on questions concerning the recovery of their possessions."¹⁸

This attitude had a significant impact in the discussion on the areas of control between the United States and the British after the end of the Second World War. Such distrust toward the United States' motives forced decision-makers in London to push for a minimal American presence in the European colonies. As a result, when the Japanese surrendered on August 14, 1945, Mountbatten found himself to be in command of the entire Indonesia and Southern Indochina theatre, which unfortunately for him was beyond his meager resources, and he only had very limited time to prepare.¹⁹

To make the situation worse, the distrust between Britain and the United States was mutual, which was also a major reason for the shortness of time available for Mountbatten's preparation for the reoccupation of Indonesia. Even though the British had been pressing the United States to transfer the jurisdiction to the British since 1943, MacArthur was not cooperative, believing that it would be difficult to pry the British

¹⁸ McMahan (1981) 77

¹⁹ According to Wehl, Mountbatten's force was comprised of one Army H.Q., one Corps H.Q., three divisions, two of them under strength, and one plus brigade in Burma. MacMillan further noted that for other area newly assigned to the British, Mountbatten had one Army H.Q., two Corps H.Q., six Indian Divisions, one East African Division, two under-strength British Divisions that would later be combined into one division, two assault brigades, and three tank brigades. Java was put under the responsibility of the XV Indian Corps whose strength was approximately 45,000 men. The Corps was given an unenviable task, which was to rescue 68,000 prisoners of war and more than 100,000 civilian internees on Java (most of them women and children), to disarm the Japanese 16th Army, numbering over 70,000 men, and to quell a hostile population of more than 50 million Indonesians in Java and Madura. Richard McMillan, *The British Occupation of Indonesia 1945-1946: Britain, the Netherlands and the Indonesian Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 2-3, 10, David Wehl, *The Birth of Indonesia* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1948) 35, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consul General at Batavia (Foote), December 9, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1183

loose from the Dutch territory. In fact, many Americans derisively called Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) "Save England's Asian Colonies."²⁰

To further complicate the situation, the Dutch objected to the transfer of the authority to reoccupy Indonesia from the British to the United States. They believed that the British were ill-prepared for this task, and as a result the Dutch placed their resources behind the Americans.²¹ On the other hand, similar to the British, the Dutch were also worried about the United States' intentions with respect to their colonies, and this conflicting consideration forced them to simply do nothing, letting both the United States and Britain to sort everything out.²²

Moreover, there was a major difference between MacArthur's goals for Indonesia and Washington's view on Indonesia. Even though MacArthur saw the British in a negative light, he did not see much difficulty with restoring the Dutch rule in Indonesia.²³ On the other hand, Washington had its own priorities, which were to speedily end the Pacific War and to bring the troops home, not to mention the fact that the State Department was opposed to involvement "in the politically explosive colonial problems of the British, Dutch, and possibly French." Furthermore, there were fears that the United

²⁰ McMahan (1981) 80

²¹ McMillan (2005) 10. Later, in early October 1946, Dr. Hubertus J. van Mook, who was the Dutch Lieutenant Governor General of Indonesia, stated:

Notwithstanding great objections on our part, the Allied Supreme Command in this area was transferred from the Americans, who had for years been preparing themselves for their task in this part of the world, to the British whose operational field up to that time had been much more limited. Charles Wolf, Jr., *The Indonesian Story: the Birth, Growth and Structure of the Indonesian Republic* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977) 16n1

²² McMahan (1981) 77-78

²³ Gardner (1997) 18-9

States might offend "the colonial peoples of Asia but also the free peoples of Asia, including the Chinese."²⁴

As a result, when MacArthur recommended to President Truman that they help restore the Dutch's "orderly administration" in Indonesia by using U.S. troops, which would achieve "full success at a minor cost," the State Department demurred, arguing that "US soldiers should not lose their lives for the sake of recovering the British colonial empire and its French and Dutch acolytes." Finally, there was no love lost between Truman and MacArthur. Truman, who privately called MacArthur "Mr. Prima Donna, Brass Hat, Five Star MacArthur," in the end rejected MacArthur's recommendation and officially ordered the U.S. troops to stay away from Java and Sumatra.²⁵

MacArthur eventually conceded, seeing his command was dangerously overextended, especially as he was preparing for Operation Olympic, the invasion of Japan. Still, MacArthur acquiesced only on May 30, 1945, and the change of the boundary itself was agreed by both Churchill and Truman at the last minute, on July 24, 1945.²⁶ This decision made sense back at the time, when the war was expected to last for at least one more year. However, when the Japanese surrendered in August, this decision left very little time for the British to prepare for this new responsibility. The unpreparedness of the British to immediately occupy Indonesia allowed enough time for the Indonesians to disarm the Japanese (sometimes forcibly, leading to clashes) and by the time the first British battalion, the Seaforth Highlanders, arrived in Indonesia on

²⁴ McMahan (1981) 82

²⁵ Gouda (2002) 163-4

²⁶ McMahan (1981) 76-77, 79

September 29, 1945, the Republicans had controlled much of the Javanese and Sumatran interior.²⁷

The discord in the chain of command was further exacerbated by intelligence problems, as reliable information was difficult to obtain. The Dutch, relieved of their Indonesian colony by the Japanese in 1942, were anxious to reestablish their rule. Believing themselves to remain popular and highly underestimating the strength and the support of the population to the new Republic, the government of the Netherlands pushed for a quick reoccupation policy.²⁸ As a result, even though the Dutch were aware of the Independence Proclamation of August 17, 1945, they believed that they would only be opposed by the ragtag Republican Army numbering between 40,000 and 45,000 men.²⁹ Upon landing in Batavia, van der Plas, the head of the Civil Administration in the "Council of Departmental Heads," which acted as Dutch provisional government of Indonesia, declared that the slightest show of Dutch force "will cause eighty percent of the [nationalist] movement to collapse."³⁰

Facing incomplete information coupled with faulty intelligence reports, it was not surprising, as van Mook later stated, that both the Dutch Liberals and Conservatives considered the new republic as Japanese-made (een Japansche machinatie), intended to wreck havoc on the Dutch, and lacking in popular support. This attitude would cause the Dutch to be obstinate in their negotiations with the new Republic.³¹

²⁷ Gardner (1997) 19, Wolf (1977) 16

²⁸ Van Mook's reminiscences, quoted in Alastair M. Taylor, *Indonesian Independence and the United Nations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960) 7. Allison mused that "the Dutch in Hague just couldn't believe they were so unpopular in Indonesia." Allison (1973) 99

²⁹ McMillan (2005) 15

³⁰ Gouda (2002) 166

³¹ Taylor (1960) 10. By December 1, 1945, even though the Netherlands had seen the popularity of the Republic, it remained committed to this belief and tried to convert the United States, who by this time had

This misconception also plagued the British, who were convinced that this would be a quick and easy task, especially when their assumptions were backed by unreliable intelligence from the field. For instance, in a report from Jakarta dated on September 14, 1945:

The bulk of the native populations in Java are indifferent to all political movements. The political problem is principally one of the towns. It is most acute in Batavia. The problem follows pre-war patterns. Most Nationalist leaders draw their following from the intellectuals and semi-educated, and of these the intellectuals are the worst... All indications are that the Nationalists are confused in their aims and badly organized... Once transport and security problems are solved, other tasks will be comparatively simple.³²

Both the British and the Dutch were not the only ones with faulty information on Indonesia. Even the United States, which originally held the responsibility for recapturing Indonesia from the Japanese, did not consider reoccupying Indonesia to be much of a problem. In 1944, for instance, Walter Foote, the United States consul general for the Indies (Indonesia) reported to General Douglas MacArthur about the unimportance

started to have second thoughts. A striking example was shown in a cable from the United States Ambassador to the Netherlands to Washington, arguing in support of the Dutch position and reflecting the prevailing Dutch belief of what was going on in Indonesia:

The present situation in the Netherlands East Indies is a product of Japanese inspiration and a projection of the Japanese war effort. In a very substantial sense, it becomes apparent that certain Japanese military authorities in the Netherlands East Indies (especially in Java), having themselves received orders to surrender, began at once to make use of the "native" peoples in continuation of the Japanese-begun warfare against the Dutch (and other people of the Occident). Japan was "defeated" in the war, and Japanese high authorities made their "unconditional surrender", but Japanese armed forces, through and with elements in the native population whom by various procedures they have made their dupes and agents, are still engaged in activities which might well be described as "vicarious guerilla warfare". One cannot but wonder how widely and how fully this is understood by and among the peoples of the various countries which, attacked by Japan, have fought as allies for the defeat of Japan and destruction of Japan's machinery and mechanism of aggression.

It certainly is an important American interest that machinations of any and every part of Japan's armed forces be promptly frustrated and that destruction of Japanese machinery and mechanisms of aggression be quickly and completely consummated. Airgram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, December 1, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1177

³² Wehl (1948) 37-38

attached to the nationalistic movements in Indonesia by the majority of the population, a view that was shared by quite a number of officials in the United States:

The natives were docile, peaceful, contented, and apathetic toward politics. They were sociable, fun loving, and witty, but exhibited little or no interest in political affairs. This is easily understood when it is realized that the natives of the East Indies, practically without exception, are polite, mild, docile, friendly, and possess a sense of humor somewhat akin to our own. Their main interests in life are their wives; chicken; rice field; carabaos (Indonesian buffalo); chickens; a bamboo hut in a garden of banana and cocoanut trees; an occasional visit to the moving pictures (especially when "Westerns" are shown); [and] a new sarong now and then, especially around their new year... [and] news of the first landing of the troops in the Indies will spread like wild fire and will be the signal for jubilation.³³

Along with MacArthur's ignorance of the situation in Indonesia (which led to him underestimating the difficulties in retaking Indonesia as noted above), Truman did not fare much better in perceiving potential problems in Indonesia. As Washington relied on the regular political analysis of the American diplomats in the field in order to understand what was happening in Indonesia, to its chagrin, it could not get much accurate or coherent information, as the number of professional diplomats in Southeast Asia was very small. Even before the war, the U.S. Consulate General in Batavia was horribly understaffed, employing only six officers who had to cover an archipelago of 70-80 million people that stretched farther than the distance from Washington to San Francisco. The situation after the war was not much better. For the entire volatile region of Southeast Asia, where there were independence movements all over the place, there were only thirty diplomats representing the United States.³⁴

Not surprisingly, there was a great deal of confusion among the senior State Department personnel on what was going on in Indonesia. On August 13, 1945 the Office

³³ McMahan (1981) 74-5

³⁴ Gouda (2002) 161-3

of Strategic Services (precursor of the CIA), Research and Analysis Branch, published OSS/R&A Report #3229, stating that the Republic was a Japanese-made construct, though they added that Indonesian "collaboration might have been an opportunistic gambit by a nationalistic minority to enhance its bargaining position with the returning Dutch."³⁵ OSS/R&A Report #2512 believed Sukarno to be an "anti-communist" and he and Hatta to be "left nationalists who had deserted the [communist] cause." However, a State Department report stated that both Sukarno and Hatta were Communists, once enrolled in the same university in Moscow, which in essence contradicted the OSS' reports, since the Communists were unwilling to collaborate with the Fascist Japanese (many of whom either went underground or escaped to Australia). To make it more confusing, there was a lack of coordination among departments, each with its own competing interest and recommendation, leading Truman to grumble that each report commenting on the political situation in the exact same region "reached radically different conclusions merely because they were submitted by different intelligence agencies."³⁶

Therefore, it was not surprising that the Dutch, the British, and the Americans were shocked to find that far from being an unpopular movement, the young republic enjoyed a huge popular support. There was no jubilation in greeting the return of the Dutch to their former colony. In reality, Indonesians' respect for the Dutch had already been destroyed when the Japanese overran the Dutch in 1942, as Charlton Ogburn, Jr., would later find out during his tour in Jogjakarta in 1947:

³⁵Margaret George, *Australia and the Indonesian Revolution* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1980) 32

³⁶Gouda (2002) 160

Alleged failure Dutch offer any real resistance and servility Dutch internees to Japs stressed in every conversation [with Indonesians]. Believe Dutch lost prestige this period (is the) most powerful single factor [in the Indonesians'] subsequent difficulties [in accepting any control by the Dutch]. In addition contempt for Dutch, Indos seem completely convinced Dutch prewar psychology and intentions unaltered.³⁷

Even though the British were originally welcomed, they soon realized that the Indonesians were adamant against the return of the Dutch. Adding to the British problems, the inability of the British to quickly impose authority after the collapse of the Japanese administration created a condition of lawlessness, where local toughs, gangsters, and criminal bosses took over control of many areas. As most of them only paid lip service in declaring the allegiance to the Republican government, there was virtually no control over them and attacks soon started on the local Chinese population, the returning Dutch, and even the British troops.³⁸ To further complicate the situation, many of the Dutch internees left the internment camps, returned to their former houses and businesses, and became easy targets of attacks by armed Indonesian gangs.³⁹

In this chaotic situation, the British believed that Sukarno was the only person who could control the masses and in essence the only person who could bring the British mission in Indonesia to fruition.⁴⁰ By September 29, 1945, Lieutenant General Sir Philip

³⁷ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 17, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1072

³⁸ Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: the Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991) 51-4

³⁹ McMillan describes an interesting experience of Major Hickey, who led a Gurkha battalion in Bandung. Hickey received a call every single night from the Dutch population, asking to save them from the attacks by Indonesian intruders on Dutch houses. He solved this problem by randomly sending groups of two Gurkha riflemen, who concealed themselves in the shrubberies in the grounds of certain pre-selected Dutch houses. The policy was a huge success as the riflemen picked off the raiders with stenguns at close ranges, leading to sharp drops in house invasions. Not surprisingly, warning notices in Dutch houses proclaiming "Awas Anjing" (Beware of the dog) were rapidly replaced with "Awas Goorkha!" McMillan (2006) 25

⁴⁰ This was proven by Sukarno's handling of the Ikeda Affair on September 19, 1945. On that day, Indonesian youths held a rally in Ikeda Square, which was attended by around 200,000 people. The Japanese army, fearing an armed insurrection, guarded the entrance to the square. Should a riot occur, the

Christison, the commander of Allied forces in Indonesia basically recognized the reality of the situation when he "intended to request the present party leaders to support him in the exercise of his task" and he further declared that, "(Sukarno led) Indonesian Authorities (would remain) responsible for the government in the areas under Republican Control."⁴¹

However, the Dutch reacted with furor. First of all, Christison's proclamation was seen as a blunder that gave a virtual recognition to the Republic. To make things worse, Christison's proclamation could also be seen as an "amnesty" toward Sukarno and other Indonesians who collaborated with Japanese.⁴² The fact that both Sukarno and Hatta were working under Japanese authority during the Japanese period essentially made them pariahs to the Dutch, who believed that they would be warmly welcomed back by their Indies subjects were it not for Sukarno's agitations.⁴³

Moreover, Sukarno's inflammatory speeches against the Allies and his conduct during the Japanese period were also not forgotten. As noted above, the Dutch considered Sukarno to be a fascist, agitator, radical, and Japanese stooge. Therefore, the Sukarno-led Republic of Indonesia was a Japanese invention and the Dutch should never negotiate with Sukarno as the negotiations would be "unworthy" and "unfruitful."⁴⁴ In fact, van der

entire event would end up as a bloodbath. However, Sukarno simply made a short speech telling people to stay calm and to go home quietly. To the astonishment of the Japanese and Tan Malaka, who was present during the entire incident, everyone obeyed. See Benedict R.O'G Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972) 122-4. Sukarno's influence was such that Mountbatten himself stressed the need to negotiate with Sukarno in order to prevent civil war in Indonesia. See Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Southeast Asian Affairs (Moffat), October 18, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1166

⁴¹ Anderson (1972) 134-5, Djajadiningrat (1958) 26, Wolf (1977) 19

⁴² In Anderson's words, "The danger of war crimes trials or other penal action against Sukarno and Hatta was thus effectively, if not explicitly, removed." Anderson (1972) 136-7

⁴³ Kahin (1952)

⁴⁴ Taylor (1960) 10

Plas had concluded that in order to maintain order in Indonesia, the Allies must first "act against the terrorism of the Sukarno-group aimed at all moderate nationalists."⁴⁵

The British, however, were exhausted. They were short on troops.⁴⁶ Worse, in their effort to accomplish their mission of evacuating both the Dutch internees and the Japanese personnel, they aroused the mistrust of the Republicans, fearing that the British were preparing the ground for the return of the Dutch. Not surprisingly, the British military movements triggered armed conflicts all over Java. The conditions had deteriorated so greatly that in an allied conference in Singapore on October 10-11, Mountbatten tried to persuade the Dutch to meet with the leading Indonesian Republicans to no avail. By late October, the British described the Dutch policy as "characterized by an unwillingness to realize the actualities of the situation."⁴⁷

In the meantime, the political situation also changed drastically in the new republic. Sukarno was starting to lose his grip on the situation as the threat of the return of the Dutch increased. He was well aware of the depths of aversion of the Dutch to him and their refusal to negotiate with the Indonesian Republic as long as he was still in

⁴⁵ Djajadiningrat (1958) 23

⁴⁶ On September 29, 1945, Britain informed the United States that it had:

1. One British battalion at Batavia on September 29, one brigade at Batavia by October 2
2. One British brigade less a battalion at Padang, October 10
3. One British brigade at Surabaya, October 14
4. One British battalion at Medan, October 14
5. Three Dutch companies on September 29 and four more additional companies at Batavia about October 4
6. Shortly after October 20, four Dutch battalions from Europe and thirteen additional battalions at some indeterminate date.

The U.S. State Department believed that the Dutch only had 2,000 soldiers available in Australia, 5,000 soldiers at Quantico, US, and another 2,000 marines at Antwerp, the Netherlands, far short of what the Dutch claimed it could bring to Indonesia. See Memorandum by the Chief of Division of Northern European Affairs (Cumming), October 8, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1161.

⁴⁷ McMahan (1981) 93-5

command.⁴⁸ In one striking example, when it came to light that van Mook had been meeting with him during two informal sessions arranged by the British in the residence of General Christison, the Dutch government officially rebuffed van Mook and released an official statement that he had been acting outside his authority.⁴⁹

In addition, the leadership of the Republic was divided on what course to take in defending the independence. The vocal youth movements influenced by leaders such as Tan Malaka were gunning for a direct confrontation against the Dutch. As a result, the youths were frustrated by the lack of willingness of Sukarno and other leaders to rouse the masses and to push for armed struggle.⁵⁰

In contrast, intellectual leaders such as Sjahrir were pushing for diplomatic negotiation. For them, what was most important was to achieve international recognition for the Indonesian independence, and as a result, Indonesia had to pursue a diplomatic approach. Sukarno's link to the Japanese occupation became more of a liability than an asset. By the end of October, Sjahrir published his famous pamphlet, *Perjuangan Kita* (*Our Struggle*), which argued for the need to pursue diplomatic paths and to court the United States' favor due to its geopolitical influences.⁵¹ In that pamphlet, Sjahrir also stressed the problem of having Japanese collaborationists in the Indonesian government,

⁴⁸ Michael Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) 7

⁴⁹ Ali Sastroamijoyo, *Milestones on my Journey* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1979) 112-3. Anderson (1972) 179-80, McMahon (1981) 94. Van Mook actually did not know that Sukarno would have come to this meeting until it was too late and both of them were seated in the same room. At that moment, van Mook was presented with two unappealing options: leaving the meeting, thereby complicating the existing impasse, or staying to representing the Dutch. Van Mook chose the latter option. See Mohamad Roem, *Suka Duka Berunding Dengan Belanda* (Jakarta: Idayu Press, 1977) 15, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, November 8, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1172

⁵⁰ Cribb (1991) 54

⁵¹ The pamphlet was officially published on November 10, 1945.

declaring them the "running dogs" of the Japanese fascists.⁵² While he never mentioned Sukarno by name, this was seen as a veiled attack on Sukarno's authority, even though Sjahrir himself rejected the implication.⁵³

Facing these problems, Sukarno was psychologically exhausted. Even though he might have ability to attract the masses, the youths started to desert him for either Tan Malaka or Sjahrir, who were seen as more decisive than the feeble Sukarno and Hatta. He was also forced to make some concessions to other leaders, notably to the demand to create a makeshift parliament, which would shift some political power from his hand to a legislative body. Sukarno's reluctance was evident as it was Hatta who declared the creation of legislature body, the Proclamation of the Vice President X (Maklumat Wakil Presiden X), on October 16, while Sukarno was "unavailable."⁵⁴

Moreover, Batavia was no longer safe for him. He was living in constant fear of arrest or even assassination by the agents of the Dutch.⁵⁵ As Allied control increased over Batavia, he became isolated from his public and as a result he became less and less effective as a leader.⁵⁶

⁵² Soetan Sjahrir, *Our Struggle* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1968) 29

⁵³ Anderson (1972) 200, Mavin Rose, *Indonesia Free: A Political Biography of Mohammad Hatta* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1987) 140n, 221

⁵⁴ Anderson (1972) 172-3, Rudolf Mrazek, *Sjahrir: Politics and Exile in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, 1994) 272, 274

⁵⁵ Adams (1965) 233-4. Kahin noted that both Sukarno and Hatta were aware that the British were under great pressure from the Dutch to arrest them and there had been several attempts on their lives already. Kahin (1952) 149. During this time, both Sukarno and Hatta signed a political testament in which they would surrender their power to a committee of four comprised of Tan Malaka, Sjahrir, Mr. Wongsonagoro, and Dr. Sukiman should both of them become incapacitated. Anderson remarked "nothing more pointedly illustrates (Sukarno's) fear and consciousness of weakness at this juncture than his willingness to sign such a document at all." See Anderson (1972) 279-80

⁵⁶ There have been several interesting discussions on Sukarno's personality, leadership ability, and the impact of isolation and rejection Sukarno's choices from various scholars of Indonesian politics. Bernhard Dahm in analyzing Sukarno's contribution to the Indonesian nationalism movement, observed that Sukarno, despite all the radicalism and grandeur was "essentially unstable. He felt sure of himself so long as he drew support from the jubilant masses and could feel himself one with the "will of the people." [Once he was

The final blow was the bloody November 10, 1945 Battle of Surabaya. It was a watershed event for both Sukarno and the British. Sukarno realized that even though he still held the respect of the masses, the militant youths were moving away from his control. The British, on the other hand, were convinced that the status quo could not be maintained and they had either to commit more troops to Indonesia or to push the Dutch to negotiate with the moderate Republicans.

The origin of the battle could be traced to October 25, 1945, when the 49th Indian Infantry Brigade, led by Brigadier General Mallaby, arrived in Surabaya to evacuate both the internees and the Japanese personnel. The Indonesians believed that Mallaby's mission was to prepare ground for the arrival of the Dutch army.

As Mallaby negotiated with the Indonesian authorities under Dr. Moestopo, to his chagrin the British Divisional Headquarter in Batavia decided to drop leaflets over Surabaya, demanding that the Indonesians surrender their weapons within 48 hours or be shot. Not surprisingly, the situation went downhill quickly. With rumors spreading that Dr. Moestopo was arrested and killed by the British, Mallaby's brigade was soon under attack.

rejected by some nationalists], Sukarno... became unsure of himself.... He could no longer feel himself borne up by the sympathy of the whole people." Ingleson concluded that "Sukarno depended heavily on contact with large crowds and support from other people and removed from this had few internal and spiritual resources on which to fall back." While Dahm was evaluating the sudden collapse of nationalism movement in 1933 and Ingleson was specifically evaluating Sukarno's sudden pledge to the Dutch Governor General to leave politics in 1933 as he was threatened with exile to a remote island, one could not help but wonder if his isolation in Jakarta and Sjahrir's veiled attack during this critical period also produced the same effect as in 1933. It is possible that the effect of public adoration for Sukarno is similar to narcotics for drug addicts. See Bernhard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969) 170-2, JE Ingleson, *Road to Exile: the Indonesian Nationalist Movement 1929-1934* (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979) 220.

The brigade was almost decimated when Sukarno arrived on October 29, 1945 to quell the situation. The next day, Sukarno returned to Batavia, believing that the situation was under control. However, in the evening, General Mallaby was killed while attempting to free two of his officers who had been arrested by the extremists. The British were outraged and demanded the surrender of the killers of General Mallaby. On November 7, the British also demanded that the youths in Surabaya be disarmed. Facing refusal, three days later, the Battle of Surabaya began.⁵⁷

Even though the British managed to take over Surabaya, the battle was a huge surprise. The British were hoping for a small, relatively easy punitive expedition to capture the city. However, the British soon had to bring in naval, artillery, and air support to help the infantry units due to heavy resistance.⁵⁸ It took the British three weeks to finalize its control of the city.⁵⁹

Realizing the extent of the popularity of the Republic, the chaos in Indonesia combined with problems still brewing in other colonies such as Malaya and India, the British were convinced that an early British disengagement from Indonesia might require a much larger occupational force for an indefinite period lest the condition degenerate

⁵⁷ An excellent discussion of the Battle of Surabaya and events that led to the murder of Brigadier General Mallaby from the British perspective can be found in Chapter 2 of McMillan's book on the British occupation of Indonesia.

⁵⁸ Wehl (1948) 64-5

⁵⁹ After the debacle that almost caused the British 49th Indian Infantry Brigade to cease to exist, the British moved in the 5th Indian Division, which was comprised of three infantry brigades. The total numbers of the British reinforcement was 9,000 troops and 24 tanks. There were also the aftermath effects from the near destruction of the British 49th Indian Infantry Brigade. The Indian troops were particularly furious, as Major Henstock, a company commander, remarked, "The Hindu men had no qualms about killing Indonesians, who were Muslims, and were getting their revenge for our troops who had been massacred." The British were facing the Japanese-trained Republican Army numbering 20,000 troops and an unknown number of armed youths. The Indonesians, however, had no battle experience and lacked military training. This was shown in one incident, when a shell that landed on a British jeep did not cause any damage at all, as the Indonesians did not know how to set the fuses. McMillan (2006) 53-6

into what a British official called a second Greece.⁶⁰ The other option was to further press for a negotiated settlement of the political crisis. The British chose the second option and they pressed the Dutch to negotiate with Sukarno's regime.⁶¹

While Britain was pressuring the Netherlands to negotiate, on the other hand, Sukarno's position was badly weakened. While the battle showed the intensity of Indonesian resistance to the British (and the Dutch) and convinced the British to push the Dutch to negotiate with the Republic, for Sukarno it was the writing on the wall that showed that his ability to control the militant arms of the Republic was at an end.⁶² The November 10 battle in Surabaya erupted in spite of Sukarno's attempt to prevent it on October 31. In turn, violence caused by extremists and armed youths threatened his credibility as the only person on whom the British could rely to impose order on Indonesians, and that was the only thing that kept Britain from turning against him.⁶³

⁶⁰ Second Greece: Djajadiningrat (1958) 48, George (1980) 44, Taylor (1960) 12. The comparison between Surabaya and Greece is particularly striking. In autumn 1944, as the Germans withdrew from Greece, the Communist-led resistance force took control over Greece. Churchill, supporting the King of Greece, decided to send sixty thousand British troops, who defeated the resistance after considerable fighting. In both cases the British tried to impose unpopular rulers back to the respective countries. See A.J.P. Taylor, *English History 1914-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965) 589. Considering that the Labor party attacked Churchill's involvement in Greece, they had no desire to be accused of doing the same thing by the conservatives. Evelyn Colbert, *Southeast Asia in International Politics, 1941-1956* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977) 65 On British choices, McMahon (1981) 97

⁶¹ Djajadiningrat (1958) 29, Leifer (1983) 6, Wehl, not having much sympathy to the Republic, noted that the battle raised possibilities among Allied commanders that a repeat performance of the battle would cause millions to have died and both the Republic and Netherlands East Indies "would have been drowned in blood." This battle thus influenced the Allied policies in its aftermath. Wehl (1948) 67

⁶² Doel Arnowo, one of main leaders during the Surabayan battle, tried to contact Sukarno in Jakarta to get him to decide whether the Surabayans should resist or not. Each time he contacted Sukarno, however, he was put off or referred to other leaders. In the end, he was told to tell the Surabayans to decide for themselves. Anderson (1972) 16

⁶³ Wehl described the situation through a story of a British staff officer who was working in his office and was continually disturbed by the firing in the street below. The staff officer asked plaintively, "Why doesn't someone tell them to stop it?" Wehl (1948) 46-7. (Wehl himself was a British intelligence officer). As early as October 17, 1945, van Mook (possibly with glee) informed the Hague that Sukarno might lose power and might disappear from the scene due to the Netherlands' consistent refusal to deal with him and his increasing unpopularity with both the extremists and moderates in the Republic. Quoted in Djajadiningrat (1958) 31. On December 6, 1945, Lieutenant Colonel K. K. Kennedy, representing the United States, made

Worse, General Christison, who had earlier proclaimed that Sukarno's government was responsible for the Republican area, started to take a strong line against the Republic after the death of Brigadier General Mallaby, seeing that "the truce agreed upon in the presence of Sukarno and Hatta was broken by nationalists who foully murdered General Mallaby."⁶⁴

Into this political headache, Tan Malaka emerged as a major threat to Sukarno's position. Having realized the popularity of Sukarno among the masses, he decided to take advantage of this split among leadership between those who demanded an armed struggle to expel the Dutch and those who opted for peaceful negotiation by taking over the leadership of the former. Tan Malaka had supported the armed struggle and by early November, he started to express his distrust toward Sukarno's leadership. By November 9, 1945, Tan Malaka and his youth group had pressed Sukarno's government to resign.⁶⁵

This demand intensified after the Battle of Surabaya. Because militarily the battle was a disaster for Indonesians as the Republic experienced massive loss of lives and resources, not to mention they lost Surabaya itself in the end, it further radicalized Tan Malaka. Based on his experience in the battle, he was convinced that the spirit of resistance within the masses was high enough to fight the Dutch. As a result, he believed

a contact with Sukarno. Even though Kennedy saw that the Republic was popular and none would support the Dutch, he also observed that:

Sukarno's power to control all elements of the Indonesian nationalist movement declined rapidly after the British began to abandon General Christison's original declaration of policy in favor of restoring Dutch control. Youthful extremists in many areas eventually got completely out of hand; no authority in Java at the moment is capable of controlling them. Colonel Kennedy expressed the belief that considerable concessions to meet the political demands of the Indonesians would have to be made before order could be restored. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Southeast Asian Affairs (Moffat), December 6, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1179

⁶⁴ Gouda (2002) 165, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Southeast Asian Affairs (Moffat), November 8, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1171

⁶⁵ Kahin (1952)167-8.

that armed struggle was a viable path to gain complete independence.⁶⁶ This belief was reflected in his pamphlet, *Muslihat* (Strategy), published on December 2, in which he criticized the path of diplomacy that was taken by Sukarno and instead stressed the case for armed struggle.⁶⁷

Facing threats from three sides (the Dutch/Allied forces, Sjahrir, and Tan Malaka), Sukarno decided to throw his lot in with Sjahrir. From Sukarno's perspective, compared to Tan Malaka, Sjahrir was the lesser of two evils: at least Sjahrir wished to retain him as president even though Sjahrir would call the shots, while Tan Malaka was after his job.⁶⁸

More importantly, the choice of Sjahrir would provide the beleaguered Republic enough goodwill from the British. The Dutch themselves had indicated their willingness to negotiate with Indonesian moderates aside from Sukarno, therefore Sjahrir was the

⁶⁶ In *Politik*, a brochure that Tan Malaka wrote in 1945, on the first page, he proudly declared, "I feel happy to live, because, for a week already, I am allowed to witness the fighting in Soerabaja." In the same brochure, he further stated, "Recognition of the Indonesian Republic by another state is not a condition for the existence of Indonesian Republic." See Mrazek (1994) 307, 310

⁶⁷ According to Anderson, from that battle Tan Malaka drew the conclusion that the militant youths did have the will to resist both the British and Dutch. They were only lacking in organization and equipment. Thus what Indonesia needed was the creation of a massive, coordinated, armed resistance movement. It was only natural that he should lead the movement considering his charisma and the absence of other leaders who were willing to pursue this path. See Anderson (1972) 283-4.

⁶⁸ Kahin (1952) 169. In an interview between Kahin and Sjahrir, Sjahrir recalled Tan Malaka suggested that, "[Tan Malaka] be President and Sjahrir be prime minister with portfolios of defense, economic affairs, home and foreign affairs. Sjahrir would practically be dictator and he [Tan Malaka] only nominal head." Quoted in Mrazek (1994) 305. Legge further noted that Sukarno was worried about the growing popularity of Tan Malaka among the masses due to his militant position. See J.D. Legge, *Intellectuals and Nationalism in Indonesia: A Study of the Following recruited by Soetan Sjahrir in Occupation Jakarta* (Ithaca: Cornell Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1988) 102-3. As will be seen in the next section, it was also possible that Sukarno calculated that Sjahrir's position was more vulnerable than Tan Malaka's and thus Sjahrir would have to depend on Sukarno to maintain his power. Mavin Rose mentioned Sukarno's dislike to Sjahrir, yet unlike Tan Malaka, Sjahrir's political base was far from secure. She noted:

The fact that Sukarno was prepared to transfer his power to Sjahrir, a man he disliked, indicated how far his confidence had been undermined. But Sukarno was also aware that Sjahrir's position depended on Sukarno and Hatta remaining as heads of state and that he therefore did not pose such a personal threat as Tan Malaka. See Rose (1987) 130.

best candidate for the post of the Prime Minister from the Republic's perspective.⁶⁹ On November 11, Sukarno agreed to change the structure of government, making himself a figure-head president and giving power to a new cabinet led by a prime minister. On November 14, Sjahrir became the first prime minister of Indonesia.

There are two questions that we may need to ask about Sukarno during this period. First, was Sukarno predisposed toward negotiation instead of pursuing armed struggle? Second, how much constraint did he face, and could he actually make a choice, instead of being controlled by structures such as the international pressures and domestic politics?

The answer for the first question is neither: Sukarno was neither predisposed toward complete armed struggle nor diplomatic approach. In his excellent biography of Sukarno, Legge argued that during this period, Sukarno was in essence a conservative:

Brought up within the framework of Dutch rule, independence to him simply meant the transfer of the apparatus of the state from Dutch (or Japanese) hands to those of himself and his colleagues.... In the months following August 1945, the efforts of Sukarno and his colleagues [were] to lay the foundations of government and to reach an understanding with the British occupation forces, and later with the Dutch.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Telegram From the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant) to the Secretary of State, November 7, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1169

⁷⁰ J.D. Legge, *Sukarno: A Political Biography* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 2003) 231-2. Wehl however provided a very contrasting view of Sukarno. Writing in 1947, he argued that:

Sukarno was concerned with the end, not with the means, and the end was to be the end he wanted. From the very first moment of the struggle he announced what the end was; he announced that, indeed, he had already reached it, and although he allowed his colleagues and lieutenants to go through the motions of negotiation as much as they liked, the final word remained always with him, uncompromising and immovable. Wehl (1948) 30

Still, Wehl may have been overestimating the power of Sukarno and neglecting the fact that even the Republican elites were highly fragmented.

Sukarno, however, never committed himself to either diplomatic or armed struggle. The fact that he supported a diplomatic approach in the beginning seems to be based mostly on personal fear instead of a deep commitment toward this approach. He realized that the legitimacy of the Republic was in question and pursuing the path of diplomacy was thus a good policy to show that "all is running well." On October 9, in a letter to Christison, Sukarno pleaded his case for the independence while in the same letter, also threatening that, "the Dutch underestimated the spirit of the Indonesians and their capacity to wage a long and bloody struggle."⁷¹

Moreover, Sukarno disliked making difficult choices that would potentially backfire against him in the future. In cases where he interfered, it was only when other choices were not that appealing and the interference gave him the least risk. In fact, Sjahrir's ascension as the Prime Minister of the Republic was a blessing in disguise: he was no longer to be held responsible when the path of diplomacy proved to be unpopular, thus maximizing his freedom of action.

This brings into the second problem on the constraints that bound Sukarno during this period. It did seem that Sukarno faced many constraints that heavily limited his freedom of action both internally and externally. Sukarno himself, in his autobiography, devoted very few pages on this period, compared to his descriptions of his activities during the Dutch period and the preparation of Indonesian independence. Rather, he focused on positioning himself as the rallying point of the revolution, dealing mostly with pomp of the office of presidency. Legge further noted that:

(Indonesian leaders) needed (Sukarno's) integrative skills; they worked within the framework of his formal authority and could not have managed without him. If he

⁷¹ McMahan (1981) 96

did not direct the revolution he at least presided over it. His presence was enough in itself to draw support to the new government at the beginning and at critical times thereafter he made his own direct contribution to the shaping of events.⁷²

Legge places Sukarno as a symbol of Indonesian unity instead of a power broker. His chapter on Sukarno's activities during this period shows Sukarno as someone who reacted to events revolving around him. In short, Legge's description of Sukarno is of a figurehead president who was above the fray and only became involved when occasion forced him to do so. However, this description neglects a vital factor. While Sukarno seemed to completely lose his power, he still held one very important source of power: the adoration of the public. In fact, one cannot help wondering whether Sukarno by the end of the day actually welcomed this unexpected turn of events.

By staying above the fray, Sukarno's position was strengthened, since he was able to avoid the effects of unpopular decisions that successive Indonesian Prime Ministers had to take, such as signing the unpopular Linggadjati and Renville peace agreements between Indonesia and the Dutch in order to buy breathing space for the Republic and force the United States to commit its prestige behind the peaceful solution of the conflict. In fact, both peace agreements in the end would cause the downfall of successive cabinets of Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin.⁷³

⁷² Legge (2003) 233-34

⁷³ Anderson eloquently stated:

It was in Jogjakarta that Sukarno came into his own, after the anxieties and defeats of October and November. He was now in his native Japanese milieu, where his proleptic oratory stirred its deepest resonances, and where none could match him in firing the imagination and devotion of the people.... (I)n time of revolution, a voice could be worth more than a ministry. It is ironic that it was precisely the silent coup against his cabinet that freed him from the direct burdens of government and allowed him to increase his power in the way that he knew best.... At a time when authority on Java seemed so fragile and uncertain, these tangible evidences of popularity seemed all the more impressive, not least to political leaders. It was quite clear that whatever his status in the eyes of the Allies, Sukarno's personal authority over the people remained undiminished.... Freed from direct responsibility for government policy, he was able, gently and subtly, to separate himself from its shortcomings.... He was presenting himself to his listeners as

Moreover, in contrast to Legge's description of Sukarno, Sukarno was active even as a figurehead president. Sukarno was able to construct and to utilize a new source of power: his ability to broker agreements among competing interests in Indonesian politics. By positioning himself above the bickering of the politicians, combined with his ability to provoke and to receive admirations and obedience from the masses, he became the ultimate power broker.

As will be seen in the next section in the discussion of Indonesian politics under Sjahrir, Sukarno played to every side in a political struggle and always held on until the end, when he saw one side was badly threatened before he jumped into the fray and either restored equilibrium by propping the loser side (such as Sjahrir) or helped break the stronger side that he felt would have threatened his grip of power by the end (such as Tan Malaka) through his command of popular support. Far from removed from the political activities of the young republic, Sukarno managed to craft a new source of power in his position as the President that would serve him well even after the revolution until later in 1966 when his hold was finally broken.

the embodiment of Indonesian nationalism, permanent and unchanging, while cabinets might come and go. If, like the Cabinet, he called for calm and discipline at every place he visited, his speeches were always tinged with the messianic imagery that appeals so deeply to the Javanese. See Anderson (1972) 301-2.

Anderson's observation was actually supported by Wehl's observation in 1948. Wehl, not having any sympathy toward Indonesian independence movement, acidly noted in his book that even though: Sukarno had been politely kicked up upstairs, relegated... to... oblivion, this was not to be so. Sukarno retained all his holds upon the enthusiasm and imagination of the people, and his nice sense of popular feeling was once again to be displayed when he ... established himself at Jogjakarta. Wehl (1948) 70

3.3. Sjahrir Took Command

The Dutch-educated Soetan Sjahrir was one of main leaders of the Indonesian nationalism movements in both the Dutch and the Japanese periods. Both Sjahrir and Sukarno had worked together during the Dutch period, which led to their exile. Unlike Sukarno however, Sjahrir was Dutch-educated – he spent some time pursuing his law degree at Leiden University in Netherland, giving him some intimate knowledge about the Dutch.⁷⁴ He was also avowedly anti-Fascist and during the Japanese era, Sjahrir refused Japanese's offers to work with them. He was one of the leaders who were actively working against Japan by helping to debunk the news of Japanese successes in the war. Supported with a strong youth-intellectual network, which would later become the PSI, by the end of Japanese period Sjahrir became one of the most popular leaders among youths, seen as more energetic and alert, according to a contemporary youth leader, than "the feebleness of Sukarno-Hatta."⁷⁵ In fact, his main reason in refusing to support Sukarno and Hatta's declaration of independence in the first place was his concern that the proclamation was too weak and it should be more strongly and openly anti-Japanese to gain Allied support.⁷⁶

His resistance against the Japanese provided him with legitimacy to the outside world, giving the Dutch the impression that he was one of the most moderate leaders

⁷⁴ Abdul Chalid Salim, a leader of the PKI and one of fellow internees in Digul during Sjahrir's exile, remarked, "Sjahrir was truly a Hollandophile... The student life in Leiden left clearly a mark of Dutch-ness on him... and Sjahrir's marriage with a Dutch woman had also broadened his world of thinking, which was tainted Dutch.... [Both Sjahrir and Hatta were] so European in their disposition." Incidentally, Abdul Chalid Salim was a younger brother of Haji Agus Salim, an illustrious Indonesian diplomat from the Masjumi. See Mrazek, (1994) 151-2

⁷⁵ Adam Malik, *Mengabdikan Republik 2* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1979) 57-9

⁷⁶ Kahin (1952) 147, Sjahrir (1949) 258-9

among Indonesian nationalists with whom they could negotiate.⁷⁷ Therefore, compared to Sukarno, while Sjahrir was lacking the popular support among the masses, he would remain important as long as the Republic decided to push for a diplomatic recognition through negotiation.

On the other hand, Sjahrir's position in the Republic was far from secure.⁷⁸ First, the armed struggle faction led by Tan Malaka was completely against Sjahrir's diplomatic approach, and Tan Malaka also wanted to bring down Sjahrir's cabinet for his own political gain. Second, as mentioned in the previous section, Sjahrir's publication of his pamphlet, *Our Struggle*, contributed significantly to the deterioration of Sukarno's position in the Republic. In fact, Anderson calls Sjahrir's ascension to power on November 1945 a "silent coup," since Sjahrir in essence helped undermine Sukarno's position and benefited greatly from doing so. However, the publication also put Sjahrir in a very vulnerable position, as he made a lot of new enemies among people close to Sukarno. Many former ministers from Sukarno's former cabinet perceived themselves as being unfairly attacked in Sjahrir's pamphlet. These were powerful people in their political parties and they also had the loyalty of some of the militias who were affiliated with their parties. As a result, they urged their parties to oppose Sjahrir and his cabinet. In the end, this opposition would bring down Sjahrir's cabinet.⁷⁹

Third, Sjahrir managed to threaten the Indonesian army. In this period, there were two major components of the Indonesian army: former Dutch trained professionals

⁷⁷ Djajadiningrat (1958) 44, McMahon (1981) 106. On a BBC broadcast, Logemann, Dutch Minister of Overseas Territory proclaimed that Sjahrir and his cabinet "are not collaborators like their President Sukarno. We will negotiate with Sjahrir...." See Mrazek (1994) 294

⁷⁸ Sjahrir was also seen as a "frail bridge [between Indonesia and Netherland0." See Philip Jessup, *the Birth of Nations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974) 44. Van Mook remarked that the Sjahrir's Prime Ministership was "in state of continual tension" with weak hold on Indonesian side. See Mrazek (1994) 294

⁷⁹ Anderson (1972) 195, Kahin (1952) 169

(KNIL) and former Japanese trained Peta officers. While in the beginning there were clashes between the KNIL and the Peta officers in order to control the Army, the rivalry was finally ended for the time being, when these factions met to elect the supreme leader of the Army. General Sudirman was elected as the head of the Army. A Peta-educated officer, Sudirman gained respect and support through his success in arranging a wholesale surrender of arms by the Japanese commandant in his area. His fame further grew through his capable leadership in clashes against the British in Semarang and Magelang. He was also highly popular for his personal warmth, gentleness, strong emphasis on discipline on his troops, and for his outreach to every faction within the Army. Not surprisingly, General Sudirman was elected by the Army as their leader. After his election, he managed to appease and to gain loyalty from the former KNIL officers by choosing Urip Sumoharjo, a highly respected KNIL officer, as his chief of staff. The fact that General Sudirman himself was a highly respected leader through his excellent leadership and his focus on merit rather than background in treating his subordinates made Sudirman's position in the Army virtually unassailable.⁸⁰

The hostility of the Indonesian army to the Sjahrir's government was caused by two factors. The first factor was that Sjahrir's denouncement of those who had collaborated with the Japanese also struck nerves among these army leaders who formerly belonged to the Peta units, which were trained by the Japanese. If Sjahrir's pamphlet was not that clear in denouncing the "collaborators," Amir Sjarifuddin laid to rest any different interpretation to Sjahrir's pamphlet. As Sjahrir's Minister of Defense, Amir tried to delegitimize the Army leadership by denouncing the youths who had joined

⁸⁰ Anderson (1972) 245

the Peta as "having surrendered their souls" to the Japanese.⁸¹ The KNIL officers were not spared from these verbal lashes, as Amir also declared them to be "a mercenary army whose members were willing to be used by the Dutch government against their own countrymen." Both the KNIL and the Peta officers were "fundamentally empty of any political conviction."⁸²

The second and probably most important factor was Sjahrir's desire to bring the independent army under the government's control and to reduce the size of the Army. The Indonesian Army in this period was a loose organization without a strong chain of command, bound only by a shared determination to oppose the return of the Dutch and by loyalty to respected leaders in the Army. The Army was comprised of independent fighting units unbridled by the government. Sjahrir on the other hand wanted his civilian government to control the Army effectively.⁸³ His efforts to bring the Army under his command had a mixed result: on one hand, Sjahrir was able to impose Amir Sjarifuddin over the Army as the Minister of Defense, overruling the Army's desire to have Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX of Jogjakarta instead.⁸⁴ On the other hand, Sjahrir was unable to

⁸¹ Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 21

⁸² Anderson (1972) 248

⁸³ Economy was an important part of the calculation. Between October 1, 1945 and March 31, 1946, the Republic spent f.246 million (Japanese occupation currency) on the Army. Considering the fact that the total expenditure of the government was f. 420.7 million while its revenue was merely f. 118.5 million, it was not surprising that the Sjahrir government was interested in cutting the size of the Army. In order to do it effectively, the Army must be brought under complete government control. See Robert Cribb, "Opium and the Indonesian Revolution," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (1988), 705n5

⁸⁴ At that time, the Army had already elected Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, the Sultan of Jogjakarta who had declared his allegiance to the Republic after the proclamation of independence, as the minister of defense. Amir's appointment was thus resisted by the Army. See Anderson (1972) 247. According to Nasution, the complaints from the Army revolved around three main issues: (1) that the Sultan had already been elected by the Army, (2) Amir lacked military experience and training, and (3) Amir was a Christian and the majority of the Army was Muslim. See Nasution, A.H., *Tentara Nasional Indonesia I* (Bandung: Seruling Mas, 1968) 241. Sundhaussen believed that Sjahrir was committed to make Amir as his Minister of Defense because he was desperate to gain Amir's support due to the latter's greater popularity among the

get rid of General Sudirman and his attempts to circumscribe and to undermine Sudirman's authority even after his grudging acceptance of Sudirman as the leader of the Army meant that there would not be a rapprochement between them.⁸⁵

Not surprisingly, there were growing resentment from the Army toward Sjahrir's government. As a reaction to the Army's hostility, one of the main projects of Sjahrir's government was to create a new and elite army division, the Siliwangi Division, commanded by Nasution, who was loyal to him. In addition, Sjahrir also built up a Mobile Police Brigade, which together with the Siliwangi Division would prove itself one of the most effective fighting units in the Republic.⁸⁶ His other project was to create political commissars, members of his party who would be attached to the Indonesian divisions as a way to indoctrinate the Army and to bring the Army to his line.⁸⁷ Not surprisingly, the Army regrouped under leadership of General Sudirman, who became a rallying point for those who were trying to depose Sjahrir.⁸⁸

Internationally, the situation had tilted in Sjahrir's favor, as the British were desperate to stabilize the situation and leave Indonesia. Even though the Battle of Surabaya in British victory, they were anxious not to have a repeat performance. At the same time, they were also in a very delicate situation with regard to their ex-colonies.

masses. Amir himself had taken an interest in military affairs when he was still a minister in Sukarno's cabinet. Sundhaussen (1982) 20-1

⁸⁵ Anderson (1972) 248

⁸⁶ Kahin (1952) 184-5. Nasution would later recall that his relationship with Amir was good. However, he admitted, "When I was commander of the Siliwangi Division, my relations with Pak Dirman (General Sudirman) were not very close. As a result, he never paid us an official visit, except that once ... but he did not get out of his railway carriage." C.L.M Penders. and Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: A Political Biography* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985) 32

⁸⁷ Sundhaussen (1982) 26-7

⁸⁸ Anderson (1972) 244-5, 248

The use of Indian troops in Indonesia was heavily criticized in New Delhi. Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of Indian nationalism, had opposed the involvement of the Indian troops in Indonesia as early as September 30, 1945, when he declared his support of Indonesian independence. In October, he protested further against the use of Indian troops and regretted that India was not strong enough "to prevent Indian troops from crushing the spirit of independence of the people of Indonesia and Indo-China." Reacting to the Battle of Surabaya, he declared on November 17 that "India is deeply moved by the horrors that are being perpetrated in Indonesia."⁸⁹ On January 1, 1946, Nehru finally declared:

We have watched British intervention (in Indonesia) with growing anger, shame and helplessness that Indian troops should thus be used for doing Britain's dirty work against our friends who are fighting the same fight as we.⁹⁰

Nehru's agitation caused major debates within the British administration, concerned about the effect such a withdrawal from Indonesia would have. For instance, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, worried that the withdrawal of the Indian army from Indonesia would mean abandoning the Dutch and even the French in Indochina. Moreover, this would lead to "much wider withdrawals, facing us with serious loss of prestige in Malaya and Burma and leading to similar troubles there." On the other hand, General Wavell and General Auchinleck worried that Nehru's agitation in India would "suborn the Army" and since the British action in Java was "represented as European repression of national risings of Eastern peoples... it may have a serious effect upon the loyalty of the Indian Armed Forces."⁹¹ Even though London remained

⁸⁹ McMillan (2006) 147

⁹⁰ New York Times, quoted in Djajadiningrat (1958) 48

⁹¹ McMillan (2006) 148-9

committed to using the Indian troops in Indonesia and the desertion rate among Indian troops was surprisingly low, due to Nehru's agitations, the Battle of Surabaya became the last major battle fought by Indian Army units under the British commands.⁹²

The second surprise came from the south: Australia decided to throw its weight into the entire question of Indonesia. Ever since the Republic declared its independence, Australia had been watching political developments in Indonesia cautiously. While the Australian government was ambivalent toward Indonesia, the Australian Communist Party and the Communist leadership of the major Australian waterfront unions unexpectedly brought the issue to the forefront by declaring an embargo on all Dutch ships destined for Indonesia. In a circular distributed on September 24, 1945, the Waterside Worker Federation clearly stated its political nature:

Four ships... are being loaded with supplies for the Dutch Army that is being brought from England for the purpose of waging war against the independence of the Indonesian people.... The loading of these ships is a definite challenge to the democratic ideals of the Australian Labor movement. To assist the Dutch in any way is to assist avaricious Dutch imperialism against Indonesian democracy.⁹³

The strike was initiated by Indonesian seamen who in the beginning declared that they were not going to help the Dutch interfere with the Republic. Later their demands were expanded into wages and working conditions to gain support from the trade union movement.⁹⁴ The Australian Labor Prime Minister, Joseph B. Chifley indicated

⁹² According to David Wehl, the majority of Indian troops in Indonesia remained loyal to the British and their rate of desertion was trivial. This assertion was supported by McMillan, who noted that out of a total of 45,000 Indian troops, only 746 troops deserted or around 1.7% of the total. 60% of the deserters were Muslims, attracted by the idea of Pan-Islamism. On the other hand, the Hindus, which comprised a huge majority of the Indian troops, were less likely to desert, especially after they heard about the near destruction of the 49th Indian Infantry Brigade in Surabaya, where "Indonesians quite literally butchered people: they hacked them limb from limb." McMillan (2006) 156-9, Wehl (1948) 67, 104

⁹³ George (1980) 37

⁹⁴ There were different interpretations of the reasons of the Australian labor union's support to Indonesian independence. *Facing North*, a book on the history of Australia's engagement with Asia, which was

sympathy with the Australian-Indonesian "worker solidarity" and did nothing to end the stoppage, since he also depended on the laborers for his political support.⁹⁵ As a result, even though the Australian government officially was neutral on Indonesian matters, the Dutch not surprisingly were suspicious of the Australia's design on Indonesia.⁹⁶ The Dutch became further enraged when on November 5 and 8, officials from the Australian Department of Information declared in two shortwave broadcasts:

Australia cannot be blind to the fact that 40 million Indonesians [on Java] in our near north may well, in the long run, be more important to our security, not to mention our trade and commerce, than the few thousand Dutch who have hitherto controlled that area and whose control is now being disputed.⁹⁷

While the broadcast itself was officially repudiated by the Australian Prime Minister, the Australian Minister of Information, and the Australian Acting Minister for External Affairs, the underlying concerns for Australian government were clear. For Australia, the question was about its security: whether it was better to have the Dutch or the new republic as its neighbor to the north. The Dutch had failed miserably during the Second World War and at this point when the Dutch authority was completely dependent upon the British military support; one cannot help but to agree with the Australian position.⁹⁸ At this point, regardless of the official proclamation of neutrality, the

commissioned by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, argued that the Australian trade union had built contacts and relationships with the Indonesian seamen during the Second World War. As a result, they highly sympathized with Indonesian proclamation of independence. David Goldsworthy, *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia: Volume 1* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001) 140-2. Ruth McVey noted that the presence of the Indonesian Communists in Australia helped influence the Australian Communist parties (and the Waterside Worker Federation as an extension) to support Indonesian independence. Ruth T. McVey, *The Soviet View of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, 1957) 4

⁹⁵ George (1980) 38

⁹⁶ Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of Northern European Affairs (Cumming), October 8, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1162

⁹⁷ George (1980) 43

⁹⁸ As early as in June 1942, Dr. Evatt, the Australian Foreign Minister, reportedly told Dutch representatives that the Dutch had surrendered the Indies without any serious resistance. C.L.M Penders,

Australians had placed their bet on the Republic, or at least sat leaned toward the new Republic, though they could not do it openly and officially lest it would upset both the British and the Dutch. As a result, the official position did nothing to stop the workers from boycotting the Dutch ships.

Moreover, Australia had also refused to extend its military assistance should the British required more troops in Java. Australia had already stationed troops in Borneo as part of an agreement with the British earlier before the Second World War ended and it refused to do more than it already agreed to do. By November 1945, Chiefley confided to his Foreign Minister, Dr. H.V. Evatt, about the difficulties in face of domestic opposition in Australia to extend Australian troops' deployment even in Borneo, and he was sure the cabinet would reject any suggestion to transfer them to Java. Macmahon Ball, an Australian diplomat stationed in Indonesia at that time, further confirmed in his report in December that, "any Australian government which sought to transfer our troops to Java instead of bringing them home [from Borneo and Morotai] would be faced with a major domestic crisis." On December 18, the War Cabinet reaffirmed its opposition to any additional commitment of Australian troops in Netherlands East Indies.⁹⁹ Time was running out for the British even as the Dutch were desperately trying to keep them in Indonesia.

As the British kept pushing for the Dutch to start negotiating with Indonesia spurred by the elevation of Sjahrir to the position of prime minister, the Dutch decided to have a talk with Sjahrir on November 17 which went nowhere. The second talk scheduled

The West Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 167

⁹⁹ George (1980) 45

on November 22 was cancelled due to bloody clashes between the Dutch and Indonesian in Jakarta.¹⁰⁰ At this point, the British decided to ratchet some pressures to both sides in the conflict. On November 23, Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary declared that Indonesia needed to stop fighting and to start talking to the Dutch. Sjahrir replied by threatening more resistance should the British try to increase its forces or facilitate the arrival of more Dutch troops in Indonesia.

On December 2, Britain decided to reevaluate its policy in Indonesia as they faced unappealing choices. On one hand, in pursuit of long-term interests in Europe, the British needed to maintain friendly relationship with the Dutch. As a result, the British withdrawal from Indonesia would be detrimental to this relationship. In addition, Whitehall worried that the British withdrawal would create a dangerous precedent that would be interpreted by other British colonies such as Malaya, Burma, India, and Ceylon that violence would drive the British away. Worse, the British were unsure whether the new republic would be friendly or hostile to their interests in the long run.¹⁰¹

On the other hand, the British simply did not have stomach to continue sending its troops to Indonesia to maintain the security for the Dutch. There were grumbles in London complaining that the British had become agents of Dutch Imperialism in Indonesia.¹⁰² Moreover, there were tensions on ground between the British and the Dutch. The British troops were complaining that the Dutch troops were acting provocatively by "firing at nothing in particular" and an Intelligence summary on

¹⁰⁰ Djajadiningrat (1958) 44-45

¹⁰¹ McMahan (1981) 108-9

¹⁰² Djajadiningrat (1958) 48

November 1945 it was stated bluntly that both British and Indians were inclined to be anti-Dutch:

They have seen incidents where the Dutch and Ambonese troops have fired, in their opinion, indiscriminately and unnecessarily at inoffensive INDONESIANS. As an immediate consequence of such incidents, they have sometimes suffered themselves from the irritated population.

The feeling of bitterness was mutual, as the Dutch also complained that "the British and Indian troops shouldn't be in JAVA, that they were quite useless and a nuisance, and that Britain was trying to grab the NEI for herself."¹⁰³ On January 10, 1946, the Dutch further accused the British of "strengthening the hands of the Indonesian leaders to the detriment of the Netherlands Government's position."¹⁰⁴ As a result, the British were put in a quandary from which they would love to escape.

Therefore, as early as November 7, 1945, the British government decided to ask for the United States' assistance to break the deadlock in Indonesia.¹⁰⁵ For months, the United States publicly stayed silent since it was unsure about which policy to pursue in regards to Indonesia. On one hand, the United States was unwilling to offend the European colonial powers. On the other hand, it also did not want to repudiate its own declaration of the "principles of self-determination." Dean Acheson illustrated this confusion when he declared, "while the U.S. recognizes the sovereignty of Great Britain, France and the Netherlands in their colonial territories in Southeast Asia, it is not the

¹⁰³ McMillan (2006) 87, 98

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Northern European Affairs (Cumming), January 10, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 793

¹⁰⁵ Telegram From the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant) to the Secretary of State, November 7, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1168

policy of this Government to assist the colonial powers to reestablish by force their position in those territories."¹⁰⁶

Still, the United States became concerned enough that on November 20 the Secretary of State authorized the United States ambassador in London to inquire to the British Foreign Office whether the United States should approach the Dutch informally to ask them to negotiate with Indonesia.¹⁰⁷ On December 1, 1945, the British replied that the Dutch were ready to talk, however, the Indonesians were reluctant to meet with the Dutch, and the Republic's was unable to control the extremists. Therefore, the United States should give a statement addressed to neither the Dutch nor the Indonesians, but simply expressing the United States' concerns at the cessation of the talk.¹⁰⁸ This request was reiterated on December 10.¹⁰⁹ On December 19, 1945, the State Department finally declared its concern on the political development in Indonesia, the breakdown of negotiations, and it wishes for an early agreement between the Dutch and the Indonesians. The statement was seen as a support for the British position in encouraging diplomatic talk between the Dutch and the Indonesians.¹¹⁰

For the Dutch, it was a friendly warning to start seriously negotiating with the Indonesians with definite concessions toward nationalists, and they could not do much against it. The Dutch painfully realized that they were not ready yet to re-establish their authority in Indonesia especially after they becoming aware of the extent of resistance

¹⁰⁶ McMahan (1982) 110

¹⁰⁷ Allison however noted that the British pressure did not have not much influence in the United States' decision to approach the Dutch informally. Allison (1973) 101, See also Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant), November 20, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1173

¹⁰⁸ Telegram From the Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Winant) to the Secretary of State, November 7, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1175

¹⁰⁹ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, December 10, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1181

¹¹⁰ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consul General at Batavia (Foote), December 19, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1183

from the Republic. Like it or not, the Dutch were depended on the British to maintain order in Indonesia. In a cable dated on November 4, 1945, van Mook lamented the fact that the Dutch position was too dependent upon the British. He stressed the urgency to expedite sending the Dutch forces to the archipelago. A few days later, the Battle of Surabaya left him greatly disturbed about the possible cost of suppressing the Republic. Logemann, the Dutch Minister of Overseas Territory, in a letter to the Chairman of the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee, blandly stated the need of the Dutch to secure full support from the British as it would have been months before they had enough troops in Indonesia.

The Dutch government, to its dismay, also ascertained that until October 1946, no more than 30,000 troops would be available and on December 31, 1945, the strength of Dutch in Indonesia only amounted to 15,000 soldiers in the Army and 5,000 in the Navy. Schermerhorn, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands at that time complained, "It should never be forgotten that the (Dutch) Government must get everything, from the first trouserbutton to the last bullet from the British."¹¹¹ As a result, the Dutch had to restrain themselves from offending the British too deeply, and they grudgingly entered into the negotiations.

Therefore, while internally situations looked bleak for Sjahrir, international developments helped his position. Sjahrir was encouraged with the fact that both the British and the United States were pushing the Dutch to negotiate with the Republicans, and that the Australians were at least sympathetic to the Republic's interests. On Christmas Day, Sjahrir sent a telegram to Truman thanking him for the United States'

¹¹¹ Djajadiningrat (1958) 39, 43, 49

support for a diplomatic approach.¹¹² On January 17, Sjahrir declared his willingness to negotiate with the Dutch.¹¹³ Further encouragement came unexpectedly from the Soviet Union. On January 21, 1946, in response to Iran's complaints about the buildup of Soviet troops on its border, both the Soviets and Ukrainians demanded that the Security Council investigate the British military operations in Indonesia. On February 7, 1946, the resolution was brought to the Security Council.¹¹⁴ While the Ukraine's draft resolution that would have established a commission of inquiry was later defeated, the implication was clear: Indonesia had started to be a monkey on the back for Britain and a quick solution to this problem must be found. After further pressure from both the British and the United States, on February 10, 1946, the Dutch finally reopened talks with Sjahrir in Batavia (Jakarta).¹¹⁵

Still, the news was not all good. The British pressure on the Dutch made the Dutch believe that negotiation would not be useful as the Dutch pondered whether "it could fruitfully negotiate with Shajrir (sic) so long as he and his associates were 'pampered' by the British."¹¹⁶ Moreover, political turmoil in the Netherlands prevented the Dutch Government from offering too many concessions to Indonesia. There were arguments that the Dutch still needed Indonesia to rebuild itself from the ashes of the Second World War. The opposition started to attack both the government's policy on

¹¹² Mr. Soetan Sjahrir to president Truman, Christmas Day, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1186-1188

¹¹³ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, January 17, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 798

¹¹⁴ Memorandum of Conversation by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Vincent), February 7, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 804n41, 805

¹¹⁵ McMahon (1981) 115, 117, 119

¹¹⁶ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Northern European Affairs (Cumming), January 10, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 795

Indonesia and van Mook's role in implementing the policy.¹¹⁷ Anderson noted that at this point, even the Dutch government started to question van Mook himself due to his overt independence and pondered if he had gone too far in accommodating the Indonesians.

Furthermore:

After the humiliation of Nazi occupation, Dutch pride was highly sensitive to the idea of losing the vast colony in the East. Powerful economic interests and conservative political groups were determined to prevent what they regarded as a capitulation to Indonesian extremists, and with some success these groups accused the Cabinet of keeping the public in dark about its intentions toward and dealings with the Republic's leader.¹¹⁸

As a result, van Mook could not concede much to the Republic. When he returned after a consultation with the Dutch government, he brought a proposal that only stipulated that Indonesia could decide their political destiny after a limited period of preparation in which Indonesia would be in a commonwealth together with the Netherlands, Suriname and Curacao.¹¹⁹ However, the details of the new commonwealth were not elaborated, and neither was the "transition period," and to the Indonesians' dismay, the fate of the Republic itself was not specified in the proposal. By February 14, Sjahrir was so pessimistic on the outcome that in a conversation with Foote, Sjahrir complained:

If he accepted Dutch proposals he would be let out at once; that they provide only for Dutch domination; liquidation of the Republic of Indonesia; gave new names to old things and that the word "commonwealth" as used therein has no meaning. He added Indonesia ... would accept status similar to Australia's in British Empire. He concluded saying Dutch proposals so unacceptable as a whole that it is impossible now to discuss details.

¹¹⁷ Djajadiningrat (1958) 51. Van Mook would later recalled in his memoir:

The Netherlands government... had to shape its policy in a tense atmosphere, full of recrimination and contradictory emotions. It was convinced that self-determination had to be accorded to the Indonesian people, but at the same time it saw no possibility of rehabilitating the country without an interim period, during which the Netherlands would still carry their part of the responsibility. Hubertus J. van Mook, *The Stakes of Democracy in Southeast Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1950) 212

¹¹⁸ Anderson (1972) 303

¹¹⁹ For complete text of the proposal, see Van Mook (1950) 213, Wehl (1948) 109-111

Still, Sjahrir believed that he had to keep negotiating with the Dutch in order to earn the goodwill of both Britain and the United States, and hopefully having both Britain and the United States to pressure the Dutch.¹²⁰ Moreover, Sjahrir had long argued that in international relations, Indonesia was located within the United States and Britain's spheres of influence. In comparing both powers, Sjahrir noted that the United States had grown much stronger with the defeat of Japan and as a result, Indonesia needed to accept the limitations of independence and behave "in harmony with the political ambitions of that Giant of the Pacific, the United States."¹²¹ Furthermore, unlike Tan Malaka, he took a radically different lesson from the Battle of Surabaya. He believed that even though the battle forced the British to rethink its policy on Indonesia, militarily, it was a complete disaster for Indonesia with its many deaths.¹²² Therefore, he concluded that prompt negotiation with the British and the Dutch was necessary to prevent further useless sacrifices.¹²³

However, domestically, Sjahrir had started to lose ground especially as the Dutch stalled in the negotiation.¹²⁴ The Indonesian presses condemned the Dutch proposal as unacceptable and demanded a complete end to the Dutch rule. The Working Committee

¹²⁰ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, February 14, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 810-1

¹²¹ Legge (1988) 108

¹²² One official source noted that the Allied side suffered 14 soldiers dead and 59 wounded, while 430 died on the Indonesian side. It was estimated, however, that the real toll was very much higher with civilians as a majority of the casualties. The British reports estimated 2,500 dead and 7,500 wounded. Nasution, a leader in the Indonesian army, later pointed out that regardless of the symbolism and propaganda effects that the Indonesians derived from the battle, in reality it was a serious Indonesian defeat largely due to disorganization. It was also a serious waste of lives and equipments from a military standpoint. See William H. Frederick, *Visions and Heat* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1988) 278-9

¹²³ Surabaya itself remained a British possession and was later transferred to the Dutch. The Dutch would rule the city until the war was over in 1949. Anderson (1972) 283, Wehl (1948) 67

¹²⁴ Van Mook would later try to justify the Dutch policy by arguing that the Dutch were willing to negotiate only after "the Sjahrir government had had a chance to consolidate its more moderate line of conduct." Van Mook (1950) 212

of the Central National Committee (Indonesian legislative body during this time) declared the complete independence of Indonesia. Sjahrir himself avoided mentioning the Dutch proposal at all.¹²⁵

At this point, Sjahrir's domestic enemies smelled blood and started to attack the government. Tan Malaka had consolidated his position by crafting a popular front called *Persatuan Perjuangan* (the PP/the Union of Resistance), comprised of around 113 organizations, after a conference in Surakarta on January 15 and 16, 1946. The conference, while ignored by Sukarno, Hatta, Sjahrir, and the rest of the Cabinet, was attended by other powerful leaders of the revolution including General Sudirman himself, who declared that, "It would be better for us to be atom-bombed than to win less than 100% freedom." Tan Malaka closed the conference by declaring that Indonesia could negotiate only after it received one hundred percent freedom and after foreign troops had left Indonesia.¹²⁶

Sjahrir's diplomatic approaches became more and more untenable. Stuck with internal opposition and recognizing the pressures facing both the British and the Dutch, Sjahrir decided to stall, if only to negate domestic opposition. Of course this internal opposition would not matter much should he deliver the lasting agreement with the Dutch that the people expected, but the Dutch refused to play along.¹²⁷ The domestic situation deteriorated further with the PP clamoring for the overthrow of Sjahrir's cabinet,

¹²⁵ Wehl (1948) 113-4

¹²⁶ Anderson (1972) 292, Djajadiningrat (1958) 53, Kahin (1952) 174, McMahan (1981) 121

¹²⁷ In a report from Foote, U.S. Consul General in Indonesia to Secretary of State Byrnes dated February 14, 1945, Sjahrir complained that the Dutch proposal was so unacceptable that should he accepted the Dutch offer, his government would have fallen. Van Mook insisted that his offer was reasonable. Sir Clark Kerr, the British mediator, in conversation to Foote, believed that Indonesians would gain by stalling due to the fact that the British would not fight and the Dutch were still unable to do anything due to the lack of soldiers in Indonesia. As noted above, by December 1945, the Dutch only had 15,000 soldiers in Indonesia. See McMahan (1981) 120-1.

supported by Sjahrir's enemies. On February 26, Sjahrir decided to take a gamble by submitting his resignation.¹²⁸ The stage was set for confrontation between Sjahrir and Tan Malaka in a bid for the position as leader of Indonesia.

Into this fray, Sukarno exerted his influence. Ever since he lost his power to Sjahrir, Sukarno had been playing with both *perjuangan* (armed struggle) and *diplomasi* (diplomatic approach) factions. On one hand, Sukarno declared his trust of Sjahrir's ultimate goal for "100 per cent independence." On the other hand, he also declared that, "Sukarno would not go to Jakarta, and would not negotiate with Dutch."¹²⁹ Sukarno's mixed position was caused by his understanding of the fragile game he was involved in. On one hand, he realized that the influence of both the British and the Americans were critical in pressuring the Dutch to negotiate. On the other hand, he could not ignore the fact that domestically, those who supported armed struggle had gathered around the PP and gained more influence. This fact was vividly illustrated during a meeting on February 26, 1946, where Sukarno, president of Indonesia, declared that from about 250 telegrams that he received from local Indonesian leaders, "All... demanded ... a war against the Dutch be declared. Further, all these men and women ask that the conferences [with the foreigners in Jakarta] be stopped." On March 2, 1946, in a speech to the Central Indonesian National Council,¹³⁰ Sukarno further declared:

We are in war, the Indonesian Republican Army must be strengthened. Its strength shall be brought up to 1,000,000 men.... A course is already embarked upon to develop an "Indonesian atom bomb" filled with nitrogen.... No Dutchman

¹²⁸ Mrazek speculates whether that was more of a tactical move of Sjahrir.

¹²⁹ Mrazek noted that this last remark prompted Sjahrir's resignation.

¹³⁰ A makeshift parliament of Indonesia in 1945-1949.

shall be admitted into our offices and into our public enterprise. Eurasians may be appointed only when this is especially approved by the President.¹³¹

Still, Sukarno realized that Sjahrir's resignation would mean that he would face an unpalatable Tan Malaka as the next Prime Minister. Hatta apparently also threw his weight into supporting Sjahrir. Therefore, Sukarno decided to support Sjahrir by appointing Sjahrir as the premier in a new cabinet comprised of several new people who were also loyal this time to both Sukarno and Hatta.¹³² To Tan Malaka's chagrin, while Sjahrir had made so many enemies, these people also wary of having Tan Malaka in power. For instance, General Sudirman visited Hatta to report that the PP was planning to

¹³¹ Mrazek (1994) 314-5. This would be in contrast to Anderson's argument in his masterpiece study on youth movements and Indonesian struggle for independence from 1944 to 1946. In *Java in a Time of Revolution*, Anderson argued that the Indonesian government as a whole was forcing the diplomatic approach instead of pursuing a total struggle that would have led to complete social revolution. The diplomatic approach required the government to ask for support from traditional authorities and thus quash any movement toward a complete social revolution. However, during the period that was covered by Anderson, everything was still a toss-up, even though Anderson claimed that, "the chances that the [path of *perjuangan* (armed struggle)] would be taken had perhaps always been very small." If Anderson is correct that "(the older leaders) were at heart committed to some form of dialogue or *diplomasi* with the Dutch," then Sukarno's speech was completely out of place. Unlike Anderson's assertion, while Sjahrir was sincerely pushing for diplomatic arrangement with the Dutch, the possibility for armed confrontation remained on the table. See Anderson (1972) 188, 406

¹³² There are several versions of the events surrounding the entire episode. Hatta admitted that both he and Sukarno decided to block Tan Malaka's ascension. In his memoir, Hatta noted that during the deliberation after the resignation of Sjahrir, the PP, the PNI, and the Masjumi could not agree to create a replacement cabinet. Chaerul Saleh, a main leader in the PP, met Hatta for a discussion. He argued that the PP was the largest faction in the Parliament, and thus they should be the one to create the new parliament. Hatta replied that the PP might have been the largest one in parliament, however both he and Sukarno probably could count on the support from three-fourths of the population and challenged Chaerul to argue against it. Chaerul acquiesced and Hatta declared that both he and Sukarno could not support the PP. Chaerul Saleh decided to withdraw. The next day, Sukarni, another major figure in the PP asked Hatta to come see Tan Malaka. Hatta refused, asking Tan Malaka to come see him instead. After they argued for a while, Sukarni left. See Mohammad Hatta, *Memoir* (Jakarta: P.T. Tintamas Indonesia, 1979) 483-5. Kahin, himself close to Sjahrir's associates, argued that the main goal of the PP was to depose Sjahrir's group, or at least weakened it. However they were not inclined to have Tan Malaka supplanting Sukarno. Thus, when Tan Malaka was offered the chance to create a government after the resignation of Sjahrir, he was unable to do so. See Kahin (1952) 175-7. Anderson, on the other hand, pointed out that Tan Malaka was willing to form a cabinet if only Sukarno would accept his programs (which would turn the government from the path of *diplomasi* to *perjuangan*). Sukarno refused and he gave Sjahrir another chance to form a new cabinet. Sjahrir proceeded to break the PP by offering cabinet positions to key members of the movement, thus collapsing the movement. Tan Malaka, realizing the key role played by Sukarno in blocking his way to the top, called the new government "Sukarno-Hatta government" instead of Sjahrir's. See Anderson (1972) 315-9

launch a coup, however, he assured Hatta that the Army was prepared for it.¹³³ The opposition hated Sjahrir so much that they were willing to work with Tan Malaka to overthrow Sjahrir's government, but once Sjahrir resigned, they also found Tan Malaka an unappealing alternative. Therefore, Sukarno's support was critical in swinging the pendulum back to Sjahrir.

Returning to Jakarta on March 4, Sjahrir declared that his position was stronger than before and he had full authority to carry on negotiations.¹³⁴ On March 12, Sjahrir announced the composition of his new cabinet, and the next day he submitted his counterproposal demanding recognition of the Republic's sovereignty over entire Netherlands East Indies, rejection of a possible "transition period," and withdrawal of Dutch troops from Indonesia. In the meantime, he agreed for a federative union comprised of both the Dutch and Indonesians.¹³⁵ To further stress the stability of his government, on March 17, Tan Malaka and six other important leaders of the PP were arrested.¹³⁶

However, the Dutch flatly rejected Sjahrir's counterproposals and the talk broke down. In order to break the impasse, in March 1946, Lord Inverchapel (Sir Clark Kerr), the British mediator, suggested to van Mook that he try to use the French-Vietnamese settlement as a possible basis for negotiation.¹³⁷ Van Mook agreed, though he stressed

¹³³ Hatta (1979) 484

¹³⁴ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 6, 1946, *FRUS*, Vol. 8, 1946, 812

¹³⁵ Taylor (1960) 20

¹³⁶ Kahin attributed the arrest to the PP's explicit opposition to the Cabinet and their plan to hold a mass rally in Madiun. Kahin (1952) 177. Anderson, however, attributed the arrests to the government's preparation for further negotiation with the Dutch, in effect forcing the path of *diplomasi*. See Anderson (1972) 329-30, 404-5

¹³⁷ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 21, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 815

that officially he could only go as far as the offer on February 10, 1946. Van Mook further proposed that the Republic become a partner in a federation and allow the landings of the Dutch forces and cease hostilities.¹³⁸ While Sjahrir had misgivings on this proposal, he realized that the Republic had no other option but to agree. Both the United States and Britain had already considered the Dutch proposal as a "promising, " "generous one," and as an "honest and sincere effort to accommodate the nationalists' aspirations."¹³⁹ Lord Inverchapel on March 10 further warned Sjahrir that he objected to further delays in the negotiation, and any delay would cause him to request that the British Foreign Office to terminate his visit in Indonesia, which would be disastrous to Indonesia's negotiating position.¹⁴⁰ At the same time, Dr Evatt expressed Australia's satisfaction to the Dutch's proposals.¹⁴¹

On March 15, van Mook reported that his meeting with Sjahrir was "encouraging" and Indonesian counterproposals were "moderate and opened up favorable prospects for satisfactory negotiations," along with the several stumbling blocks, notably on the recognition of the "Republic Indonesia," the territory that comprise the Republic, and the demand of the Indonesians for the Dutch to withdraw their troops immediately after the

¹³⁸ In an interview with Djajadiningrat, van Mook stated his belief that there were striking resemblances between the Indochinese and Indonesian problems. Therefore, he was hoping to use the settlement as a template for both the Indonesia and the Netherlands government to follow and his offer was submitted to Sjahrir without prior consultation with the Netherlands government. Interestingly, van Mook did not mention Lord Inverchapel as the originator of the suggestion. See Djajadiningrat (1958) 55-6. See also Wehl (1948) 122

¹³⁹ Manchester Guardian declared the proposals as "promising" and New York Times in an editorial on February 17 declared "an almost worldwide recognition of the Dutch offer as a generous one" had resulted in "the greatest pressure for peace in Java." See Djajadiningrat (1958) 56-7, McMahon (1981) 123-4

¹⁴⁰ Telegram from the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 10, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 814

¹⁴¹ Sjahrir replied by stating his disappointment in Australia's alignment with European powers against its geographical and sentimental interests. See George (1980) 53-4

agreement.¹⁴² On March 27, Sjahrir's government finalized its counterproposal, the key provision of which was the recognition that the Republic had the de facto authority in Java, Madura, and Sumatra with the exception of areas under control of the Allied Military Administration, implicitly accepting the Dutch de jure sovereignty in Indonesia.¹⁴³ Lord Inverchapel was optimistic enough that on March 30, he declared that after he went to The Hague to accompany van Mook to brief the Dutch government, he was going to England for holiday and he did not think that he needed to return to Java. Van Mook also declared that he believed that the agreement would be reached soon.¹⁴⁴

On April 14, 1946, the Dutch and Indonesian delegates met at Hoge Veluwe, the Netherlands. A week later, both van Mook and Sjahrir managed to make a joint document which was submitted to the Dutch Government by van Mook "without recommendation." The document calls for an "establishment republic embracing all Java within and under Indonesian Federation of Netherland Empire." They also agreed that the status of Sumatra would be determined based on "local wishes," and that foreign relations would remain in the hands of the Dutch government.¹⁴⁵ However, when the Dutch Minister Overseas Territories Logeman made his report to the Dutch Chamber, he found the packed chamber "in almost complete silence."¹⁴⁶ The Dutch government refused to give

¹⁴² Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, March 15, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 815, Telegram from the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 21, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 815-6, Telegram from the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 28, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 818

¹⁴³ Djajadiningrat (1958) 57-8, McMahon (1981) 124, Taylor (1960) 21

¹⁴⁴ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 31, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 818

¹⁴⁵ Circular Telegram From the Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic and Consular Officers, April 22, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 820

¹⁴⁶ Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, May 3, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 820

de facto recognition to the Republic in Sumatra and it insisted it would consider the agreement as protocol, instead of as a treaty.¹⁴⁷

The Dutch refusal could be explained with the fact that the Dutch political situation was very grave. Van Mook in his memoir noted that the Dutch Government "had no parliamentary basis" and the result of first election which would be due on May 17 was uncertain. There was also outrage over what they saw as "the iniquities of the Allied measures" that they saw benefit this "Japanese-inspired government of the republic" at the expense of the Dutch.¹⁴⁸ On May 19, the new Dutch government finally offered de facto recognition of the Republic in Java but stressed that the Republic must be a part of a federation of Indonesian states within the Dutch kingdom which would move toward independence after a suitable interim period. Sjahrir replied on June 17, 1946 demanding de facto recognition of the Republican territory *including Allied-occupied territory* in Java and Sumatra, which would have prevented any further landing of the Dutch troops, and he also proposed of an alliance, instead of a partnership, under the Dutch crown.¹⁴⁹ The talk deadlocked. From both the Dutch and Indonesian perspectives, their offers were already the maximum they could give without causing the collapse of their respective cabinets.

Sjahrir's toughening stance reflected his growing nervousness about the stability of his cabinet in Indonesia, as the *perjuangan* faction grew stronger, and became

¹⁴⁷ On the issue of Sumatra, the Republic argued that their authority was the only effective one in the island, a position supported by an American intelligence report which reported that the Dutch control in Sumatra was almost non-existent. On the issue of "treaty," the Dutch refused to use the term "treaty" as treaty implies an equal position between the Netherlands and Indonesia. See McMahon (1981) 125-6. For a full discussion of the Hoge-Veluwe talks, see Djajadiningrat (1958) 61-78

¹⁴⁸ McMahon (1981) 127. Taylor (1960) 23-4, Van Mook (1950) 214-5. Djajadiningrat provided an elaborate analysis on the internal conditions of the Netherlands. See Djajadiningrat (1958) Ch. 4

¹⁴⁹ McMahon (1981) 127-8

convinced that the Dutch were planning a preemptive strike against the Republic. Their fear was not without basis. The Dutch had been slowly increasing the number of their troops in Indonesia. In spite of van Mook's complaints that both the British and the Americans prevented the Dutch from landing or taking actions in Indonesia,¹⁵⁰ by March 16, the Dutch had a considerable presence in Bangka, Bali, Lombok Island, Borneo, and even on Java. By the middle of April 1946, over fifteen thousand Dutch troops had landed on Java in spite of the Australian trade union boycott on Dutch shipping.¹⁵¹ The Dutch had also started to take over the British position. On May 30, 1946, Foote reported to the State Department that the British agreed to relinquish in favor of Dutch all authority in all Indonesia except Java and Sumatra. In both Java and Sumatra, however, the British would give up all authority "except in areas actually occupied by them," giving the Dutch free hand in all areas except Jakarta, Bandung, and Bogor, which would be turned over to Dutch in about two weeks.¹⁵²

With the failure of the Hoge Veluwe talks, many Indonesians became disillusioned and no longer believed in the path of *diplomasi*. *Perjuangan* factions grew more active and they started to undermine Sjahrir's precarious hold over the Republic. In April and May, they took over the government of Surakarta, a city north of Jogjakarta.¹⁵³ The government reacted by arresting the main leaders of the movement on May 25, only

¹⁵⁰ Telegram from the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 6, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 812

¹⁵¹ On shipping: George (1980) 54-5, on the number of troops: Wehl (1948) 116. On April 23, the British Embassy informed the United States State Department that the British troops would be reduced by the end of May from 46,000 to 19,000 "approximately equal to the Dutch forces on hand at that time." Telegram From the Charge in the United Kingdom (Gallman) to the Secretary of State, April 15, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 819

¹⁵² Telegram from the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, May 30, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 825

¹⁵³ Anderson (1972) 357, Kahin (1952) 185-6

to face mass protests and demonstration.¹⁵⁴ Sjahrir had lost his mandate and he was no longer seen as necessary.

In the meantime, the Army led by General Sudirman had also started to lean toward the *perjuangan* faction. As early as March 17 when Tan Malaka and his associates were arrested, the Army announced that it had nothing to do with the arrests.¹⁵⁵ The perceived insults from Sjahrir, coupled with the fear that Sjahrir was building his own powerbase within the armed forces, remained a powerful motivation not to support Sjahrir's cabinet. On May 31, responding to pleas from the *perjuangan* factions, Sudirman released *perjuangan* leaders who were arrested a week before, a move that was also seen as a slap to Sjahrir's authority.¹⁵⁶ While the military would not fight against Sukarno, the symbol of the revolution, it was not inclined to lend its backing to Sjahrir's position.

By June, the Sjahrir's cabinet was seriously weakened, though Sjahrir, with backings from both Sukarno and Hatta, was hoping to salvage the situation through a cabinet reorganization by broadening the composition of the cabinet. However, Sjahrir's reply on June 17 was leaked. Indonesian newspapers, the most influential of which was *Kedaulatan Rakyat* in Jogjakarta, had a field day with editorials condemning the proposal and the government. Regardless of the fact that from the viewpoint of the Americans, the British and the Dutch, Sjahrir had taken a tougher stance, from the Indonesian viewpoint,

¹⁵⁴ Anderson (1972) 363-4, Kahin (1952) 187

¹⁵⁵ Anderson (1972) 328

¹⁵⁶ On May 30, Sudirman warned against "unauthorized actions taken in the Army's name" and on June 1, the Army headquarters further announced that it had nothing to do with the arrests on May 25. See Anderson (1972) 364. Sudirman explained that he needed to restore order due to the fear of the Dutch's invasion from Semarang to Surakarta during the entire disturbance, an explanation that the cabinet did not buy. However, the position of the cabinet was too weak at this point to try to censure Sudirman. Kahin (1952) 187

the letter was seen as a major betrayal of the ideals of the Republic. On June 27, Hatta tried to quell the situation by explaining the context of the counterproposals before a huge crowd in the main square of Jogjakarta in the presence of Sukarno.¹⁵⁷ Sukarno however was uncommitted and refused to support Sjahrir.¹⁵⁸ With both Sukarno and the military under General Sudirman remaining uncommitted about supporting the government, the time was ripe for a coup.

The opposition struck on the same night as Hatta's speech. In an event which later would be called the July 3 Affair, General Sudarsono, commander of the Third Division arrested Sjahrir in Surakarta, hoping that Sukarno then would have to take full power and stop the "diplomatic treason."¹⁵⁹ There was also a failed attempt to arrest Amir Sjarifuddin on the same night by Jusuf. After some gunfire, Amir was spirited to the Presidential palace.¹⁶⁰ On June 28, finding that Sjahrir was kidnapped; Hatta and Amir

¹⁵⁷ Anderson (1972) 381-1

¹⁵⁸ Three days before this event, van Mook had informed The Hague that:

According to dependable sources; the counterproposals [Sjahrir's letter on June 17] had not been approved by Sukarno and when he saw them, he got angry. It is not clear, which course the anger might take. Mrazek (1994) 317

¹⁵⁹ Anderson noted that after the speech, influential leaders of the opposition met for a discussion. In the meeting, Abdulkadir Jusuf, Sudarsono's subordinate, launched a fiery denunciation on the Sjahrir government's betrayal of Indonesia – a diplomatic treason. See Anderson (1973) 383-4. J.T.M. Bank also noted that "the wide publicity, which Hatta gave to the letter, has led to a coup against Sjahrir and to Sjahrir's kidnapping on the same evening. See J.T.M. Bank, *Katholieken en de Indonesische Revolutie* (Baarn: Ambo, 1983) 187 – Quoted in Mrazek (1994) 317

¹⁶⁰ There was a contradiction on the date of the failed attempt to kidnap Amir. In an interview with Mrs. Amir Sjarifuddin by Frederiek Djara Wellem, she stated that the first kidnapping attempt was in the early morning of June 28, several hours after Sjahrir was kidnapped. Mrs. Amir Sjarifuddin recalled that at that time she secretly put a Bible in Amir's pocket. The second attempt happened on July 3, as Amir was leaving for the Presidential palace when he also escaped from a murder attempt. See Frederiek Djara Wellem, *Mr. Amir Sjarifuddin Tempatnya Dalam Kekristenan dan Dalam Perjuangan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Master Thesis for Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Jakarta, 1982) 239. Anderson, using the prosecutor's brief, stated that the entire event happened on July 3 as Jusuf persuaded Sudarsono that Sukarno might be more amenable to the threats should he managed to kidnap both Hatta and Amir Sjarifuddin. See Anderson (1972) 399-400. Hatta in his memoir recalled the entire event on July 3:

[In the presidential palace], I met Abdul Madjit Djojodiningrat who stopped me to inform that Tan Malaka's followers wanted to stage a coup. Few days ago Sjahrir was captured. Due to the President's speech (on June 30), he was freed. This morning they wanted to kidnap Mr. Amir Sjarifuddin, however Bung Amir, who had been arrested and had been loaded to a truck, could

Sjarifuddin pressed Sukarno to declare martial law. The next day, the news of kidnapping spread and on June 29, Sukarno assumed government power.

During the entire drama, General Sudirman was well aware on what was going on. General Sudarsono kept him informed and at this point, General Sudirman seemed to play a wait-and-see game.¹⁶¹ On June 30, he met with Sukarno, Hatta, and Amir, and all three of them suspected that Sudirman knew about the entire affair and demanded Sudirman to exert his influence to release Sjahrir. Sudirman refused to do anything and left for Surakarta. The next day, Sukarno decided to speak on radio "more in sorrow than in anger." He denounced the entire kidnapping episode and demanded Sjahrir to be released.¹⁶²

In the meantime, however, Sjahrir's supporters did not stay silent. Strong units of heavily-armed Pesindo¹⁶³ struck from the area around Surabaya on July 1 and within few days they occupied both Surakarta and Madiun. In the meantime, the Siliwangi Division moved to the east, threatening Jogjakarta with tanks.¹⁶⁴ Sudirman realized that he had a civil war developing, and probably ordered Sudarsono to release Sjahrir while assuring Sudarsono that he would not comply with Sukarno's order to arrest him. Sudirman then returned to Jogjakarta.¹⁶⁵

influence the driver and the driver drove him here. Our friends hoped that [Hatta] would act decisively and "liquidate" them. I replied of course I would act strongly. (Hatta (1979) 488)

¹⁶¹ Sudarsono in an interview with Anderson in 1962 complained bitterly of what he saw as Sudirman's facilitating and deceptive behavior during the entire crisis. Anderson (1972) 396

¹⁶² Ibid. 389-90. Poppy Saleh, Sjahrir's future wife and at that time, his secretary, remarked, "Sukarno made his call on the kidnapers to release Sjahrir, after consulting his Javanese sorcerer [dukun] at the Yogyakarta palace. Javanese sorcerers kept their guard over Sjahrir, you know." Mrazek (1994) 321

¹⁶³ The PSI's militia units. Their loyalty was to Amir Sjarifuddin. His control over the Defense ministry allowed him to provide military equipments to the Pesindo, thus creating loyal units.

¹⁶⁴ Kahin (1952) 190-1

¹⁶⁵ Anderson (1972) 391, Louis Fischer, *The Story of Indonesia* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959) 95

On July 1-2, with Sjahrir released and remaining in Jakarta, Sukarno ordered the mass-arrest of fourteen opposition leaders. Sudirman was incensed, and Sudarsono later claimed that Sudirman ordered him to go to Jogjakarta to confront Sukarno.¹⁶⁶ On July 3, Sudarsono, accompanied by civilian leaders of the coup, met Sukarno, and they were all promptly arrested. In the evening, Sudirman met with Sukarno and the cabinet leaders and they struck some sort of agreement. Aside from General Sudarsono, a few officers under him, and a few civilian leaders of the PP including Tan Malaka,¹⁶⁷ there would not be any more arrests. In return, Sudirman would support Sjahrir. At this point, Anderson argues that any chance for the *perjuangan* faction to prevail was non-existent as everyone was committed to the *diplomasi*. From Kahin's perspective, even though Tan Malaka's influence was basically ended, the opposition for the diplomatic approach was still strong though uncoordinated.¹⁶⁸

The coup marked the end of Sjahrir's influence. Even though he would be reappointed again on October 2, 1946 as the Prime Minister for the third time, by then he was completely dependent on both Sukarno and Amir Sjarifuddin's support and they both

¹⁶⁶ Testimony in the trial from both Sudarsono and Yamin. Yamin was one of the civilian conspirators in the coup. Yamin supported Sudarsono's claim that Sudirman would refuse any request for help from Sukarno. Ibid. 394-5

¹⁶⁷ Tan Malaka's role in the entire event was never satisfactorily explained. He was seen as having a main role in the event because most of people who were associated with this attempted coup came from his faction. He himself was absent from the entire episode as he remained in jail after his arrest in March, and Anderson speculates that he did not know what was going on. See Anderson (1972) 318. Sjahrir in an interview with Kahin noted that most people involved in the coup were only close to Tan Malaka because Tan Malaka was seen as the way to get power and some of them were not even supporting Tan Malaka. See Mrazek (1994), 318n. Interestingly, Adam Malik, a youth leader, later noted that there were three main pairs in the Republic during the revolution and they were Sukarno-Hatta, Sjahrir-Amir Sjarifuddin, and Tan Malaka-Sudirman. One cannot help but speculate how strong Tan Malaka's involvement with Sudirman and various members of the PP played key roles in this entire event. Quoted in Wellem (1982) 221

¹⁶⁸ Anderson (1972) 401-3, Kahin (1952) 191-2

seemed to be getting closer with each other.¹⁶⁹ By the time both the Dutch and the British delegates met Sjahrir to negotiate the ceasefire, they realized that Sjahrir was no longer the key player in the Republic: Sukarno had taken it over.¹⁷⁰ If Sjahrir believed that he could lean on Sukarno for support, it was a very slender reed to lean on.

While Sjahrir survived the domestic turmoil, he found that the international condition had worsened. The Dutch were becoming bolder as they had been building their strength in Indonesia. In early June, the Chinese Consul General in Indonesia reported to Nanjing that the Dutch had around 30,000 troops and were becoming more intransigent.¹⁷¹ By the end of October 1946, the Dutch was finally able to have 55,000 well-trained and well-armed troops in Java.¹⁷² Even though the British had agreed to transfer their authority in Indonesia to the Dutch, they worried that as they finalized their withdrawal from Indonesia, the Dutch would act without adherence to London's wishes and the resulting bloodshed from the Dutch invasion would make London open to criticism from the world.¹⁷³ Still, it did not stop the exhausted British from finalizing their withdrawal on November 30, 1946.¹⁷⁴ At the same time, the United States, worried

¹⁶⁹ Van Mook's cable sent to The Hague on the eve of the crisis. He further speculated that the growing bond was because both of them were uneasy about Sjahrir going too far in the negotiations with the Dutch. Sjahrir himself in an interview with Kahin believed that both Sukarno and Sudirman knew of the entire kidnapping business beforehand. See Mrazek (1994), 319n.

¹⁷⁰ Mrazek (1994) 328-332

¹⁷¹ Telegram From the Counselor of Embassy in China (Smyth) to the Secretary of State, June 18, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 828

¹⁷² Wehl (1948) 134

¹⁷³ McMahan (1981) 130

¹⁷⁴ In these last days of the British occupation of Indonesia, there were bitterness between the British and the Dutch. The British troops were particularly incensed to the trigger-happy attitude of the Dutch troops. For instance on September 28, 1946, a Dutch sentry fired at a lorry belonging to the British troops, killing a private and injuring three other soldiers. Not surprisingly, the British Consul General in Batavia observed the departing British troops "shaking their fists as they drove down to the port at a battalion of astonished Dutch soldiery fresh out from Holland and shouting the Indonesian war cry of "Merdeka" (Freedom). The

that Moscow would use the possible bloodshed as another tool to humiliate both the United States and the British, asked the Dutch to be more conciliatory to the Republic.¹⁷⁵

Both the Republic and the Netherlands finally met on October 7 and on October 14 they concluded a truce agreement. On November 15, in a mountain resort called Lingadjati, an agreement was reached whereby the Dutch would recognize the Republic to have de facto authority over Java and Sumatra, while the Republic agreed to a federal form of government for the proposed "United States of Indonesia." The new federal government would be a member of a union led by the Dutch Crown but the United States of Indonesia would be a sovereign and equal partner in the Union.¹⁷⁶

The agreement had a vital weakness, however, which was the necessity for both sides to cooperate in order to implement the rest of the agreement, as noted on the Article 16: "Directly after the conclusion of this agreement both parties shall proceed to reduce their armed forces. They will consult together concerning the extent and the rate of this reduction, and their co-operation in military matters." The problem was both sides simply

British Government was also unhappy over its involvement in Indonesia. On December 17, Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was grilled in the House of Commons on the cost of the British intervention in Indonesia. He replied "by giving a figure of £ 15 million and said that it was not at that time certain if any of this would be recovered from the Dutch Government." Captain Wright of the 9th Indian Infantry Brigade put it bluntly that the British in Indonesia "were on a thick ear to nowhere." On the other hand, the Dutch were not particularly grateful for what they saw as the British support to the Japanese-made Republican government and its deplorable behavior toward the Dutch. In other words, the Dutch felt that Britain betrayed them through its policy during this period. McMillan (2006) 106, 168-70. Hornbeck, the United States Ambassador to the Netherlands, reported his analysis:

Dutch feel course pursued by British has created obstacles to prompt and satisfactory settlement through British failure to urge upon Nationalists acceptance proposals which Dutch have made, has created in Indonesian minds impression that British not support Dutch but conversely sympathize with Nationalists, which in consequence, has strengthened Indonesian intransigence. . . . They feel British policy of avoiding involvement and preventing Dutch from embarking upon certain essentially defensive military operations has resulted in developments unfortunately for all concerned, some of which easily-to-have-been-prevented-such as cutting off water supplies at Soerabaya and massacre of Chinese at Bangka. Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Hornbeck) to the Secretary of State, October 4, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 847

¹⁷⁵ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Hornbeck), August 5, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 840

¹⁷⁶ McMahan (1981) 133-4. A full version of the agreement can be found in Wehl (1948) 146-8

did not have much faith in each other. On January 23, De Boar, a member of the Dutch Commission General who initialed the agreement, confided to Foote that he believed the agreement was "doomed to failure." He was convinced that the Republicans "had no intention honoring it and would violate it as flagrantly as it did truce agreement" and only van Mook alone was optimistic.¹⁷⁷

On the other hand, the Dutch also managed to irk the Indonesians through creating other states within its former colony.¹⁷⁸ On December 19, the Dutch opened the Denpasar Conference to establish the government of East Indonesia State (Negara Indonesia Timur), which would be one of the first components of the United States of Indonesia.¹⁷⁹ On January 10, the Indonesian leaders denounced the conference, calling it a "comic opera."¹⁸⁰ On February 6, the Dutch further infuriated the Indonesians by demanding that ships bound for Republican ports must first stop at Dutch port for inspection and clearance.¹⁸¹

However, the Republicans were also not blameless. While the Dutch agreed that the Republic had a de facto authority over Java, the Republic still demanded the right to

¹⁷⁷ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, January 23, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 893-4

¹⁷⁸ Indonesia would later claim that the agreement was ruined by the disagreement of the legal status of the Republic and the formation of other Indonesian states. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 13, 1948, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1082

¹⁷⁹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, December 19, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 858-9

¹⁸⁰ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, January 13, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 893. Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, a high official in the East Indonesia State who would later become one of the foreign ministers of Indonesia in the 1950s, in his book about Indonesian foreign policy (also partly his memoir) briefly defended the creation of the East Indonesia State as necessary since "in the other islands of the archipelago, in act, the Republic had not succeeded in establishing its authority." Moreover, he argued that the East Indonesia State was not a Dutch puppet state. Rather it was a viable, independent state, which would be recognized by the Republican Government as an equal partner on January 19, 1948. Interestingly, Anak Agung did not really elaborate much on the politics of East Indonesia State in his book. Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973) 41-2

¹⁸¹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, February 6, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 897

foreign representation, even though theoretically, de facto authority only allows non-political relationships to other countries and then only until the establishment of the United States of Indonesia.¹⁸² Moreover, there were border clashes committed by both sides, though Foote, who was biased against the Republic, declared that the blame lay almost entirely with "Republican militarists led by Soedirman."¹⁸³ Van Mook in his memoir further declared:

The truce was never observed by the republican forces. Their local commanders had impossible ideas about demarcation lines; ideas that in certain cases would have located our troops in the sea. The irregular formations, the fighting clubs, just went their own way. A visit to the fronts by a combined high-level committee of republican and Dutch authorities – including the republican Minister of Defence – achieved practically nothing; apparently the Minister could only try to persuade but had no power to command. remained, in the republican way of thinking, an accessory measure, only to be perfected....

But the main difficulty was that the truce remained, in the republican way of thinking, an accessory measure, only to be perfected when peace should be restored. And peace was only conceivable when an internationally recognized republic transferred its sovereignty, on its own terms, to the sovereign United States of Indonesia and concluded a treaty of mutual assistance, called the Netherlands Indonesian Union out of deference for Dutch sentiment, with the Netherlands. Whereas we read the agreement so as to imply a period of transition and rehabilitation including the whole of Indonesia until sovereignty would be solemnly transferred on the first of January, 1949, the republic calmly went on extending its foreign relations and blocking the way to any organization of government and government services on an all-Indonesian scale.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 13, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1082

¹⁸³ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, January 23, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 895. It needs to be emphasized here that Foote is very biased against the Republicans and friendly to the Dutch. The British in contrast believed that the blame fell on the Dutch. Lord Inverchapel on June 17, 1947, stated to George Marshall, the United States Secretary of State that "the Indonesians had some suspicion that the Dutch were not playing fair with them and that he felt the Indonesians' suspicions were justified." Memorandum of Conversation, June 17, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 949

¹⁸⁴ Van Mook (1950) 224. Interestingly, he would later admit to Louis Fischer that the Dutch Government was to be blamed for "at least 75 percent" of the failure of the Linggadjati. Van Mook put it simply that the Netherlands government:

lacked the time to accustom themselves to the new post-war world of anticolonialism. They were not reconciled to the loss of the Indies. I myself was accused of treason for having a talk with Sukarno. Also, domestic politics interfered. The country could find no strong government. Always

This distrust from both sides was further exacerbated by the fact that the agreement was so loosely written that soon both sides were bickering about the interpretation of every single article.¹⁸⁵ By March 15, 1947, Sjahrir complained that the agreement "would threaten to be buried under interpretive material."¹⁸⁶

While both sides bickered about the implementation of the agreement, the situation turned grave to Sjahrir. The domestic opponents to the *diplomasi* approach were reenergized with Sjahrir's concessions in the Linggadjati agreement. The PNI and the Muhammadiyah voted against the agreement.¹⁸⁷ General Sudirman on November 20 declared, "never mind about the agreement, just keep on fighting for independence of Indonesia."¹⁸⁸ He reiterated his admonition on December 26, ordering the Army to continue fighting, and to send as many *laskars*, arms and supplies as possible to the front lines.¹⁸⁹ There were complaints that Sjahrir was giving up too much even though Sukarno was present during the agreement.¹⁹⁰

Deadlocked, the Dutch finally raised the ante. On May 27, 1947, the Dutch sent a memorandum demanding a creation of a Federal Council led by a representative of the

a coalition, in which the Right insisted on law and order in the colony and the Labor party wanted to remain in the office – so it gave in to the Roman Catholics. The Antirevolutionary [Calvinist] party, moreover, resisted rapid change. Fischer (1959) 96

¹⁸⁵ Kahin (1952) 197, McMahon (1981) 134

¹⁸⁶ Wehl (1948) 158, 189

¹⁸⁷ Interestingly, Haji Agus Salim, the revered Indonesian diplomat, said "draft treaty gives Indonesians more than they expected."

¹⁸⁸ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, December 2, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 857

¹⁸⁹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, December 30, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 859-60

¹⁹⁰ Roem (1977) 18. Sukarno in his memoir, in spite the fact that he approved the agreement in the first place, declared, "Linggadjati was a shower of ice water on the fire of revolution. Sjahrir, then Prime Minister, was its architect, not I." Adams (1965) 238. This was an interesting revision of the history, considering the fact that Sukarno decided to increase the size of the Republic's temporary parliament in order to pack it with his supporters who would approve the agreement.

Crown who would enjoy the same voting strength as every Indonesian state in the federation. The memorandum also stressed that Indonesia was only one of the states in the federation and should not consider itself as separate nation, particularly not by conducting its own foreign policy. The Dutch also demanded a reply within fourteen days.¹⁹¹

The Republican replied on June 8 accepting an interim government where the Republic would possess half the membership with the other half comprising representatives of East Indonesia and West Borneo, but not the Netherlands.¹⁹² The Dutch refused. To make the situation worse, by June 1947, the Dutch had managed to increase their troops significantly and threatened to invade the Republic.¹⁹³ It was apparent for Sjahrir that the Dutch were aiming for war. However, to accept all the Dutch demands was tantamount to political suicide.¹⁹⁴ On June 20, having been pressured by the United States,¹⁹⁵ he gave one last concession which agreed to recognize the special position of the representative of the Dutch Crown in governing Indonesia during the interim period – essentially a *de jure* recognition of the position and special powers of the Crown's representative.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Taylor (1960) 35, Wehl (1948) 167

¹⁹² Taylor (1960) 36

¹⁹³ Wehl estimated that by June 1947, the Dutch had 90,000 troops in Indonesia. Wehl (1948) 168. However, Foote on January 23, 1947, reported to the State Department that he believed the Dutch had around 120,000 troops, while the Republicans had about 150,000 troops, of which a maximum of twenty percent were armed. Still, he believed while the Dutch would win the battle, they would be hard-pressed to maintain the peace. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, January 23, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 895 Another report dated on May 10, 1947 stated that the Dutch had about 100,000 troops and decreasing in Indonesia, as more troops returned to the Netherlands than went to Indonesia. Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, May 10, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 921-2

¹⁹⁴ McMahan (1981) 162

¹⁹⁵ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, June 19, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 953

¹⁹⁶ Kahin (1952) 207, Mrazek (1994) 344, Taylor (1960) 36

The concession was the last nail in Sjahrir's government, because it was not made in consultation with Jogjakarta.¹⁹⁷ Heavily condemned by the Republicans, by the end of June he was abandoned by every major party including the Amir Sjarifuddin faction within his own party. Only the Masjumi remained on board, and it was not long before they saw the hopelessness of Sjahrir's position and withdrew their support.¹⁹⁸ The situation was getting hopeless and, facing opposition from every side, Sjahrir tendered his resignation for the final time on June 27, 1947, thus ending the Sjahrir government. Sukarno briefly took over the government before he appointed Amir Sjarifuddin as the new Prime Minister on July 3, 1947.

Sjahrir rose to power in a bloodless coup that deprived Sukarno of his power, backed mostly by the perception of people that he was the only one with whom the Dutch were willing to negotiate. Therefore, when his diplomatic attempts failed, his position became very vulnerable and he then lost his power. The question is whether there were things that Sjahrir could have done to change the outcome, and he would have clung to power instead of completely losing it and resigning.

Compared to Sukarno, Sjahrir had far less external constraints in the beginning. The Dutch had not yet built their military forces in Indonesia and with the British pressing them to negotiate with the Republic, his position was fairly solid. Moreover, he was well-liked by the Dutch who considered him to be "moral," "decent," "cool-minded,"

¹⁹⁷ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, June 20, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 955

¹⁹⁸ Kahin (1952) 208, Legge (1988) 119, Mrazek (1994) 342-3

"beyond hate and sentiments," and "rational and sober." Even van Mook considered him to be one of the "intelligent nationalists."¹⁹⁹

In his path to power, facing a tremendous obstacle in form of Sukarno and his mass appeal, Sjahrir had two choices: either to throw his lot to the diplomatic or the armed struggle faction. He had influence with both factions and as noted above, youth groups actually flocked to Sjahrir when they perceived Sukarno as unwilling to take decisive action.²⁰⁰ Sjahrir, however, chose to throw his lot in with the diplomatic faction possibly because he could capitalize on the Dutch predisposed attitude toward him. Besides, he was an intellectual who dislike spontaneous revolutionary actions, not a street fighter.²⁰¹ Moreover, he did not have enough charisma to galvanize the masses and to create a mass organization as a source of power. Therefore, he finally came to top due to his promise that he could bring peace through a diplomatic approach.

This would not be much of a problem had he been able to craft a working coalition to maintain his domestic position. However, he had stepped on too many toes after the publication of his pamphlet, *Our Struggle*. While the pamphlet probably should be seen in the context of him trying to set himself apart from Sukarno, appealing for support from the Allies, and showcasing his understanding on the international situation, it created enemies among those who had cooperated with the Japanese. Moreover, in his attempt to bring the Army under his control, he managed to alienate every single faction within the Army. Therefore, Sjahrir's problem was not due to lack of trying. It was

¹⁹⁹ Mrazek (1994) 292-3

²⁰⁰ In his memoir, Sukarno accused Sjahrir of stirring youth groups as far back as days before the proclamation of August 17, 1945. While Sjahrir in reality was not responsible for that one, Sjahrir did gain some support from the youth groups in the early days of independence. See Adams (1965) 210

²⁰¹ Legge (1988) 106

simply because he picked too many fights at once. This blunder severely limited his leverage in diplomatic negotiations as he had to rely on the unpredictable Sukarno for his domestic support and concessions from the Dutch to keep him afloat.

Increasingly, Sjahrir had to rely more and more on Sukarno's support especially after his kidnapping during the July 3 Affair. It was Sukarno's choice to keep Sjahrir, since Sukarno found the alternative, Tan Malaka, to be less appealing, and thus keeping the diplomatic way alive, even though in the end, after the signing of Linggarjati Agreement on November 15, 1946, Sjahrir's position was no longer tenable and his cabinet collapsed in 1947.

Of course, one question that we need to ask is whether either Sukarno or Sjahrir would have been able to push the path of armed struggle. One would argue that during this period, Indonesia was not in shape to push for war. Nasution recalled that the Indonesian army was lacking in organizational capability, making it less effective as a fighting force.²⁰² He also found the Army to have problems in acquiring materials for its troops: of 400 battalions officially formed in the fall 1945, only 96 battalions were fully equipped.²⁰³ This assertion was backed by Colonel T.B. Simatupang, himself an influential colonel in the Indonesian guerilla force, who years later noted in his memoir the difficulties to finance and to get arms for the armed struggle during the war, which became more acute after the Dutch overran Jogjakarta, the capital of the Republic on

²⁰² Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 33-4

²⁰³ Anderson (1972) 240

December 19, 1948.²⁰⁴ Therefore, it was a necessity for both Sukarno and Sjahrir to push for the diplomatic path.

Still, this argument neglected the fact that the Indonesian army was still capable of pushing for guerilla war. As the Dutch would later painfully find out, even after their surprise attack on Jogjakarta in 1948 that succeeded to capture leaders of the nascent republic, notably Sukarno, Hatta, and Sjahrir, their control over Indonesia was not complete. A stalemate happened, where the Dutch controlled the urban area, while the Republican guerilla army controlled the countryside, and both were unable to completely defeat the other. In essence, it was theoretically possible to push for a guerilla war that would have bled both the British and the Dutch badly as early as 1945. Having experienced the Battle of Surabaya, the British were not in the mood for a second helping²⁰⁵ and the Dutch, as noted above, were unprepared militarily. However, this option for a total conflict, similar to what the Vietnamese would later take, was never taken by the Indonesian leadership, regardless of how many people were pushing for this course of action. It was due to the choices of these leaders that Indonesia never seriously followed the option of total armed struggle, and only after the Dutch invasion on December 19, 1948 that would keep Sukarno and Sjahrir out of the picture was the initiative was taken off their hands.

Another argument could be the idea that both Sukarno and Sjahrir simply wanted to maintain the conservative old order in the society and to prevent the radical youths from upsetting this order. Benedict Anderson argued that the pursuit of the path of

²⁰⁴ T.B. Simatupang, *Report from Banaran: Experiences During the People's War* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1972) 52

²⁰⁵ Djajadiningrat (1958) 48

diplomasi meant an accommodation of various conservative interest groups. This accommodation in turn would prevent a true revolution driven by the youths from occurring, and thus becoming the cause of the liquidation of both Tan Malaka and his PP. However, both Sukarno and Sjahrir's main reason in cracking down on the youths in *Persatuan Perjuangan* was pure politics, simple as it was. Tan Malaka and his supporters had grown too strong by appropriating the entire *perjuangan* movement and all the symbolism, including the then already legendary November 10 battle. The Dutch intransigence further added fuel to the fire. Moreover, for Sukarno, the prospect of Tan Malaka growing in power and overthrowing him was too real, and thus the best recourse was to ally himself with Sjahrir. Once Sjahrir lost his power after the July 3 affair, Sukarno no longer worked with him: instead, Sukarno dominated him, while maintaining his "detachment" from the politics. In short, contrary to Anderson's assertion, it was still possible for the Republican to pick either *perjuangan* or *diplomasi* approach. It was the choices that key people such as Sukarno and Sjahrir made that pushed Indonesia toward the path of diplomacy.²⁰⁶

Finally, Linggadjati was an agreement signed under duress. By that time, the Dutch had grown powerful and no longer depended on the British, while the Republicans had just narrowly avoided a civil war and lost valuable time to actually consolidate their internal position. Sjahrir, uncertain about neither the loyalty of the Army nor the strength of the Army itself, had no card to play and he had to capitulate.

²⁰⁶ Anderson would stress that Sukarno's backing of Sjahrir sealed the doom of the *perjuangan*. Anderson (1972) 408

3.4. Amir Sjarifuddin: Five Words that Matter

Out of the leaders of the revolution, Amir Sjarifuddin was probably the unlikeliest one to emerge as the prime minister of the Republic. Imprisoned by the Japanese due to subversive activities and almost executed,²⁰⁷ his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and thus he was completely out of the loop when he was freed from prison on October 1, 1945, not even realizing that Indonesian independence had been proclaimed weeks before.²⁰⁸ As a result, he shared a common advantage with Sjahrir: he was an Indonesian leader untainted by cooperation with the Japanese. Unlike Sjahrir however, Amir's oratorical ability was second only to Sukarno and as a result, he was very popular among the masses. Moreover, he was known for his administrative skill. In Simatupang's words:

Given the personalities and work methods of Bung Sjahrir²⁰⁹ and Bung Amir, I often used to describe Bung Amir as the motor and Bung Sjahrir as the rudder of our ship of state. To separate them meant having a motor without a rudder or, conversely, a rudder without a motor. Though this is, of course, a great exaggeration, it still has some truth in it.²¹⁰

As mentioned above, Amir Sjarifuddin was instrumental as minister of defense in helping to strengthen the Siliwangi Division and modernize the Army, causing some resentments within the Army. As Sjahrir's fortune fell further, Amir was seen as a possible replacement. It was highly possible in Sukarno's mind that Amir would be a loyal prime minister compared to quarrelsome Sjahrir as both Sukarno and Hatta were the

²⁰⁷ In Sjahrir's memoir, he mentioned that Amir had asked both him and Hatta to work with the Dutch government. Sjahrir (1949) 235-6. Hatta also mentioned such an offer more specifically in giving a speech on the radio in opposing the Japanese. Hatta (1979) 387-8. According to Kahin, Dr. Charles van der Plas, an official in the Dutch colonial government, gave Amir 25,000 guilders before the Japanese landed to establish an anti-Japanese underground organization. See Kahin (1952) 111-2

²⁰⁸ Mrazek (1994) 270, Wellem (1982) 168

²⁰⁹ Bung was a common salutation during the revolutionary era. Literally it means "Brother."

²¹⁰ Simatupang (1972) 79

ones who saved him from execution during the Japanese period.²¹¹ In addition, they did know that from the Dutch point of view, aside from Sjahrir, Amir Sjarifuddin was the only acceptable representative of the Republic for the negotiation.²¹²

Compared to both Sukarno and Sjahrir, Amir Sjarifuddin's position was very weak and grave when he took office on July 3, 1947. The Dutch were aiming for complete capitulation of the Republic to their demands under the threat of war. In fact, the Dutch had been planning for the invasion since May and originally the invasion was scheduled for June 24. It was only after the United States interfered, trying to mediate between the Dutch and the Republicans, that the Dutch decided to postpone the attack.²¹³

However, the United States, whose benevolent neutrality was hoped for, seemed to be partial to the Dutch, through an their aide-memoire that was published on June 28, which urged the Republic to assent to the immediate formation of an interim government. It also stated that the Netherlands was to retain sovereignty and ultimate authority in Indonesia.²¹⁴ Realizing the grave situation and believing that the United States might not be willing to stop the Dutch, Amir's cabinet gave more concessions on July 8. However, the Dutch were not satisfied as they demanded joint control over and joint manning of the

²¹¹ Adams (1965) 182, Hatta (1979) 434. An interesting insight was given by Ds. F.K.N. Harahap, a colleague of Amir. In 1948 while Amir was in prison, having been arrested after the failed communist revolt that implicated him, Mr. Harahap asked Amir whether he would like him to ask for pardon from Sukarno. Amir replied, "No need to contact Sukarno and Hatta to save me. Their efforts to save me was enough during the Japanese period and I had paid them when I protected them during the July 3 Affairs. I have received enough humiliation from them as they paraded me around Jogjakarta." See Wellem (1982) 301-2. It was highly possible that both Sukarno and Hatta believed that as Amir felt that he owed his life to both Sukarno and Hatta, he would be completely loyal to them.

²¹² Sastroamijoyo (1979) 138

²¹³ Fischer (1959) 99, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, June 26, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 959-60

²¹⁴ Kahin (1952) 208-9, McMahon (1981) 164

Indonesian security force, which the Republicans refused.²¹⁵ On July 20, notwithstanding the United States' warning that any aggression would cause serious adverse reaction in American opinion,²¹⁶ Dutch armored columns invaded the Republic.²¹⁷

International reactions favored the Republicans in the beginning. Australia, which had been trying to increase its influence in Indonesia, threw its lot in with the Republican government. Earlier on, its attempt to be a part of the Linggadjati agreement was rebuffed by the British. Since then, Australia had been trying to offer "good offices" to both the Dutch and the Republicans much to dismay and annoyance of the Dutch, who considered Australia's offer to reflect its desire to intervene.²¹⁸ On July 16, Australia informed Britain that it would bring the dispute to the United Nations. London tried to dissuade Australia, pointing out the possibility of the Soviet Union championing the Republican cause and embarrassing the West.²¹⁹ Australia warned London, however, that it could not remain inactive while military operations were being conducted in Indonesia. On July 21,

²¹⁵ One of the Dutch's contentions to the Republic was the fact that there were so many attacks to the Dutch position from the Republican territory. Wehl (1948) 171

²¹⁶ McMahon (1981) 165

²¹⁷ From the Dutch perspective, the invasion was long overdue. It needed Indonesia's resources badly to help rebuild the Dutch economy, which was still in shambles following the German occupation of the Netherlands, and it was very costly to post troops in Indonesia. As van Mook stated:

The Netherlands is not a rich country and while this present stalemate continues it is becoming increasingly expensive. The Netherlands Government cannot hold out much longer. If ... in the next two or three months there cannot be a settlement of this matter, the only recourse of the Netherlands Government will ... be completely to withdraw from the entire N.E.I. Memorandum of Conversation by the Secretary of State, September 8, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1050-51

On December 11, Dr. P.J. Koets, one of the Dutch high officials, further "described frustration by Republic of Netherlands program economic rehabilitation prior July 21." Therefore, invasion was necessary to regain the Dutch plantations and factories scattered throughout Indonesia. The Dutch also hoped to destroy the Republic, thus getting rid of this problem. This attitude was reflected in Frank Graham's report when he stated that "the Dutch believe they have capability taking Djoeja, silencing Indo radio propaganda, then gradually moping up resistance in plantation areas." Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, October 29, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1064, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, October 13, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1083

²¹⁸ George (1980) 79-80

²¹⁹ *Ibid.* 81

with United States approval, Britain offered its good office, which was rejected by the Netherlands.²²⁰

In the meantime, Washington sent a measured response to the Dutch military aggression, notwithstanding its earlier warnings. In fact, on July 24, 1947, Washington was assuring the Dutch that it would assist the Dutch in showing that the situation in Indonesia "was a purely internal matter,"²²¹ leading the British to speculate that:

The United States would not be dismayed by Dutch police action and the manner in which the Dutch Govt has gone out of their way to link the US Govt with (the British) in their grateful acknowledgement of assistance received suggests that the Dutch were aware of this American attitude.²²²

In other words, the British suspected that Washington was assisting and encouraging the use of force. On July 23, having been rebuffed by the Dutch again on the offer of its good office, Britain informed Australia that it would not wish to interfere with whatever action Australia might decide to take.²²³

Washington was surprised when India threatened to bring the conflict to the United Nations. Nehru on July 25 telegraphed the British Foreign Office condemning the Dutch and demanded both the United States and the British to interfere.²²⁴ On July 29, India publicly announced that it would refer the dispute to the Security Council. "Slightly embarrassed" as Australia did not actually expect India to bring the entire issue to the United Nations, Australia sent the Indonesia question to the Security Council claiming "a

²²⁰ Aide-Memoire From the British Embassy to the Department of State, July 24, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 987-8

²²¹ Memorandum of Conversation by the Associate Chief of the Division of Northern European Affairs (Morgan), July 24, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 986-7

²²² McMahon (1981) 175

²²³ George (1980) 82

²²⁴ McMahon (1981) 180

breach of the peace under article 39" which was more forceful and urgent than India's invocation of Chapter VI of the Charter.²²⁵

The next day, on July 31, the United States offered its good office to both the Dutch and the Republicans in order to stave the issue off from the United Nations where the Soviet Union could use it to its advantage, and where France would use its veto to help the Dutch. The Dutch accepted the Americans' offer. However, the Republicans objected to it, since the Republic was worried that the United States was partial to the Dutch. As a result, while Indonesia accepted the United States' offer "in principle" on August 7, Indonesia also specified that it would also want to have both Australia and India as arbiters, and Sukarno further accepted Australia's offer to be an arbiter on August 10.²²⁶

While the Dutch declared a ceasefire on August 4 (although the "mopping up operations" continued, which in essence continued military advances in areas previously bypassed by the Dutch *Blitzkrieg*), the diplomatic negotiation was at an impasse until the United States on August 25 proposed to create a "Committee of Good Offices" (GOC) comprised of three members of the Security Council, two of which were selected by both the Dutch and the Republic and the third member selected by the selected two. By

²²⁵ George (1980) 84, Taylor (1960) 48

²²⁶ Kahin (1952) 214-5. There were miscommunications between the Americans and the Indonesians on the meaning of "good office." While from the United States' perspective, "good office" meant having the United States as the arbiter, the Republic believed that the United States was offering "to defend the Republic's cause before Security Council." Later, Sukarno claimed that he would like to accept the United States' offer, however, he claimed that he had appealed to the Security Council and had accepted Australia's offer. Therefore, it would be very difficult to suddenly accept the United States' offer without losing face for Indonesia. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, August 8, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1017-8, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, August 12, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1022, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, August 12, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1024 Still, the main reason of Sukarno's acceptance of the United States was more due to the fact that the Republic realized that the United States was the most important power in the Security Council, and Indonesia could not afford to offend the Americans. George (1980) 86

September 18, the Dutch selected Belgium, and the Republic selected Australia. Both Belgium and Australia selected the United States as the third member.²²⁷

Even after the selection of the members, both sides continued to haggle with each other on issues such as the location of the negotiations, and the Dutch induced more delays.²²⁸ The Dutch delaying tactic was understandable as the situation had worsened for the Republic. Pressures from the Dutch attack had taken its toll on the leaders of the Republic. On August 12, Foote reported that Sukarno "looks very ill, having lost probably 30 pounds weight; his face very thin and voice weak."²²⁹ There were also additional headaches caused by the attack. By November 1947, the Republic had a major food deficit as the Dutch invasion had reduced the Republican area, taking over the rich rice-producing region. As a result, rice production had fallen by 85.9 quintals to 62.6 quintals. As the Republic was also burdened by a huge influx of refugees and was cut from sources of arms, food, clothing, and other materials, the Republic was running out of time.²³⁰

On December 4, the GOC submitted its proposals to both the Dutch and the Republic, which would create a demilitarized zone and once the zone was accepted, normal trade would be resumed.²³¹ On December 8, the negotiation brokered by the GOC finally started aboard the U.S.S. Renville in Jakarta harbor.²³² The negotiation started

²²⁷ Kahin (1952) 217

²²⁸ George (1980) 92

²²⁹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, August 12, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1025

²³⁰ Kahin (1952) 221, McMahon (1981) 194. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 1, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1076

²³¹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 6, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1080

²³² The Republicans preferred the talk to be held outside Indonesia, possibly in order to impress the idea that the affair in Indonesia was an international one, while the Dutch insisted that the talk be held within

horribly as the Dutch declared that the Linggadjati agreement, which provide *de facto* recognition to the Republic, was no longer binding, though the Dutch "intend carry out political program based [on] principles underlying Linggadjati." To make the situation worse, the Australian and the Belgian delegates were bickering and unwilling to compromise with each other. The former supported the Republic while the latter supported the Dutch, leading Frank Graham, who represented the United States as a member of the GOC, to complain that apart from the American delegation, "GOC in no sense [a] Good Offices Committee."²³³

Frank Graham, however, was worried about the status quo. Unlike Foote, Graham tried to be a neutral third party²³⁴ and soon he was disillusioned with the Dutch belligerent policy. He believed that the Dutch were trying to strangle the Republic economically, and he also distrusted the Dutch proposal of the independent United States of Indonesia, as he believed that the Dutch "aim is federation in which Netherlands itself will have ultimate voice though speaking through hierarchy Indonesian officials."²³⁵

Indonesia to emphasize that it was an internal affair. Sukarno privately suggested to Frank Graham that the talk be held in a "naval vessel, provided it US." Graham then aired the idea, which was agreed to by both sides. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, October 31, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1066, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 1, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1067, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 7, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1069-70

²³³ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 13, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1083, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 6, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1079

²³⁴ The Dutch saw Frank Graham in a very negative light, considering him as "amateur." Van Mook dismissed Graham as a "docile, diligent little man" and it would be better if "he quickly returned to his pristine ivory tower in North Carolina." General Hendrik Spoor, the Dutch Army's Commander in Chief, claimed Graham suffered from "a well-known sentimentality complex known as underdog sympathy." Even Charlton Ogburn, Graham's deputy from whom the subsequent report proved to be actually pretty sympathetic to the Republicans, considered Graham to be an "elderly granny" and "filled with lofty banalities." Gouda (2002) 223

²³⁵ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 20, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1087

In order to break the impasse, the committee decided to push for what Graham would call the "GOC Christmas Proposal." Essentially, the proposal asked for a complete ceasefire following the "van Mook lines," which was the furthest Dutch advance on August 4. Once the military observers, who would come from the GOC, accepted that the hostilities were completely stopped, the Dutch were required to withdraw to the line on July 20, before the invasion. This was a very bitter pill for the Republicans to swallow. Still, the Republic accepted it on December 27.²³⁶

The Dutch, however, flatly refused and on January 2 further demanded a complete demilitarization without mention at all about a Dutch withdrawal, restoration of the Republican's civil administration, provision for representation of the Republic, or any guarantee of international observation. Implicit in this demand was the underlying assumption by the Dutch that the survival of the Republic would be depended on the Dutch's whim. The Hoge Veluwe and Linggadjati would simply ceased to exist. The Dutch further stated that if this "offer" was rejected, the Dutch would "reserve liberty of action."²³⁷ Frank Graham was outraged over this blatant ultimatum. He also complained

²³⁶ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 27, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1095-6, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 30, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1097

²³⁷ In fact, all members of the GOC (surprisingly including Belgium) actually believed that the Dutch offer was constructed such that it would elicit the Republic's refusal. Basically, the Dutch wanted the Republic to reject it, therefore giving the Dutch the pretext to continue its invasion. From the Dutch perspective, even the fact that they were willing to negotiate with the Republic in Renville was a very generous concession, since the negotiation prevented the Dutch from continuing their military movement and destroying the Republic. In fact, by this time, the Dutch had openly declared that Linggadjati agreement was a "terrible mistake," approved because the Dutch Government "insisted on agreement any price," which in the end simply legitimize the Republic. On December 2, van Mook further stated that the Dutch invasion in August "would have finished Republic resistance." Dutch Prime Minister Drees for one claimed the only reason they even agreed to negotiate was because they could not afford to "antagonize America," and Paul Van Zeeland, the Belgian delegate who bought everything the Dutch claimed, hook, line, and sinker, also stated that the Dutch accepted the GOC principles "under pressure." Mrazek (1994) 366. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 4, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1078, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 31,

that the Indonesians had accepted all proposals while the Dutch "have never yet accepted single GOC proposal without at least serious qualification."²³⁸ Unfortunately, he could not do anything, having received an instruction from the State Department that stressed that the Dutch was a "strong proponent" of the United States' policy in Europe. Moreover:

Dept believes that stability present Dutch Govt would be seriously undermined if Netherlands fails to retain very considerable stake in NEI, and that the political consequences of failure present Dutch Govt would in all likelihood be prejudicial to US position in Western Europe. Accordingly, Dept unfavorable to any solution requiring immediate and complete withdrawal Netherlands from Indies or any important part thereof.... US has long favored self-government or independence for peoples who are qualified to accept consequent responsibilities. Therefore, Dept favorably disposed to solution providing Netherlands sovereignty for limited period and setting date in future for independence of Indonesians, both Republican and non-Republican.²³⁹

In short, the State Department had heavily circumscribed Graham's freedom of action. The strategic importance of the Netherlands in Europe remained the most important factor and Graham could not really pressure the Dutch to concede anything.

Therefore, his only way out was to ensure that the Republic could survive as an entity until the creation of the United States of Indonesia in the future. In order to do so, the GOC drafted seven additional principles to make the Dutch ultimatum a bit palatable for the Republicans. Most important were the explicit inclusion of the Republic in the United States of Indonesia, which would have fair representation, and the ability of either

1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1097, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 58-59

²³⁸ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 61. Graham would later state to the United States Senate that the Dutch had never negotiated in a good faith:

A strong obstructing Dutch factor was the underlying and not always submerged determination of some powerful economic and political interests in the Netherlands not really to use the Committee of Good Offices and to eliminate the Republic from any real part in the preparation for an organization of the promised United States of Indonesia. Kahin (1952) 223

²³⁹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 31, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1100

side to request the continuation of the GOC.²⁴⁰ Moreover, these proposals, regardless of how painful for the Republicans, would provide some sort of guarantee to the Republic that it would survive.

The Netherlands, under strong pressure from the United States, who on January 8, 1948 bluntly stated that its failure to accept Graham's proposals would jeopardize the United States' assistance in reconstructing Indonesia, and threatened to cut the Dutch off from the European Recovery Program, reluctantly accepted these proposals on January 11, 1948.²⁴¹ The Republicans, however, were hesitant in accepting the proposal, pointing out that nothing in the proposal provided assurances that the Dutch would not provoke incidents. The proposal was also silent on any means for the Republic to gauge popular support in the Dutch-held territories, whether these people would prefer to have their own state or join the Republic.²⁴² The skepticism was not surprising, considering the fact that the invasion in August had completely extinguished any remnant of trust between the Republic and the Dutch.²⁴³

However, Graham's personal relationship with Amir Sjarifuddin won the day. The Republicans finally agreed to sign the Renville Agreement, assured by Graham's remarks to the Republicans: "You are what you are."²⁴⁴ By these words, the Republicans believed

²⁴⁰ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 6, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 62-3

²⁴¹ McMahon (1981) 203-4, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Netherlands, January 9, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 70-1, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 10, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 72-3

²⁴² Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 9, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 69

²⁴³ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 17, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1072

²⁴⁴ These five words were most often quoted by the Republican side to state how much Graham influenced their decision to sign the Renville Agreement. In addition, relationship between Frank Graham and Amir Sjarifuddin was particularly close, and as a result Amir probably took what Mr. Graham said for granted. H. Rosihan Anwar, in his memoir on the Renville negotiation, mentioned, "I saw Dr. Frank Graham,

that Graham put the United States' prestige behind the effort to maintain the existence of the Republic. Moreover, the Republic also realized that it had major problems both economic and militarily.²⁴⁵ As a result, Amir decided to sign the agreement on January 17 and 19, 1948.²⁴⁶

By signing the Renville Agreement, however, Amir was signing his own political death warrant. The agreement was still seen as a betrayal from the ideals of independence. Both the Masjumi and the PNI denounced him for going too far in compromising with the Dutch.²⁴⁷ In anticipation of the signature, the Masjumi withdrew from the Cabinet followed by the PNI. As both of them were the largest parties in the Parliament, the government was drastically weakened. Moreover, Sjahrir and his faction

delegate of the United States in the Good Offices Committee. Prime Minister Amir Sjarifuddin was also there and he held a Bible. It seemed that both of them shared good personal relationship." H. Rosihan Anwar, *Kisah-kisah Zaman Revolusi: Kenang-kenangan Seorang Wartawan 1946-1949* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1975) 63. In another memoir, Frank Graham told Simatupang how he knew Amir was a Christian and thus both of them resolved to try to end the Dutch-Indonesia conflict in the spirit of Christianity to avoid further bloodshed. Apparently Frank Graham accidentally met Amir when they were both sleeping in the ship. When Graham walked around, thinking about problems that would be discussed the next day, he saw a room with the light still on. To his surprised, he saw Amir sitting down reading a Bible. In a conversation, they found out that both of them used to belong to Campus Christian Youth Movements. R.Z. Leirissa, *Kewarganegaraan yang Bertanggungjawab, Mengenang Dr. J. Leimena* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1980), Wellem (1982) 310-11. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 28, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 84

²⁴⁵ Colonel Simatupang, Assistant Chief of Staff of the Indonesian army, admitted to Ogburn that while the Republic could raise any size of volunteer army, it was severely limited by the lack of equipment and poor training for their officers. He further stated that the Indonesian roadblocks which covered every road approaching Jogjakarta could not stall the Dutch columns due to the lack of weapons. However, he also cautioned that the Dutch would not be able to completely pacify Indonesia and the Army could make the situation eventually intolerable for the Dutch. This would later be shown as prophetic, as the Indonesian army was able to make life difficult for the Dutch after the second invasion on Jogjakarta in December 1948. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 17, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1073

²⁴⁶ Dr. Johannes Leimena, a member of the Republican delegation, complained that the Republican government accepted the Dutch demands "under perceptible American pressure." Kahin (1952) 228. According to Anak Agung, then the foreign minister for the Republic of East Indonesia, one of the federal states created by the Dutch, Amir was under strong pressure from Dr. Graham, who also acted under strong pressure from the U.S. State Department. The latter also promised a substantial American aid for the rehabilitation of free Indonesia. See Anak Agung (1973) 38-9

²⁴⁷ Anak Agung (1973) 39, Mrazek (1994) 366

within the Socialist party also opposed the Renville Agreement and abandoned the government.²⁴⁸ On January 23, 1948, Amir Sjarifuddin resigned.

From all three leaders discussed in this chapter, Amir probably had the biggest constraints in his foreign policy decision making. As noted above, the strength of the Dutch military forces was at its peak and the United States was unwilling to press the Dutch forcefully due to political considerations in Europe. As a result, Amir had no other choice but to keep giving more and more concessions, and to place all his eggs on a basket in Renville by trusting Dr. Frank Graham and his assurance that the United States would support the Republic. Moreover, he had put so much personal investment in this agreement. On December 30, 1947, Livengood reported that Amir Sjarifuddin had "collapsed" possibly due to exhaustion.²⁴⁹

To his chagrin, there was no support from his allies after he signed the agreement, even though everyone should have realized that Amir Sjarifuddin had no other choice but to sign the agreement if he wanted to maintain the survival of the Republic. No political faction in Indonesia was willing to be associated with the agreement. He rightfully felt that everyone made him the scapegoat for this necessary yet distasteful diplomatic agreement. In Mrazek's words:

In sense, this was a repetition of what happened during and after the Linggadjadi negotiations. As through the Liggadjadi agreement, through the Renville agreement Sukarno and Hatta gained as symbols of Indonesian independence and

²⁴⁸ Kahin (1952) 230-1, 258-9. However, the most likely cause of Sjahrir's unwillingness to support Amir Sjarifuddin was from Sjahrir's bitterness toward what he saw as Amir's betrayal earlier that caused the collapse of Sjahrir's cabinet. Ann Swift, *The Road to Madiun: The Indonesian Communist Uprising of 1948* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1989) 24

²⁴⁹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 30, 1947, *FRUS*, 1947, Vol. 6, 1097

unity. Yogyakarta survived; the heart of the Republic kept beating. This again was the center's gain. As after the Linggadjati agreement, also, another personage away from the center was identified with agreement – the Prime Minister Sjahrir, now Prime Minister Amir – who was to be held directly responsible if anything went wrong or looked wrong.²⁵⁰

It was not surprising that when the Cabinet fell, contemporaries described him as "bitter," "depressed," "confused," "betrayed," "humiliated," and "looked like ... a lost man."²⁵¹

It was unfortunate that Amir rose to power just when the fortune of the Republic at its nadir. Having thrown his lot to the path of diplomatic struggle, and under strong pressure from the Dutch, he had no other choice but to rely on diplomatic successes to stay in power, and once the Renville Agreement was signed (which in fairness, was the best deal he could probably get) his government's days was numbered.

3.5. Hatta, the Communists, and the United States

After the collapse of Amir's government, Hatta took over the government and the implementation of the Renville agreement. Hatta, being the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, a person above the party politics, and the symbol of Indonesian Independence, probably was the best man to do this dirty work, since nobody wanted to be identified with the implementation of this distasteful agreement.²⁵² Moreover, unlike Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin, Hatta's relationship with General Sudirman was cordial,

²⁵⁰ Mrazek, (1994) 366

²⁵¹ Hamka, *Kenang-kenangan Hidup* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1966) 380, Hatta (1979), Wellem (1982) 270, 272

²⁵² Kahin (1952) 251

and as a result, Hatta did not have much trouble getting support from the Army for his policies.²⁵³

Hatta's first and most painful action after he took the reins of government was to immediately implement the Renville agreement, even though the agreement was very disadvantageous to the Indonesians. While it is tempting to argue that he had no choice due to the Dutch military superiority, it was likely that Hatta at that time believed that time was on his side. In the long run, the Republic would regain what it lost, especially after the creation of the United States of Indonesia, due to the numerical superiority of the Republic in terms of population. In addition, both Sukarno and Hatta were wildly popular in Indonesia. Therefore, it was in the Republic's interest to push the implementation of the Renville and to create the Federal Government as soon as possible.²⁵⁴

The most difficult implementation of the Renville was to withdraw the Republican troops to the Republican territories. He instructed the Army to pull its guerrillas from the Dutch-occupied territory, and the Army complied. By February 26, 1948, 35,000 Republican troops had left the Dutch area, a number that astonished the Dutch and led Colonel C.S. Meyers, an American military observer, to gleefully write to Graham (who had resigned on February 13, 1948 to take a position as a President of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill),²⁵⁵ "I am sure it was a considerable shock to some of our smug friends to be compelled to face up to it."²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Sundhaussen (1982) 37

²⁵⁴ In his autobiography, Sukarno stated that Renville "won us no freedom. It gave us only a reprieve." Adams (1965) 251

²⁵⁵ Graham's last act in Indonesia was to spill a cup of coffee all over Ogburn at the Batavia Airport. Gouda (2002) 223

²⁵⁶ McMahon (1981) 211

In the meantime, Hatta also realized that he needed to reorganize the Army. While both Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin had attempted to reorganize the Army to bring it under the rein of the government, Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin's already horrible relationship with the Army caused the Army to resist their attempts. However, the defeat of the Army during the Dutch invasion in August 1947 was a mixed blessing for Hatta: while it cost the Republic its territory, it drove home the need for the Army to reform. By the time Hatta declared the "Rationalization Program," which would reduce state's expenditures by demobilizing and reorganizing the bloated and inefficient army,²⁵⁷ Sudirman no longer objected.²⁵⁸ At this point, the Army was comprised of 350,000 regular troops and 470,000 laskars in Java. Hatta's short-term goal was to reduce the size of the Army to a total of 160,000 men. He also wanted to do away with the laskars, as he believed that the laskars were very difficult to control and contributed to lawlessness in the Republic.²⁵⁹

On March 11, Hatta privately met with van Mook and they both agreed to create a USI national army, to which the Republic would contribute around 60,000 troops. Still he had no illusions that the rationalization program would be very easy. The laskars would be unwilling to voluntarily disband themselves, and lack of trust about Dutch intentions would make it difficult for the Army to reduce its forces. On March 13, he asked Coert DuBois, who replaced Frank Graham as the United States delegate, to induce the Dutch

²⁵⁷ One of the examples of the wastes in Indonesian military was the fact that even as the Republic did not have any significant naval force (practically non-existent), the Republic had nine admirals on its payroll. Hatta (1979) 528

²⁵⁸ Even so, General Sudirman was not blindly following Hatta. On June 3, he declared that "the Army would take control if it appeared that Hatta was about to sell out the Army to the Dutch." Swift (1989) 45. This statement could also be interpreted as reassuring people that Sudirman was still in command and that he supported Hatta's rationalization plan.

²⁵⁹ Brackman (1963) 74-5, Sundhaussen (1982) 38

to give him time to work, since he worried that the Dutch was impatient.²⁶⁰ The Dutch, however, became more intransigent, believing that the Republicans were dragging their feet,²⁶¹ which led Pringgodigdo, one of the Republican delegates in the negotiation with the Dutch, to explain that while the Republicans were committed to the Renville and were willing to integrate the army with the new federal forces, overhasty demobilization would make these soldiers susceptible to influenced by the "Left-Wing group."²⁶²

In fact, that was exactly what happened. The economy in the Republic-controlled area was in shambles due to the Dutch blockade, which officially was to keep arms from the extremists²⁶³ while in reality strangling the Republic to death.²⁶⁴ To make the situation worse, the Republic received nearly a million refugees from the Dutch area and

²⁶⁰ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, March 15, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 117

²⁶¹ The Dutch distrust was not without basis. In May, the Dutch intercepted a secret telegram from LN Palar, the Republicans' delegate to the United Nations, to Hatta, stating his optimism that "Neth position presently unfavorable since Neth cannot secure loan from US unless and until Neth has settled dispute with Repub.... Because US desires raw material originating Indonesia it will not permit Dutch to resume hostile action Indonesia...." Basically, the United States would pressure the Netherlands to concede more due to its interests in Indonesia. It was possible that this telegram was a forgery to make Washington seem unsympathetic to the Republic, since this telegram was provided by the Dutch Embassy to the State Department. Still, even if this telegram was true, the Dutch severely underestimated the difficulties for Hatta's government in implementing the Renville in the face of domestic opposition. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, May 7, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 163

²⁶² Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, April 30, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 159

²⁶³ The Dutch even refused to allow the import of medicine. On one occasion, Dubois mentioned that the Republicans need medical supplies and van Mook replied that "the last medical supplies provided for Repub were seized by TNI and sold," leading to Dubois' objection over the Dutch habit of "dwelling on past and on discreditable side" of the Republicans. This illustrates how much the Dutch actions had repelled even their sympathizers. In fact, Dubois' objection was remarkable, considering that his appointment was due to the belief of the State Department that he had a pro-Dutch bias, and as soon as he arrived in Indonesia, Dubois made plain of his distaste for the "illegal, Japanese puppet regime at Jogjakarta." Brackman (1963) 77, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, February 26, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 107-8

²⁶⁴ The Dutch hoped that the Republic would collapse as soon as possible, since they also realized that maintaining Dutch troops in Indonesia was very costly, and in fact, the Dutch privately admitted that the troops "may well eventually prove too great a burden politically and economically for Dutch Government. Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, May 28, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 188

there was not enough food or clothing.²⁶⁵ There were simply no jobs available for the demobilized soldiers, which made it easy for the Left Wing faction, which was led by a very bitter Amir Sjarifuddin, to find friendly ears within the units of the army that were threatened by the demobilization.²⁶⁶

Since the collapse of his cabinet, Amir Sjarifuddin had made a major shift from his earlier position. He had become a vocal critic of the Hatta's government for committing Indonesia to the Renville Agreement and he had pushed for armed struggle. His change in stance was due to his association with the left-wing groups. Not long after he was ousted from the office, he was approached by the Communists who were interested in creating an opposition group against the Hatta government. The Communists had many reasons to approach Amir Sjarifuddin: regardless of his connection to the Renville, he was still one of the top revolutionary leaders and he had carved a loyal group of officers within the Army. The immediate result of Amir Sjarifuddin's decision was that

²⁶⁵ Kahin (1952) 250-1, 255. By this time, the Republic had to rely on illicit trade in opium to stay afloat financially, even though Hatta intensely disliked it, since he considered opium to be immoral. Proceeds from the trade in opium were used to maintain Indonesian establishments in Jakarta and international delegations all over the world, especially in Singapore and the United States. By mid-1948, opium was directly distributed to loyal units, especially the Siliwangi Division, so the units could exchange opium for weapons and supplies. The Dutch would later find details of Hatta's involvements in the opium trafficking and would use this fact as proof of the Republican's treacherous nature. Cribb (1988) 716-8, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, August 16, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 302, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, August 22, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 306, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, August 26, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 307, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, September 1, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 313, Memorandum of Conversation by the Chief of the Division of Southeast Asian Affairs (Reed), September 24, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 370, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, September 29, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 380, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, October 1, 1948, *FRUS*, Vol. 6, 381, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, October 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 385, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, March 3, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 297. See also the memoir of John Coast, who was hired by the Republic to help smuggling the opium. John Coast, *Recruit to Revolution: Adventure and Politics in Indonesia* (London: Christophers, 1952)

²⁶⁶ Sundhaussen (1982) 39

the PSI was split between Amir Sjarifuddin and Sjahrir factions, the latter especially disagreed with the growing friendliness of the Amir Sjarifuddin faction to the Communists. This split was inevitable considering the bad blood between these two leaders after the Renville. The Amir Sjarifuddin faction then merged with left-wing groups to create the People's Democratic Front (FDR – Front Demokrasi Rakyat). After the merge, Amir Sjarifuddin became more radical, especially after Musso, one of the old leaders of the PKI, returned in August 1948 from exile in Moscow, threatening his leadership position in this now Communist-dominated group.²⁶⁷ As a result, on September 1, Amir declared that he had always been a member of the Communist Party, even during the Dutch era before the Japanese occupation.²⁶⁸

At this point, while the Dutch kept stalling, the economy collapsed, and the Army simmered from discontent due to Hatta's rationalization program, clashes started to erupt

²⁶⁷ Kahin argued that the reason for the split was Sjahrir's insistence that the Sjarifuddin faction had grown far too close to the Communists, and Sjahrir opposed any alignment with either the Soviet Union or the United States. The latter might be true, as Amir Sjarifuddin seemed to rely heavily on the United States. Much later, Simatupang, in an interview with Mrazek, recalled that years after Renville, he told Graham, "You left Amir up in the air; it was your doing what happened to him"; and Graham acknowledged some guilty feelings. However, it is difficult to accept the first premise that Amir Sjarifuddin had grown too close to the Communists. While it was true that the Amir Sjarifuddin faction had grown closer to the Communists due to fact that the Amir Sjarifuddin faction relied mostly on the masses as a source of power, the the breaking point was the disagreements between Sjahrir and Amir Sjarifuddin. By the time Amir lost his power, he was bitter over what he saw as betrayal from Sjahrir and other Republican leaders. Simatupang, in his memoir, speculated that Amir "[felt] disappointed and abandoned by the people and groups he had at first expected would support him in the implementation of the Renville Agreement," making him susceptible to the Communists' influence. Moreover, as Mrs. Amir Sjarifuddin recalled, after the collapse of the government, the Communist leaders came to his home all the time, presumably to influence him. Ali Sastroamijoyo, in his memoir, further noted that Amir's later declaration that he was a Communist was heavily influenced by his disappointments and "in such a state of mind he had easily fallen victim to the political tactics of Musso, who wanted to use him because of his very great influence in FDR." Ali also noted changes in Amir Sjarifuddin's attitude, and that he became hostile and Ali further noted, "he was often angry with (his wife) and had even threatened to beat her. This was very strange, because... Amir had always given us the impression of being a loving family man." See Kahin (1952) 258, 273-4. Mrazek (1994) 370, Sastroamijoyo (1979) 160, 162, Simatupang (1972) 82-3, Swift (1989) 24-5, 59, Wellem (1982) 200, 272. 285-6

²⁶⁸ Amir's claim was received with disbelief. Kahin noted that none of the most responsible non-Communist leaders, including Sukarno, Hatta, and Sjahrir, believed Amir's claim. Kahin (1952) 273-4

in the Republican area. Many of the demobilized soldiers and former laskar troops were frustrated,²⁶⁹ and the PKI-backed FDR manipulated the situation by demanding that the government maintain the entire army. There was resentment toward Hatta's preferential treatment of the elite Siliwangi Division, and since the goal of Hatta's rationalization plan was to integrate the Army to the new federal force, it was inevitable that the FDR started to label the plan as "Spoor's Plan" (General S.H. Spoor, the commander of the Dutch army, was supposed to be the Commander-in-Chief of the new federal army) and the Siliwangi Division, whose initial is SLW, was labeled as *Stoot Leger Wilhelmina* (Assault Troops of Wilhelmina, the Queen of the Netherlands).²⁷⁰

The FDR stance toward rationalization of the Army cannot be seen only through nationalism and an anti-colonialism lens. Amir Sjarifuddin, while he was the Minister of Defense and the Prime Minister of the Republic, had been able to strengthen his position with the Army by putting his loyal men in both the regular army and the laskars. While Hatta did not show his preference in demobilizing both the laskars and the Army, by the time he started to demobilize the regular army, one of the first units to be demobilized, which was the Fourth Division, had a strong affiliation toward FDR. Even though Hatta considered the demobilization of the Fourth Division solely from a military standpoint (half of the division was comprised of sailors, which were practically useless as the Republicans did not have any naval forces), the FDR became more determined in

²⁶⁹ Simatupang (1972) 125. Hatta, in his memoir, blamed the mentality of the soldiers as the culprit of their frustration:

I learned a lesson on the mentality of our youths at that time. Once he became a soldier he saw other occupations as beneath him. From thousands that was demobilized, only tens willing to work in carpentry. If I am not mistaken, on the first day, we employed 70 people, under a competent carpenter. On the second day, only half of them returned. On the third day, nobody came. Hatta (1979) 528

²⁷⁰ Sundhaussen (1982) 39

opposing Hatta. Not surprisingly, Hatta and the Army leadership decided to remove the Communist elements from the Army through transfer or demobilization.²⁷¹

The situation had turned worse by July 2, 1948, when Sutarto, the commander of the Fourth Division, was assassinated in Surakarta. By September, tensions further rose in Surakarta as several more officers were assassinated. Moreover, there were many armed clashes between the Siliwangi Division and pro-PKI units. Despite Musso's appeal to localize the situation, units sympathetic to the Communists started to move from the frontline to Surakarta and Madiun, two cities where the FDR had the strongest support.²⁷²

In the meantime, the external situation of the Republic had changed with the commencement of the Cold War, raising the spectre of Communism in Europe. The Communists led general strikes in France and Italy. There was also the Communists' civil war in Greece. The Communists' further took over Czechoslovakia in February 1948. On June 1948, the Soviet imposed a blockade on Berlin.²⁷³ The United States' anxiety over the Communists' expansion in Greece and Turkey in turn led to Truman's declaration that "It must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."²⁷⁴ This declaration, later known as the "Truman Doctrine," was aimed to contain the spread of Communism and became the cornerstone of the United States foreign policy in Indonesia.

This policy, however, was skillfully used by the Dutch to present its case to the United States that its presence in Indonesia was helping to the overall policy of the

²⁷¹ Kahin (1952) 260-1, 265-6, 287

²⁷² Swift (1989) 72-3

²⁷³ Brackman (1963) 66

²⁷⁴ Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969) 222

United States to contain the Communism. The Dutch gained a huge diplomatic windfall when on May 26, 1948 the Soviet Union unexpectedly declared that it ratified a diplomatic exchange with the Republic and agreed to consular representation. Apparently on December 25, 1947, Dr. Suripno, who was part of the Republican delegates to the Youth Congress at Prague, was ordered by Sukarno to find diplomatic support from the Eastern Bloc. He managed to secure support from Moscow and in January, the Soviet consular treaty was signed, though the Republicans ignored it, fearing that the United States might align with the Dutch.²⁷⁵

Hearing the news, the Dutch reacted by arguing to Washington that the Republicans were "inspired" by Moscow.²⁷⁶ Some of the leaders of the Dutch truly believed that the Republic was following instructions from Moscow. Van Mook later in his memoir further stressed his conviction that the entire problem in Indonesia was created by the "thirteen men in the Kremlin."²⁷⁷ The State Department was so worried that on May 28, 1948, it asked Dubois for his opinion on whether the Republicans were simply unwilling to implement the Renville, and pointedly referred to the USSR's declaration as a proof of the Republicans' bad faith. Implicit within this telegram was the accusation that the Republicans were drifting to the Communists' side.²⁷⁸

The Republicans themselves, however, was caught by surprise over this announcement. Pringgodigdo declared that Suripno was a "saloon Communist," though

²⁷⁵ Brackman (1963) 75-6, Kahin (1952) 268n26

²⁷⁶ It was interesting that the Dutch actually managed to produce a copy of Sukarno's instruction to Suripno "from friendly source in Republic." Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, May 28, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 187, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, May 29, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 194

²⁷⁷ Van Mook (1950) 249

²⁷⁸ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, June 2, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 192

he admitted that the Republic could not state that Suripno acted without authority, since he was operating under instructions from Sukarno. Realizing the importance of the United States' support in facing the Dutch, Hatta further informed the United States that "as long as he Prime Minister there would be no exchange consuls with USSR." Both Hatta and Mohammad Roem, who was one of the Republican representatives, also claimed that Suripno was acting under Amir Sjarifuddin's government, and both of them denied knowing anything about his mission. Dubois accepted the Republicans' explanation. The Republicans had repudiated Moscow's overture, and several days later, Hatta further reiterated that even if he received the letter asking to exchange consular representation from Moscow, he would "put them in a box" indefinitely. Dubois considered the matter closed and he believed that the "Republic has gone as far as it can be expected at this time in disavowing relationship USSR, that it has, in fact, shown considerable restraint by attitude taken."²⁷⁹ However the Dutch refused to keep this "crass violation" dead, hoping to use it as a pretext to break negotiation.²⁸⁰

By this time, Dubois no longer held any illusion that the Dutch were negotiating in good faith. He felt that the Dutch had been dragging their feet, asking concessions from the Republicans while giving none. Moreover, he saw that as the negotiation dragged on, it hurt the interests of the United States in Indonesia. He also correctly

²⁷⁹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, May 29, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 194-6, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, May 28, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 208

²⁸⁰ Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, June 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 215, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, June 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 216

surmised that the Republicans were actually popular all over Indonesia and any attempt to create a federation without the Republic was bound to fail.²⁸¹

At this point, he decided to work with the Australian delegate to draft a working paper for political settlement. Called the Dubois-Critchley proposals, the paper called for an election for the Constituent Assembly based on proportional representation. The Assembly itself would be comprised of both the federal states and the Republic. On June 10, he gave the proposals to both the Dutch and the Republicans. The Republicans immediately accepted it, while the Dutch objected, complaining that Dubois had "created havoc all respects" and bypassed the Belgian delegate in his proposal. Moreover, the Dutch also complained that the Republicans kept violating the Renville Agreement.²⁸²

On June 12, a very frustrated Dubois, in response to the Dutch accusation that he was bending to Australian pressure, cabled the State Department, stating that he had successfully neutralized the Australian Delegate from taking unilateral action that might have been emboldening the Republic for the past five months. He also added that the only reason for the Dubois-Critchley proposals was simply because he saw the Netherlands' plan for the USI, which demanded that the Republic first acknowledge the authority of the Netherlands over Indonesia and use Dutch forces to suppress all dissidents, to be

²⁸¹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, May 10, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 166, 168, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 3, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 212. Dubois' remark was not without basis. On June 26, H. Adil Puradiredja, the Prime Minister of Pasundan State, one of the Dutch-made federal states, confessed to the U.S. members of the GOC that he was in continual touch with both Hatta and Roem. When he was asked whether most Indonesians in non-Republican areas were pro-Republican, he replied this was like asking if most of the citizens of the United States were pro-American. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 28, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 274-5

²⁸² Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 218-223, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 11, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 236, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, June 12, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 237, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, June 12, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 238-9

"unworkable, based on fictitious premises, and fairly sure have disastrous aftermath for US interests Southeast Asia."²⁸³

On June 16, the Dutch broke negotiations, claiming that the Dubois-Critchley proposals were leaked to Daniel Schorr, a *Time* reporter.²⁸⁴ Dubois was so disgusted with the Dutch delaying tactics and sense of righteousness that after he claimed that the Dutch were the ones who leaked the proposals, he bluntly told the State Department:

It high time turn deaf ear to Dutch argument that Republic has violated *Renville* Agreement and principles while Netherlands has loyally support them. Apart release considerable numbers prisoners war, Netherlands has done nothing here except in direct pursuit its immediate interests while demanding Republic be bound by political principles prior signing political agreement has not regarded self as similarly bound.... It also seized every excuse for not fulfilling important provisions truce.²⁸⁵

At this point, Dubois had gone too far for the State Department's liking. On June 23, Philip C. Jessup, the American Deputy Representatives at the United Nations Security Council, argued to Dean Rusk against accepting the Dubois-Critchley proposals since the United States general policy was "supporting the Dutch as much as we could." In other words, the Republicans must be sacrificed for the sake of the United States' interest in Europe.²⁸⁶ Dubois himself however was ill and desired to return to the United States.²⁸⁷

²⁸³ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 7, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 226, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 12, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 242

²⁸⁴ Daniel Schorr actually received the copy from "someone on the United Nations staff." Gardner (1997) 65

²⁸⁵ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 24, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 249

²⁸⁶ McMahan (1981) 226

²⁸⁷ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, June 16, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 266

On June 25, the State Department decided to replace him with H. Merle Cochran, who was well-known for his sympathies to the Dutch.²⁸⁸

While the State Department appeased the Dutch by recalling the troublesome Dubois and replacing him with Cochran, it also realized that the status quo in Indonesia could not be maintained forever as it would result in "an unstable situation and an economic drain on both the Netherlands and the United States for many years." Even though Washington thought Dubois had gone too far, it also realized that his plan was a good basis for a political settlement and resented the fact that the Dutch seemed to consider the GOC as "a salesman for the Dutch proposal." Therefore, the State Department believed that the Dutch had to be pressured to return to the negotiating table and to accept a plan from the GOC as a basis for negotiation since "the Republic will not accept a settlement unless it originate with and be offered by the Good Offices Committee."²⁸⁹ On July 13, 1948, Washington bluntly stated to the Dutch that it found "the present state of affairs in Indonesia very unsatisfactory" due to the lack of progress after the Renville and stressed that "a compromise solution could be offered only by the GOC."²⁹⁰ On July 21, the Dutch signaled its willingness to accept a working paper that would be prepared by Cochran upon his arrival in Jakarta on August 9.

In the meantime, however, Ogburn, the acting United States Representative in the GOC, reported that the situation in Indonesia had turned critical as the Communists'

²⁸⁸ Cochran himself later would claim, "No one could have come to Batavia with more friendly attitude toward Netherlands than I did." Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Netherlands, June 25, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 270, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 6, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 467

²⁸⁹ Memorandum Prepared for the Under Secretary of State, July 12, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 280-1

²⁹⁰ Hatta believed that the United States' threat of stopping the Marshall Plan to the Dutch was the major factor in this decision. However, there was no basis of this assertion in the memorandum of conversation between the State Department and the Netherlands. Hatta (1979) 531, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), July 13, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 282

influence had grown stronger in the Republic, due to the frustration among many nationalists regarding the lack of progress in the negotiations and increasing economic problems. The growing influence of the Communists in turn caused the Republican delegate to the GOC to take a much harder line than before. He deplored the "persistent Dutch belief that if they can bring about collapse Republican Government through political and economic squeeze or drive it into hills by military force, Indonesians will turn to them" as the most dangerous factor since it radicalized the Indonesians. He also complained about the United States' seemingly indifference toward the Republic, warning that "every SC debate on Indonesia probably wins thousands new converts to USSR."²⁹¹

On July 28, a very frustrated Ogburn bluntly reported to the State Department that "Republic has been consistently convinced US Government solidly support Dutch" and "its only weapons against Netherlands are public opinion and needling by Russia." Moreover, the Republic was convinced that the "actual locus for negotiating solution [to] Indonesian problem is ... Washington." On the other hand, he could not do anything as he "continues in dark as to how Department views current situation or what action it proposes." As a result, the risk of Indonesia falling into the Communist camp was increasing.²⁹² The arrival of Musso in Jogjakarta on August 13, where he was received by Sukarno, further ratcheted the tension.

By August 31, the State Department was so alarmed with the deteriorating condition in Indonesia that it made a major turnabout, agreeing with Ogburn that "Neth attitude, intentional or unintentional, appears be hastening fall Hatta Govt and Dept fears

²⁹¹ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, July 21, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 286-7

²⁹² Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, July 28, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 292-3

successor that Govt will be strongly Left Wing if not Communist controlled." In the meantime, Cochran had arrived in Indonesia in early August. After spending some time, he finished his plan, which was similar to the Dubois-Critchley proposals, with the difference being that the new plan strengthened the federal character of the United States of Indonesia to ensure that the Republic could not dominate it through its sheer population.²⁹³

On September 8, the State Department agreed to the Cochran plan and ordered the plan to be discussed with both the Dutch and the Republicans. It also instructed Cochran to tell Hatta that the United States would assist the Hatta government in resisting the "Communist tyranny" and would make "every effort" to find a "just and practical settlement" of the Dutch-Republican dispute. To further illustrate the urgency that the State Department felt due to the rapid deterioration of the situation in Indonesia, on September 10, it further rejected the Dutch's plan, which was written in response to the Cochran plan, as unacceptable and pressured the Dutch to negotiate with the Republic under the plan that Cochran was developing in Indonesia.²⁹⁴

While the Republicans were enthusiastic and accepted the plan,²⁹⁵ the Dutch remained unwilling to save Hatta's government. On September 13, Cochran reported that

²⁹³ McMahon (1981) 240, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, August 31, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 312

²⁹⁴ Stikker complained in his memoir that when he objected to Cochran's plan, Marshall remarked that the United States had "civil, political, and military observers on the spot for three months" and they had all reached the same conclusions. Stikker retorted, "Do you really believe that the advice of these few people who have been there for three months is of more value than all the experience we have gained over more than three centuries?" Dirk Stikker, *Men of Responsibility: A Memoir* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 117, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, September 9, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 325, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, September 9, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 327, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, September 10, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 330

²⁹⁵ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, September 17, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 342, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, September 17, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 342-3

in an informal conversation, a Dutch delegate considered his plan to be "very disappointing" and "90 percent Dubois plan." The Dutch also felt that the Republicans should allow the Dutch forces to move to territories under Republican control to restore law and order.²⁹⁶ On September 17, Mr. Dirk Uipko Stikker, the Netherlands Foreign Minister, reproved the United States about the growing menace of Communism in the Netherlands East Indies, and declared the Dutch willingness to assist the United States in fighting Communism, before he stating his disapproval of the Cochran proposals, and his belief that the Dutch Government would not be able to get enough support to build the two-third majority in the States General to approve the plan.²⁹⁷ Seeing that the State Department remained committed in supporting Hatta's government and Cochran's proposals, on September 18, the Dutch tried to provoke the Indonesians by ordering some of the families of the Republican delegates in Jakarta to leave the Netherlands-controlled territory.²⁹⁸ However, at this time, the Republicans had a more pressing problem: the Communists revolted and seized Madiun.

As noted earlier, the situation in the Republic had become critical with the arrival of Musso and the clashes between the Siliwangi Division and the FDR-dominated Fourth Division in Surakarta. Surakarta was also racked with a rash of kidnappings, which the PKI blamed on the Hatta government. On September 10, Suadi, the commander of Division IV, issued an ultimatum, demanding that the Siliwangi Division return his

²⁹⁶ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, September 13, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 337

²⁹⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, September 17, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 344

²⁹⁸ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, September 19, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 352

kidnapped officers, even though the Siliwangi Division declared that they had nothing to do with the kidnappings. On September 13, clashes erupted between the Siliwangi units and Division IV. While General Sudirman managed to arrange a ceasefire that evening, there were several kidnapping incidents in the next several days, causing the battle to resume between the Siliwangi Division and the Division IV. The latter was supported by the Pesindo troops, who were loyal to the FDR (which had become the PKI at this point, as Amir Sjarifuddin had declared himself to be a Communist). On September 17, the Siliwangi Division finally expelled the Division IV and Pesindo units from Surakarta, though at the same time, Sukarno, prodded by Sudirman, declared a state of emergency in Surakarta, putting the city under the control of a military governor.²⁹⁹

In reaction to events in Surakarta, troops loyal to the PKI and the Pesindo forces might have decided that their options at this point were either to submit to the government's mobilization program, which would end their careers and would surrender part of the PKI's military potential, or to embark in an open rebellion.³⁰⁰ They picked the latter option, taking over the city of Madiun on September 18, and establishing a "National Front Government for the Region of Madiun." The PKI leadership reacted with dismay. They were caught off guard by the takeover. Even the PKI itself was not prepared for a coup as it were still in process of integrating the FDR to the PKI.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ Swift (1989) 68, 70-2

³⁰⁰ Kahin (1952) 290

³⁰¹ It is also believed that Musso himself would prefer the revolt to start between November 1948 and January 1949, which then would lead to American-sanctioned Dutch invasion to curb it. Then Indonesia would have become engulfed in the chaos of guerilla warfare, allowing them to take control of the guerilla movement and Indonesia itself when the Dutch were expelled through the constant wars. The purge of pro-PKI sympathizers from the Army, however, caused these pro-PKI military officers to revolt two months ahead of schedule and the PKI leadership could not afford to repudiate their sources of armed strength. See George McT. Kahin, "Indonesian Politics and Nationalism" In William L. Holland, *Asian Nationalism and the West* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953) 98, Swift (1989) 73-4

At this point, Musso's options were not very appealing. On one hand, the PKI was not ready to fight. On the other hand, if the PKI leadership repudiated the takeover, it would lose prestige and support from the disgruntled army, not to mention that it would also lose significant military resources that would be a major setback to the movement, as the Hatta government would surely disarm these troops, including the Division IV, after all of the fighting. Facing two unappealing options, the PKI decided to wait to see what Sukarno would do, though the PKI was unwilling to surrender the city.³⁰²

Sukarno, however, saw Musso and his PKI as a threat, and decided to back Hatta. On September 19, he denounced the takeover of Madiun and demanded that the people choose either Sukarno and Hatta, or Musso. The die was cast. Less than two hours later, Musso shot back, calling the population to overthrow both Sukarno and Hatta. This was a fatal blunder: Sukarno was still very popular all over the countryside and even within the Army.³⁰³ Troops started to desert the PKI. Marred by defections, Musso could only rely on Pesindo and parts of Division IV, which was between 5 and 10 thousand troops. The revolt was put down quickly by the Siliwangi Division. Musso was shot on October 31, while Amir Sjarifuddin was arrested on December 1, 1948.³⁰⁴

³⁰² Swift (1989) 75

³⁰³ Kahin (1952) 292-3, 301

³⁰⁴ Swift (1979) 77-80 Amir Sjarifuddin's involvement in this rebellion was completely unexpected. According to Simatupang, when Sukarno heard that Amir had joined the Communist revolt, he exclaimed, "What does Amir really want?" Hatta rejoined by saying, "Now it is a matter of life or death. Er op of er onder." In Simatupang opinion, these are the words of utter consternation and surprise as they were at loss in trying to figure him out. Simatupang (1972) 81 Surprisingly, Sukarno did not mention his name at all in his memoir, aside from the earlier assertion that he saved Amir's life during the Japanese era and his complaint that "Indonesia's first Communist uprising was incited by ... the man whose life I saved during the occupation, Amir Sjarifuddin." Adams (1965) 182, 269

In the meantime, the State Department watched developments in the Republic with interest, though to its chagrin, it had nobody in Jogjakarta at that time, as the American delegates in the GOC had returned to Batavia on September 15, three days before the rebellion erupted and Cochran himself was in Kaliurang, a town in the ceasefire zone between the Dutch and the Republic.³⁰⁵ On September 20, Cochran returned to Jogjakarta, where he impressed Hatta with the need of the Republic to "show determination" to "suppress Communism," and he promised to recommend to Washington "practical ways to assist democratic non-Communist government of Indonesia" in opposing the Communists' threat.

While Hatta hoped that the Republicans could quell the rebellion in two weeks, he noted that the Republicans were short on ammunition and weapons, and he discussed the need for the police force material with an American attaché (who would be sent to the Republic later). He also worried that the Dutch would use the situation to invade the Republic. The Dutch, however, did nothing as van Mook halted them from interfering in Indonesia, since he believed that any Dutch attack on the Republic would backfire on the Dutch.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁵ Kahin, who happened to be in Kaliurang, recalled that he had his first meeting with Cochran and both of them were walking together when Haji Agus Salim informed them about the rebellion. Kahin further noted, "It was evident that Cochran was every bit as surprised as I was at the outbreak of rebellion. He immediately turned around and strode back, seemingly as fast as his considerable bulk would permit, to join his colleagues in the UN delegation's office." Kahin (2003) 60, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, September 20, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 357

³⁰⁶ Fischer (1959) 115, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, September 20, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 357-8, The attaché was Arturo Campbell, who was a representative of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Dutch did not know about his real identity until much later. In March 1949, his name appeared in a Dutch file labeled "unwanted American activities" as an "intelligence officer." Kahin remembered him as a "squat-rotund 200-pounder... He smiled less than Cochran and, by his blustering demeanor and self-important attitude, very quickly antagonized many Indonesians." Apparently, Campbell also tried to offer Hatta funds in support of the Republic, which Hatta refused out of the fear of tense political situation at that time. Gardner (1997) 78, Gouda (2002) 285, Kahin (2003) 63, 65, McMahon (1981) 244

The immediate result of the Republic's clampdown on the Communists was the thawing of the relationship between the United States and the Republic. From this point on, the United States started to look favorably toward the Republic, considering it to be a bulwark against communism in Southeast Asia, especially after the defeat of the Nationalists in China.³⁰⁷

The evidence was telling in a State Department memorandum, where the option of "possible US recognition of the Republic" was raised to pressure the Dutch to negotiate. The memorandum surprisingly also accepted the possibility of the Dutch delaying tactics, which was never mentioned in earlier memoranda or in statements from the State Department. Moreover, included in the memorandum was Frank Graham's advice to State Department to immediately allocate "a fair proportion of available textiles, transportation equipment, and medicines to the Republic... to strengthen the Hatta regime."³⁰⁸ On September 24, the State Department further pressured the Dutch to return to the negotiating table and to give more concessions to the Republic.³⁰⁹ Several days later, Cochran received further instructions from the State Department to emphasize to the Republic that:

recent sharp cleavage effected between Communists and Communist sympathizers in Repub on one hand genuine nationalists on other could only have been most welcome development to US Govt and US public opinion.... Further

³⁰⁷ Kahin (1952) 417-8, McMahon (1981) 244, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, November 10, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 479

³⁰⁸ The memorandum also contained Dr. Frank Graham's strong plea "for prompt and vigorous action by the US to induce the Dutch to come promptly to terms with the Indonesian Republic." Graham argued that the Dutch position was a policy of "delay, continual attrition, economic strangulation and political fragmentation" and proposed that the United States to take a position of "This is *it* and *now*." The fact that Graham's memorandum was quoted at all suggested a complete change in the State Department view on the Republic's problem. Memorandum Prepared for the Acting Secretary of State, September 23, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 364-5

³⁰⁹ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Southeast Asian Affairs (Reed), September 24, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 369-70

firm action against Communists by Repub Govt could hardly fail accrue advantage Repub by giving it clean bill health in eyes democratic govts and peoples and added stature as representative and effective govt.³¹⁰

On October 1, 1948, the State Department decided to offer Hatta medical supplies gratis. While textiles and other items were to be purchased, this was a change in policy, as Washington no longer waited for the Netherlands opinion before making an offer, Still, Washington did not want to completely embolden the Republic, and therefore ordered Cochran to impress to Hatta that Washington was "helping him fight Communism and does not intend that his position in negotiations is changed as a consequence US support in this manner."³¹¹

The Dutch were furious over what they saw as a shift in American policy, as it would undermine their position in Indonesia drastically. The Republicans might be further strengthened and would start resisting the Dutch attempt to reorganize Indonesia under their own terms. As a result, the Dutch tried to undermine this new relationship. Trying to show that the Dutch were the only ones who could destroy the Communists once and for all, the Dutch played down the importance of the Republic and Hatta by stating that Hatta was "not great impeccable national figure" and that appeasing Hatta "would do irreparable damages." Moreover, the Netherlands started to belittle the Republic's success in uprooting the Communists, claiming that "principal success Repub

³¹⁰ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, September 27, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 378

³¹¹ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, October 1, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 381-2

Govt against Communists have been achieved by Tan Malakka division Trotskyite Communists not regular Repub troops.³¹²

The Dutch also felt that the State Department's pressures "has embarrassed Neth Govt in effort suppress unlawful and subversive activities carried on by large Repub delegation Batavia." The State Department, however, described the Dutch position as "unsatisfactory" and pressed the Dutch to negotiate. It defended Cochran's proposals as "sound, reasonable and realistic," and instructed the American Ambassador in the Netherlands to tell the Dutch government that it was impatient with the Dutch's delaying tactics and "the only serious obstacle remaining relates to Neth insistence on attaching counterproposals to letter of acceptance."³¹³

By October 8, the Dutch started to get so frustrated that the American Ambassador in the Netherlands warned that the Dutch "might take firm measures, even involving police action." On October 14, the Dutch took a hardened position, submitting so many of their amendments to Cochran's proposals that "they amounted to a substitution of Dutch counterproposals." By October 29, Cochran was so frustrated with the Dutch unwillingness to negotiate in good faith that he expressed his unhappiness to the Dutch delegate over "Netherlands delegation imposing one condition after another on resumption of negotiations," and refused to play along with the Dutch tactics. He also complained that the "trend of provocative incidents emanating from Netherlands East Indies authorities at such a critical moment" proved that the Dutch were trying to make it

³¹² Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, September 26, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 376, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, October 11, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 406

³¹³ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, September 29, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 380, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, October 12, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 409, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Netherlands, October 12, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 411

impossible for Hatta to survive. More alarmingly, he felt that the Dutch at this time were trying to break the negotiation to create a pretext for a "police action."³¹⁴

Still, Hatta apparently was willing to bend backward to meet some of the Dutch demands, especially in truce agreements, in order to bring the United States of Indonesia to fruition, causing Cochran to be concerned about whether Hatta conceded too much beyond what other Republicans would allow. At this point, Hatta probably gambled that with the United States backing his position, the existence of the Republic was assured and what he needed to do was to keep pushing for the transfer of sovereignty. However, the Dutch government remained unsatisfied with the Republic's concessions. Moreover, the Dutch also demanded that the Republic disband its army because the Dutch believed that the Army would menace the non-Republicans in Indonesia.

Cochran started to sense that the Dutch were planning something. On December 4, in a telegraph to the State Department, Cochran concluded that the Dutch seemed to have the intent of making settlement as difficult as possible. The next day, he reported that the talks definitely had broken down due to the unwillingness of the Dutch to negotiate.³¹⁵

On December 7, the State Department submitted an aide-memoire to the Dutch government, blaming the Dutch for the breakdown of the talks, criticizing the Dutch for substituting the Cochran proposals with the Dutch's own, and asking the talk to be

³¹⁴ Gouda (2002) 282, McMahon (1981) 244, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, October 8, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 398, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, October 29, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 441

³¹⁵ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, November 13, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 485, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, November 22, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 498-9, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 4, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 516, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, December 5, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 525

restarted. The Dutch reacted with furor and demanded the Republic to "confirm its willingness to recognize Netherlands sovereignty" and to disband its army.³¹⁶ At this point, with the United States seemed to lean toward the Republicans and the Dutch cabinet split, the Dutch needed to take a decisive action to quash the republic once and for all.

Even though on December 13 Hatta wrote a letter to the Dutch, trying to satisfy the Dutch, the Dutch refused to return to the negotiation table. On December 17, the Dutch presented an ultimatum, demanding a complete surrender of the Republic and giving only one day to reply.³¹⁷ Cochran was furious as he was not even given time to bring the message to the Republic, and the Dutch action was a breach of trust. However, the aim of the Dutch was simply to gain a pretext for invasion. Without allowing the Republicans to reply, on December 19, 1948, the Dutch launched a second invasion which managed to capture Jogjakarta and the Republican leadership.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, December 6, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 528-9, The Netherlands Embassy to the Department of State, December 10, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 548

³¹⁷ McMahon (1981) 249

³¹⁸ The Republicans were in confusion at that time. Even though there were signals that the Dutch were going to invade, part of the leadership believed that the Dutch would not dare to attack as they could not afford to offend the United States, and in Simatupang's words, "Attack by the Dutch would be the policy of madmen." General Sudirman, on the other hand, was pessimistic and believed the Dutch would attack. Interestingly, in Hatta's memoir, he claimed that he and his fellow delegates believed that the Dutch would invade and he welcomed that invasion, since he guessed correctly that the Dutch attack would force the United Nations to intervene. Sukarno in his autobiography stated that General Sudirman came to his palace two hours before the Dutch arrived, asking him to leave. Sukarno refused, arguing that he had to remain in Jogjakarta so he "may be in a position to bargain for us and to lead us." Adams (1965) 255, Hatta (1979) 539, McMahon (1981) 251, Simatupang (1972) 16

A casualty from this invasion was Amir Sjarifuddin. He was executed by the Republican force, even though Sukarno had ordered the Army not to hurt him. However, during the Second Dutch Aggression, Gatot Subroto, the military governor of Surakarta, ordered his troops to execute all FDR leaders in Surakarta prison. The official reason was to prevent them from crossing the line and joining the Dutch. See Wellem (1982) 303. Still, one could not help to wonder if this execution was an act of revenge due to Amir's interference in the Army during his reign as the Defense Minister and later the Prime Minister of the Republic, and more importantly his involvement with the Communist revolt of 1948, where

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter briefly analyzes four of the Indonesian leaders during revolutionary era: Sukarno, Sjahrir, Amir Sjarifuddin, and Mohammad Hatta. As we have seen in this chapter, leaders do make impacts in situations where both external and internal factors are fluid and thus allow some freedom of action.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Sukarno had a major impact on the creation of Indonesian foreign policy, due to his ability to garner and manipulate internal distributions of power. His choices were based purely from calculations of power. In the fateful month of November 1945, Sjahrir's position was more dominant and threatening to Sukarno, and it was highly possible that Sukarno would back Tan Malaka and his *perjuangan* faction instead. A crafty leader, even as his wings were clipped by Sjahrir, he managed to create a new base of power, simply from his ability to be in the middle of everything. As the leader, he appropriated the symbolism and pomp of the revolution, thus enhancing his prestige. To maintain it, he was always ambiguous in his decisions, playing both sides, while the adoration from the population assured him that nobody would dare to overthrow him – aside from Tan Malaka – but with Sjahrir balancing him, Sukarno could remain on top. This strategy would be used again in the 1950s when the

the Communists murdered many sympathizers of both the PNI and the Masjumi and many officials who refused to join the rebellion. There was also fear that these prisoners, should they escape, would cause trouble due to their affiliation with the USSR. In addition, the Army had not been able to completely subdue laskar units affiliated with Amir Sjarifuddin and therefore his release would complicate the situation. In fact, on April 28, 1949, the Sultan of Jogjakarta stated that the TNI controlled the area around Jogjakarta, "except for bands Sjarifuddin Communsits, some roving but principally centered around town Paken between Jogja and Kaliurang." Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State, December 20, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 592, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (LIVengood) to the Secretary of State, April 28, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 391. See also Brackman (1963) 109. An interesting fact is in Simatupang's memoir written in Banaran. Simatupang himself was close to Amir. In his diary which would be the source of his memoir, he wrote the names of those who were shot in Surakarta right after his entry on Gatot Subroto. However, he simply noted, "The next entry in my diary contained seven names, without any further clarification – Amir Sjarifuddin." Simatupang (1972) 77

Parliamentary government again limited his authority and bound him under constitutional limits.

However, once Sukarno picked the path of *diplomasi*, he could not really repudiate it, as he had thrown his lot to the moderate Republican leaders. Had he tried to backtrack, not only he would have lost the support of these moderates, but he would also be beholden to the will of those pursuing armed struggle. As a result, he had to put his prestige to back the diplomatic approach of Sjahrir, Amir Sjarifuddin, and Hatta. His backing was important: without Sukarno's backings, these Prime Ministers would be hard pressed to find enough support to pursue the diplomatic approach.

Sjahrir on the other hand had external support for his power and in the beginning operated under a much favorable situation compared to both Sukarno and Amir Sjarifuddin.³¹⁹ However, his ability to make a difference was hampered by his inability to garner internal support and to establish a strong powerbase within the Republican government.

Right from the beginning he had made a cardinal mistake in politics: creating too many enemies while being unable to build a strong powerbase for his political support. His main support system was the slender support that he had through his alliance with Amir Sjarifuddin in the PSI, and Sukarno's backing. With Tan Malaka's faction looming behind ready to strike should he seemed to concede too much, while other groups tried to depose him, Sjahrir's position became more and more untenable especially with no visible gain from his negotiations. Should the Dutch actually have been more reasonable and the United States threw its support to the Republic straight from the beginning, this

³¹⁹ Even Australian labor leaders claimed that they would obey Sjahrir's commands! George (1980) 72

chapter might actually be about the "triumph of Sjahrir," as Sjahrir's legitimacy as a leader rested solely on his diplomatic ability. By the end of the day, however, he had to depend more and more on Sukarno, and the failure of the negotiation with the Dutch coupled with what the Republicans called "diplomatic betrayals" destroyed whatever remained of his political capital.

Amir Sjarifuddin, on the other hand, was a capable yet also a tragic figure, who had very little freedom of action. The Republican position had deteriorated badly after the Dutch invaded. This external weakness was added to the fact that he mostly depended on Sukarno's support. His relationship with the Army was strained due to his favoring of his Pesindo troops and the Siliwangi Division. His failure to support Sjahrir during Sjahrir's cabinet crisis caused a split even within the PSI. Amir Sjarifuddin's government was essentially a very weak government. Therefore, the Renville was signed under conditions that were far less favorable than Linggadjati, with the Republicans completely exhausted, and Jogjakarta could have been taken had the United States not interfered due to its fear that the Dutch victory would ruin the United States' image in the Third World.

While Renville was the doom of Amir Sjarifuddin, Hatta was in a slightly better condition in pursuing the diplomatic path. Unlike Amir Sjarifuddin, Hatta was one of the most revered leaders of the revolution and he was not burdened with the squabbles with the Army. By Hatta's ascension to the position of the Prime Minister, the Army was badly beaten and important figures in the Army, such as Nasution and Simatupang, started to realize that it was high time for the Army to reform, therefore paving the way for Hatta to control the Army. Moreover, in a tragic twist of fate, since Amir Sjarifuddin was the one

who signed the Renville, any blame to the unfavorable terms of the Renville was heaped on him. Hatta was simply following what was agreed upon.

Still, Hatta was not blindly following the Renville Agreement. He realized that regardless of how unfavorable the Renville Agreement was, it already drew the United States into the negotiation, therefore providing a control lever to the Dutch and guaranteeing the existence of the Republic as a political entity. More important was the fact that the majority of the population in Indonesia supported the Republic. Even if the Republicans were defeated in the short term, in the long run, time was on the Republic's side: after the Dutch left and the United States of Indonesia was formed, the Republic could dominate the Federation through its sheer population size. Therefore, even though there was significant domestic opposition against the Renville, Hatta *chose* to follow the Renville Agreement. He also chose to rationalize the Army regardless of the cost, and he chose to destroy the PKI rebellion of 1948. Had the Dutch not invaded the Republic, probably the Indonesian army that emerged after the Revolution would have been highly competent yet not politicized. The seed of the Army's involvement in Indonesian politics government was sown at this point.

The Dutch, however, wanting to keep influencing the Indonesian politics even after the transfer of sovereignty, decided to bring the Republic under by pursuing the delaying strategy, hoping that the Republic would collapse economically and self-imploded in a wave of revolts, allowing the Dutch to move in to save the day and to get rid of the troublesome Republic. From the Dutch perspective, the new republic was still highly vulnerable, and the faster they were able to undermine the new republic the less

likely it would be to survive, and the Dutch could have regained control over the entire archipelago.

To be fair to the Dutch, the Dutch's freedom of action was severely limited by its economic condition and internal politics. Economically, the Netherlands was still in ruins from the impact of the Second World War. It did not have enough resources to push for a long-term interference in Indonesia. In fact the Cabinet even considered the possibility of leaving Indonesia. Time was critical and the Dutch needed to have a quick solution, and the best solution for the Dutch was to have the Republic submit to the authority of the Dutch, which the Republic was never willing to do. In fact, the First Dutch Invasion of 1947 was primarily caused by this economic condition.

On the other hand, compromise was also out of question since any compromise would mean the downfall of the fragile Dutch government. Even after the Republic conceded so much in the Renville, Dutch internal politics proved to be the biggest hindrance for the final compromise. Having been occupied by the Germans, the Dutch prestige was shattered and its public opinion was highly critical about any attempts that were seen as fatally compromising the Dutch position in her former colony.

The Dutch Government itself was a fragile coalition comprised of various factions, from the moderates such as Stikker, its Foreign Minister, and surprisingly, Van Mook, to the hawks such as Sassen, its Minister of Colonies.³²⁰ Part of the delays of the Dutch in the negotiations were caused by the inability of the Dutch government to make an agreement, fearing that too much concession would drive the hawks out, causing the

³²⁰ In 1949, Selden Chapin, the American Ambassador to the Netherlands, stated that the Dutch Cabinet was a "coalition of uneasy bedfellows thrown together in summer 1948 after six weeks of no government." Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, November 11, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 559. See also Stikker (1966) 114, 119-20

government to collapse. There were also people within the coalition who had messianic intentions, believing that Indonesia was simply not ready for independence. Even as late as 1985, Henri van Vradenburch, one of the Dutch negotiators in Renville, wrote in his memoir:

It was not so much a marriage as a *liason de raison* between the colonial uncle and his nationalist niece. It will not surprise anyone who has observed the world in a clear-eyed fashion that once she was released from the uncle's custody and had acquired a taste of freedom, the niece was convinced she could get as many lovers as she might desire. For the uncle, however, it was an remained a tragic affair. With endless patience, exemplary determination, and attractive gifts in the form of concessions, the uncle attempted to regain the affection of the beautiful niece. Until one day he was forced to acknowledge that he no longer had anything to relinquish or to acquiesce, thus recognizing that all his efforts had been in vain. The uncle was furious at the lack of gratitude on the part of the niece, who had recently been quite ignorant and silly (*onnozel*), and whose first steps on the path of emancipation the uncle himself had guided. It was a brief but sad story.³²¹

Therefore, compromise was not an option. At this point, with its economic problems partly solved through the assistance from the Marshall Plan, the Dutch started to have the luxury to delay, hoping the Republic would collapse.

The United States' position as a result was critical. Its economic assistance allowed the Dutch to gain enough time to keep pursuing the policy of delay. However, thanks to the premature revolt of the PKI and Hatta's quick action in crushing the rebellion, the United States started to look at the Republic favorably. By the time the Communist Rebellion in Madiun ended, Hatta's position became much stronger and with the United States pressuring the Dutch to negotiate, conditions became intolerable for the Dutch. Should the Dutch give concessions to the Republic, there was no guarantee that it would be supported by the entire cabinet, risking the collapse of the Dutch government.

³²¹ Gouda (2002) 226

At this point, the Dutch decided to invade to get rid of the Republic, and most importantly, to preserve the unity of the Cabinet.³²²

This one fateful decision set the path of Indonesia for the next several decades, even to today.

³²² Foreign Minister Stikker later told Herman Baruch, the United States Ambassador in the Netherlands, that the invasion was agreed upon by both the Cabinet and the Chamber and "No other practical recourse left but the present action, which they deplore under the circumstances, but they saw no other course open to Netherlands if they were to maintain their integrity." Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, December 21, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 596

CHAPTER 4

OPPORTUNITIES SQUANDERED:

FROM HATTA TO WILOPO

(1949-1953)

As it seemed likely that neither we nor the Dutch would achieve a definitive military victory in the near future, it was not impossible that international developments would have a rather decisive influence upon events in Indonesia.

What could be accomplished by the Armed Forces Staff in the next few months? It seemed to me that the Armed Forces Staff needed to follow very carefully both military developments (our own and those of the Dutch) and the course of international politics, seeking to influence as far as possible events in the direction most favorable to our cause.

T.B. Simatupang¹

Democracy is not anarchy where anyone can take up arms as he pleases.

Mohammad Hatta²

THUS ended our period of struggle. And thus began our struggle for survival. The deed to the house called Indonesia was now securely in our hands, but it was a badly damaged house. It leaked aplenty. Its windows, doors, roof, and walls were broken. Our economy, government administration, transportation systems, communications media, methods of production were all damaged. Even morally and mentally we needed repairs.

Sukarno³

¹ T.B. Simatupang, *Report from Banaran: Experiences During the People's War* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1972) 52

² Mavin Rose, *Indonesia Free: A Political Biography of Mohammad Hatta* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, 1987) 172

³ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 264

4.1. The Aftermath of the Dutch Second Invasion

The Dutch, having invaded Jogjakarta and arrested many of the Republican leaders, believed that the military phase would be over soon. As Foreign Minister Stikker noted to Herman Baruch, the American ambassador in the Netherlands, the Dutch expected to finish taking over the Republic in a week, and Stikker further expressed his confidence that he could persuade Hatta, who he held in full confidence, to lead a new Indonesian Republic without "hotheads and obstructionists."⁴

However, the unfolding events did not follow the Dutch plan. First, Hatta refused to cooperate.⁵ Second, the Republicans remained committed to defying the Dutch, and the seat of the government was transferred to Sumatra under the leadership of Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, the Minister of Economy, who was authorized to form an emergency government. Third, even though the Dutch were able to achieve their military objective, the Republican Army had melted into the jungle and pursued a guerilla war. Soon, the Dutch army, which had fewer than 100,000 effective soldiers to pacify entire Indonesia with its more than 50 million population, found itself to be stretched to its limit, and Kahin noted that the Dutch "were actually more on the defensive than on the offensive."

⁴ Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, December 21, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 596

⁵ The Republican leaders were held at Prapat, a small town in North Sumatra. In his memoir, Hatta did not mention the Dutch offer at all. He simply stated that he refused the invitation to come to Jakarta to meet Prime Minister Drees, demanding instead that Prime Minister Drees come to Prapat if he wanted to talk. However, he briefly mentioned that Sjahrir, who was also imprisoned, accepted the Dutch invitation to Jakarta and never returned. Mohammad Hatta, *Memoir* (Jakarta: P.T. Tintamas Indonesia, 1979) 548. Sukarno, on the other hand, complained bitterly in his memoir about living with Sjahrir, stating that Sjahrir kept cursing and insulting him, blaming him for the invasion. When Sjahrir left, Sukarno denounced him as a traitor and "ended up a free man." This would be the final straw that broke the already strained relationship between Sukarno and Sjahrir. Adams (1965) 258-9. On January 12, the Dutch, unable to get Hatta to cooperate, started to claim that they did not want to deal with both Sukarno and Hatta because they were "Japanese collaborationists," but were willing to recognize Sjahrir as an outstanding Republican. Sjahrir, however, refused to cooperate, though he remained in Jakarta. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Acting Secretary of State, January 12, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 143-4

The Republican guerillas started to attack all railroads, roads, bridges, and Dutch properties, and looted the Chinese merchants. On March 1, the Republican Army even managed to capture Jogjakarta for six hours before it retreated back to the jungle.⁶

The Dutch simply did not have enough troops to maintain law and order everywhere all the time. Even before the March attack, Dutch officials privately admitted that the guerilla activity had "set back economic progress in the islands anywhere from six months to two years. On February 6, Stikker further admitted to Cochran that the guerilla activities of the Republicans were very serious and it had cost the Dutch Government so much in maintaining its military that it might not be able to carry on beyond another five or six months."⁷

More problematic was the international uproar caused by the Dutch invasion, especially from the United States. On December 23, a very furious Dean Rusk⁸ signaled

⁶ Simatupang in his memoir stated that the goal of the attack was to humiliate the Dutch as "the fairly sensational news item of a general assault on Jogjakarta was bound to have a very favorable effect." Simatupang (1972) 65 However, the effect was the hardening of the Netherlands' attitude. On March 7, T. Elink Schuurman, the Acting Chairman of the Netherlands delegation in Batavia, flatly told Cochran that "Jogja trouble March 1 has made The Hague more determined not permit Republican restoration." Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, March 8, 1948, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 307. Kahin, however, believed that the attack helped signal to the leaders of the Dutch-created states that the Dutch would never be able to completely destroy the Republic. George McT. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952) 411-2

⁷ In October 1949, Stikker admitted to Cochran that the Dutch spent f. 3.7 billion for its military intervention in Indonesia. The Dutch put some 100,000 soldiers at a rate of f. 30 per day. Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963) 107, Kahin (1952) 391, Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: the United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945-49* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981) 280, Dirk Stikker, *Men of Responsibility: A Memoir* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 144, Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Acting Secretary of State, January 12, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 149-50, Telegram From the Ambassador in Belgium (Kirk) to the Secretary of State, February 9, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol 7 Part 1, 214-5, Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Steere) to the Secretary of State, October 10, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 518

⁸ Dean Rusk had a personal reason to be so angry with the Dutch. On the day he heard of the attack, he was told by the Netherlands Embassy officials in Washington that they also found the attack "a complete surprise." When he later told his wife, however, she responded, "Oh, perhaps I should have told you. I was at lunch with a group of Dutch ladies, last week, and they were freely discussing the upcoming second police action." Frances Gouda and Thijs Brocades Zaalberg, *American Visions of the Netherlands East*

his anger by stating to Phillip C. Jessup, the United States Representative at the United Nations, that the Dutch invasion was a "direct encouragement to spread of Communism in Southern Asia."⁹ George Kennan, one of the most influential figures in the formation of the foreign policy of the United States, did not mince his words when he wrote to George Marshall complaining about the Dutch invasion:

Curiously enough... the most crucial issue of the moment in our struggle with the Kremlin is probably the problem of Indonesia.... The train of events which would follow chaos in Indonesia would therefore likely lead to a bisecting of the world from Siberia to Sumatra.... It would be only a matter of time before the infection would sweep westward through the continent to Burma, India and Pakistan.¹⁰

However, Rusk also had to refuse the idea that the United States would unilaterally push the Security Council to act since "US cannot accept role of world policeman.... Certainly US did not bargain for such unilateral role when it signed Charter." Moreover, there were some strategic and pragmatic considerations that prevented the United States from taking a forceful action against the Dutch:

US has no intention bringing about general break with Dutch over Indonesian question. For us to insist upon full compliance with highest standard of conduct as price of our association with other govts and peoples would lead us quickly into position of not too splendid isolation. On that basis we might have already broken with Russia (Berlin, Korea, etc.), Albania (Greece), Yugoslavia (Greece), Bulgaria (Greece), France (Indo-China), UK (Palestine), Arab States (Palestine), India (Kashmir and Hyderabad), Pakistan (Kashmir), South Africa and so on down the list. In same way others might have in fact broken with us. We must pursue our basic objectives under whatever conditions we find, shaping such conditions to extent we can. We must avoid putting ourselves in such a position that any wrong committed anywhere in the world and left unpunished constitutes diplomatic defeat and humiliation for US. For this reason we must make every

Indies/Indonesia: U.S. Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920-1949 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002) 297

⁹ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Acting United States Representative at the United Nations (Jessup) at Paris, December 23, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 597

¹⁰ Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 260

possible effort to obtain concerted action in such situations, particularly among all permanent members SC.¹¹

The ambivalence of the American position, however, did not last long, especially after the Dutch simply ignored the Security Council resolutions, threatening the credibility of the United Nations. Condemnations from third world countries and mounting public and Congressional pressure in the United States started to have an impact on Washington's view of Indonesia. At this point, the State Department began to worry about the image of the United States in Asia and started to consider following Cochran's advice to completely suspend economic aid to both the Netherlands and Indonesia.¹²

On January 11, the State Department bluntly told the Dutch that it might take action "which would be extremely adverse to the interests of the Netherlands and of the United States, including jeopardizing ECA aid to Holland and the North Atlantic Security pact."¹³ On February 7, in a dinner with Prime Minister Drees, Foreign Minister Stikker, and Minister of Overseas Territories Sassen, Cochran stressed that the United States Congressional opinion was very critical of the Dutch and the ECA aid would be in jeopardy, as Congress would cut the fund. He also criticized the Dutch attack, declaring that the Dutch military action "had upset truly conservative Republican Government

¹¹ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Acting United States Representative at the United Nations (Jessup) at Paris, December 23, 1948, *FRUS*, 1948, Vol. 6, 597

¹² Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, January 3, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 120-1

¹³ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Secretary of State, January 11, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949 Part I, Vol. 7 Part 1, 140

which with own leaders and resources had successfully put down Communist uprising" and "had set off resentment in all of Asia."¹⁴

As the Netherlands procrastinated, fearing the collapse of its government and only offering minor concessions, in March, facing intense Congressional displeasure that even threatened the Military Assistance Program to Europe, the United States government started to hint that economic assistance to The Hague might suffer. Worse, the Dutch would not be able to join NATO.¹⁵ The Dutch, facing a serious financial threat from the United States, international condemnation, and serious guerilla war within Indonesia, was forced to return to the negotiating table with the Republican government.¹⁶

¹⁴ Telegram From the Ambassador in Belgium (Kirk) to the Secretary of State, February 9, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol 7 Part 1, 217, 219

¹⁵ Stikker noted in his memoir that the State Department informed him that "the United States, while prepared to create NATO and to give military aid to its future allies, would not be willing to give such aid to allies like The Netherlands so long as they had not solved their colonial difficulties." Stikker (1966) 145-6, Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973) 77-8, Kahin (1952) 415-7, McMahon (1981) 285-6, 291-3, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Batavia, March 9, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 309

¹⁶ In a telegram dated June 17, 1949, Herman Baruch, the American ambassador to the Netherlands, reported:

Netherlands Governemnt and people have progressed very considerably in their attitudes towards the international reaction to Indonesian question as well as to their own thoughts about Indonesia. It has been drummed into them from every side that their actions have been stupid and arrogant, flouting as they have world public opinion. We believe that they are now sincerely anxious to rehabilitate themselves internationally. With respect to Indonesia, the Dutch have seen a steady drain on their resources, guerilla warfare and no real progress made since the war ended. They have now resigned themselves to the inevitable and want the Indonesian question cleared up quickly. Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Baruch) to the Secretary of State, June 17, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 444-445

This however, did not mean that the Dutch were negotiating with the Republicans without problems. On September 15, 1949, Cochran cabled Washington, complaining that:

Netherlands authorities continue play up non-compliance TNI with cease hostilities orders. Their accumulating evidence thereon and their refusal reveal situation in proper perspective, namely admit casualties down more than 75 percent, would tend confirm suspicion had from beginning that Netherlands Government would utilize plausible excuse to suspend or break up RTC (Round Table Conference)... NethDel balking at certain necessary concessions on ground these might upset government. Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Steere) to the Secretary of State, September 15, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 487, 489

However the American embassy believed otherwise, arguing that the Dutch did not want the conference to fail lest it would create chaos, withdrawal of the Dutch forces and nationals, and the loss of

On November 2, 1949, after months of negotiation, the Netherlands and Indonesia finally agreed to sign the Round Table Agreement in which the Dutch agreed to transfer sovereignty of Indonesia to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia by December 27, 1949. This new state comprised the Republic of Indonesia and several federal states that were created by the Dutch between 1946 and 1949. The agreement, however, had two major points of contention: the questions of who would pay the debt left by the former Dutch administration of Netherlands East Indies, and who would have political control over Irian Barat.

While the debt problem was settled with Indonesia assuming the debts totaling 4.3 billion guilders out of 6.1 billion guilders demanded by the Dutch after an intervention by H. Merle Cochran, who recommended that the Dutch cancel 2 billion guilders,¹⁷ both the

investments. Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Steere) to the Secretary of State, September 16, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 492

¹⁷ Kahin, (1952) 443-4. Kahin suggested that Cochran's attitude in this matter was due to his (and Washington) attaching greater importance to the Netherlands' economic health than Indonesia. In addition, the Indonesian delegates also operated under Cochran's assurance of major financial assistance from the United States to Indonesia after the transfer of sovereignty. The financial assistance, however, failed to materialize, as the United States only provide US\$100 million in loans from Export Import Bank (compared to Indonesian's assumed debt from the Dutch totaling US\$ 1,723 million). To add insult to injury, the Indonesians were well aware of *the New York Times* report on December 22, 1948 stating that until 1948, the United States had provided at least US\$949 million since the end of the Second World War to the Dutch government – nine times the amount the United States would provide to Indonesia. George McT. Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (London: Routledge, 2003) 120-1, 123

However, Taylor noted that Cochran's suggestion was only seriously considered after both sides deadlocked in the negotiation. Alastair M. Taylor, *Indonesian Independence and the United Nations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960) 245. In fact, to be fair to Cochran, it was a wonder that he could force the Dutch to agree to cancel two billion guilders worth of debt. The Dutch were very unwilling to give any financial concession. On October 9, for instance, Cochran complained that the Dutch only offered a debt reduction of 700 million:

Since decision had already been taken by government in liaison with Parliament that this would be maximum. Stikker told me Cabinet had just completed plans for next budget to be in balance which counted on interest from Indonesians on state to state debt, consequently this could not be reduced as I suggested. In my conversation with Drees and Stikker, Prime Minister found my suggestion unacceptable since he said he had given pledge to Parliament further sacrifices in favor Indonesia would not be sought from them. Difficult believe reduction by another billion or two would mean sacrifices by Netherlands anything like comparable those Indonesians have suffered already and would bear in monetary purge wiping out at least two-thirds remaining value of

Dutch and the Indonesian delegates (from the Republic and federal states) refused to budge over the issue of Irian Barat. The idea that the loss of Indonesia would reduce the Netherlands status into "Denmark" was not appealing, and the Dutch also felt that they had given so many concessions financially "in face of violent domestic opposition, by the public, in the press, and among political leaders." Furthermore, it was simply inconceivable that the Netherlands would give up its status as one of the powers in the Pacific region. In addition, the Dutch wanted West Papua to be a safe haven for Eurasian or Dutch sympathizers from Indonesia who presumably would be persecuted by the government of the new republic. As a result, should the agreement include Irian Barat, it was certain that the Dutch parliament would not ratify it.¹⁸

From the Indonesian point of view, the fact that Irian Barat remained under the control of the Dutch was unacceptable. The Dutch-created federal states were the most adamant over this issue as they realized that, unlike the Republic, they were lacking moral authority because they had cooperated with the Dutch during the independence

currency after 30 percent devaluation few weeks ago. Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Steere) to the Secretary of State, October 9, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 514

To be fair to the Dutch, the Dutch were not in a good financial position either. In 1947, the Dutch deficit was at f 15 billion while the Netherlands East Indies had a positive balance of f. 245 millions. On September 16, 1948, Stikker admitted to Acheson that the Netherlands might have to devalue its currency in the near future in order to "enable us to keep going" and on October 9, he further complained that "Holland was in difficult financial position close to end its resources, and point had been reached where it could not agree assume added burdens beyond its strength to carry and in face great uncertainties." As the Dutch believed that the Indonesia could export itself out of the debt, the Dutch delegates became adamant on this issue. In fact, the feeling in the Netherlands was that the United States had favored the Indonesians too much at the expense of the Netherlands' future strength. C.L.M Penders, *The West Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 48, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Netherlands, September 16, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 493, Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Steere) to the Secretary of State, October 10, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 517, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, November 1, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 559

¹⁸ Robert C. Bone, Jr., *the Dynamics of the Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) Problem* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1962) 51-2, Kahin (1952) 444, McMahon (1981) 302, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, November 1, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 559

war. Therefore, by using this issue of Irian Barat, they could regain lost ground vis-à-vis the Republic.¹⁹ The question of Irian Barat slowed the negotiation to a grinding halt until Cochran intervened again, proposing to postpone the issue by letting the Dutch maintain control with the stipulation that within a year after the transfer of sovereignty, the future status of the island would be negotiated between the Dutch and the Republic of the United States of Indonesia.²⁰ Unwilling to let the entire negotiations collapse, both the Dutch and the Indonesian delegates reluctantly agreed to this position.²¹

As the issue of Irian Barat remained unresolved even after the transfer of sovereignty, it became a sticking point in the relationship between Indonesia and the Netherlands in the period between the transfers of sovereignty of 1949 and 1962, when

¹⁹ Cochran noted that the federal states, "Far from being 'stooge' of Netherland delegation, is more resistant than Republican delegation." Anak Agung (1973) 69, Bone (1962) 49-50, John Coast, *Recruit to Revolution* (London: , 1952) 260, Telegram From the Charge in the Netherlands (Steere) to the Secretary of State, September 19, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 495

²⁰ Kahin (1952) 444-5, McMahon (1981) 302-3, Taylor (1960) 440, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, October 30, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 553

²¹ The Dutch delegates in particular wanted to settle this issue (of course, to their favor) by continuing to pressure the Indonesians, as they believed "Indonesians would continue agitation until New Guinea in their possession." Cochran flatly told the Dutch that "Indonesians have more opportunity for pressure now when RTC is at stake and thousands Netherlands troops in Indonesia." However, the Republicans simply wanted to wrap up everything quickly. In fact, Hatta had indicated to Van Royen that he was not personally interested in the question of Irian Barat, though he indicated that his delegation would still support the federal states' position. It was very likely that Hatta saw Irian Barat as too backward, which would force Indonesia to commit a huge amount of resources to develop the island, a luxury that the cash-strapped Indonesia simply did not have. Even so, he was worried about the domestic implications of such a "surrender," and thus he could not publicly said this. This attitude, however, was reflected in the behaviors of the Republican delegates. Anak Agung, a delegate from the East Indonesia State, complained in his memoir that the Republican delegates were simply "more or less indifferent on this matter.... They felt it was too great a risk to bring the conference to a deadlock solely on this issue." Both Kahin and Ali Sastroamidjojo, however, saw Cochran's role in a very negative light. They argued that Cochran's position as a representative of the United States in the Good Offices Committee was so influential that Cochran's pressure tactics on both the Dutch and the Republican delegates led to the finalization of the Round Table Conference. They also considered him a braggart, and believed he was patronizing and took too much credit for himself for the success of Indonesia in the Round Table Conference. Interestingly however, Mohammad Roem, one of the top Indonesian negotiators, stated to Taylor in an interview in 1959 that Cochran did not put any special pressure on his colleagues. "There was unanimous agreement among them." Anak Agung (1973) 69, Kahin (2003) 123-4, Sastroamidjojo (1979) 205, Stikker (1966) 149, Taylor (1960) 250 n76, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, October 30, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 550, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, October 30, 1949, *FRUS*, 1949, Vol. 7 Part 1, 554

Indonesia decided to take Irian Barat by force.²² In fact, the question of Irian Barat would haunt the Constitutional Democracy period. Indonesian Prime Ministers had to take this issue as a cornerstone of their policy and should they seem to waver, it would provide the opposition with ammunition to claim that the government was weak on foreign policy and betraying the ideal of Indonesia, creating a crisis of confidence.

4.2. The Republic of the United States of Indonesia Period (January – August 1950)

Thus the Indonesian Revolution ended in 1949 with the transfer of power from the Netherlands to a federal entity called the Republic of the United States of Indonesia, led by Prime Minister Mohammad Hatta on December 27, 1949. In less than a year however, the United States of Indonesia collapsed.

There are several contributing factors to the collapse of the federal states. First and the most important factor, was that these states were tainted by the stigma of collaboration with the Dutch and by the belief that they were puppet states of the Dutch government. Not surprisingly, these states then were wracked with popular demonstrations demanding that these states merge with the Republic of Indonesia to create a Unitary Republic of Indonesia.²³

The final nail in the coffin to the federal states, however, was the revolts led by former KNIL members who were to be integrated into the federal army. Some former KNIL members completely distrusted the Republic and believed that the Republic

²² Anak Agung, then the Chief Minister of East Indonesia, upon arrival in Jakarta stated that the fact that the issue of Irian Barat remained unresolved essentially caused the so-called "Dutch-Indonesian Union" to be a stillborn child. See Anak Agung (1973) 70-1

²³ Herbert Feith, *the Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962) 77

intended to subvert and destroy the federal government. Worse, thanks to the Dutch officers' resistance in facilitating the transfer of the former KNIL soldiers to the Indonesian army, the fear of the ex-KNIL troops was further exacerbated.²⁴ Captain Raymond "Turk" Westerling, who gained notoriety through his brutal crackdown in South Sulawesi, probably reflected the fear of the former KNIL soldiers of the Republican domination when he claimed in his memoir:

There were sixteen constituent states in the Federal United States of Indonesia to which sovereignty over the former Netherlands East Indies were transferred on December 27th 1949, one of which was the Indonesian Republic of Djocjakarta – that is to say, Java.

The administration which had been set up in advance to govern these sixteen states comprised a President, a Premier and seven ministers – nine persons at the head of sixteen states. However, equitably the new regime might have tried to divide the offices, seven states had to be without immediately representation.

But it was hardly necessary to leave thirteen out of the sixteen unrepresented!

...It was only a matter of few days before the sixteen states of the Federal government had become a single state, the Indonesian Republic, administered by the Javanese. To maintain that power in the stolen territories, the terrorist regime, whereby the peasants were subjected to the orders of Djakarta (for the Sukarno government now returned to the former capital), was reinstated throughout Indonesia.²⁵

On January 22, Westerling revolted in Bandung. While the revolt was swiftly put down, it implicated Sultan Hamid, the leader of the State of West Borneo, and the leaders of the State of Pasundan, one of the states in the USI. This revolt was followed by two more revolts in Makassar and South Maluku (Republik Maluku Selatan/Republic of South Moluccas) by former KNIL soldiers, further implicating the leadership of the

²⁴ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, March 30, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 996

²⁵ Raymond "Turk" Westerling, *Challenge to Terror* (London: William Kimber, 1952) 65, 169. See also Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 54

federal government, especially the leaders of the State of East Indonesia. As these revolts were put down and the leadership of the federal states was discredited, the fate of the United States of Indonesia was sealed. By August 17, 1950, the United States of Indonesia was no more.

It has to be emphasized that even though the Republic of the United States of Indonesia had a very short life span, this period was very significant in Indonesia's history, as it was a period of transition from the revolutionary period to the Constitutional Democracy period. Many of the events unfolding in this short eight months would later create six strong constraints that affected the Indonesian decision makers, which in turn would have huge implications for the development and later the collapse of the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia. The six constraints were the problem of regionalism, the role of the Army, the creation of the Provisional Constitution of 1950, the role of President Sukarno, the unfinished dispute of Irian Barat, and the growing tensions in the relationship between Indonesia and the United States.

The first constraint was the problem of regionalism, which was exacerbated by a huge mess in the Indonesian bureaucracy. The several months after the end of revolution were marked by a huge increase in the number of civil servants, as the government demobilized the Army and integrated the Republican bureaucracy with the Federal bureaucracy. In February 1950, Sukarno gave the approximate figure of 180,000 federal civil servants and 240,000 Republican civil servants. The increase in the number of civil servants in turn exacerbated the relationship between Java and the region. As the

Javanese officials took top positions in regional offices and services, this in turn bred resentment from the old officials, who were sidelined for the simple reason that they were not former Republicans in Jogjakarta. Connections and cliques became important and trumped merit-based systems. To further worsen the situation, the massive increase in the number of civil servants caused budgetary strain for the government, resulting in a drastic reduction in salary.²⁶ Not surprisingly, the morale of the civil service corps plummeted.²⁷

Even so, civil service remained an attractive position in war-ravaged Indonesia and in fact, the civil service itself became politicized as a source of perks. Whenever a party held the government, it would initiate a massive purge of the bureaucrats belonged to rival political parties. The central government also no longer paid attention to the demands of the regions. For example, in 1951, Iskak Tjokrohadisurjo, the Minister of Interior from the PNI, appointed two members of the PNI as the governors of West Java and Sulawesi, in spite of the local regional councils' recommendation of other candidates. The Deputy Prime Minister Suwirjo, who was also from the PNI, dismissed the complaints by asserting "the right of the government to ignore the lists proposed by the councils, in view of the non-representative character of the latter."²⁸ The reason for the PNI's insistence was that by controlling the position of governor, the PNI would be able to dole out more perks to their supporters and potential supporters. As most of the members of the PNI were Javanese, not surprisingly, the regions started to resent this

²⁶ The budget for 1950 envisaged a deficit of f. 1.5 billion, approximately 17% of the total budget. Rose (1987) 173

²⁷ Feith (1962) 83, Sundhaussen (1982) 54

²⁸ Lawrence S. Finkelstein, "The Indonesian Federal Problem" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (September 1951) 292, Robert Cribb, "Legacies of the Revolution," In David Bourchier and John Legge, *Democracy in Indonesia 1950s and 1990s* (Clayton: Monash University Press, 1994) 76

supposedly Javanese domination, even though the real cause was nepotism, plain and simple.

The second constraint was the role of the Army after the Independence War. Unlike the dispirited and demoralized army of 1948, the Army of 1950 was brimming with confidence, believing itself to be the savior of the Republic. While Sukarno, Hatta, and other leaders of the Republic were imprisoned by the Dutch, the Army saw itself able to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat by bleeding the Dutch dry. Moreover, the fact that General Sudirman, stricken with tuberculosis, was willing to suffer the hardship of guerilla warfare, while the civilian leaders simply surrendered, made the Army view them with contempt.²⁹

Even so, after the death of General Sudirman in January 1950, the leadership of the Army in the early 1950s remained committed to reforming itself under the leadership of Major General T.B. Simatupang as the armed forces Chief of Staff and Colonel Nasution as the Army Chief of Staff.³⁰ At this point, with rationalization of the Army benefitting the Dutch-trained officers, there was discontent simmering within the Army from the former PETA officers. Having lost General Sudirman as the symbol of unity and brimming with confidence, unlike 1948, this time these officers were very resistant to the rationalization.

This discontent was further exploited by leftist and nationalist politicians. The leftist politicians, who were formerly associated with the FDR, held a grudge against the

²⁹ Sundhaussen (1982) 41-2, 44-5

³⁰ According to Penders and Sundhaussen, the death of General Sudirman:

Put an end to any speculations that the military might assume a more prominent role in politics: none of the surviving officers had the charisma, the authority, the political experience, and – most importantly – the will to lead the Army into a head-on confrontation with Sukarno and the civilian leaders. C.L.M Penders. and Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: A Political Biography* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985) 77

Army's crackdown on the left during the Madiun rebellion. The nationalists, on the other hand, watched in dismay as most of the demobilized personnel had either political or familial ties with the nationalists. Furthermore, they also disliked the fact that the majority of the Army leadership was close to either Sjahrir-PSI or technocrat leaders in the Masjumi. The Army, on the other hand, was upset with what it saw as civilian meddling in army affairs. The distrust of the Army about the civilian leadership was thus fanned and the Army would later involve itself further in the government to counter the civilians' interferences.

The third constraint was the creation of the Provisional Constitution of 1950 that would be the basis for the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia. The Constitution of 1950 was supposed to be temporary until the election of the Constitutional Assembly, which then would draft a new, permanent constitution. On paper, the Constitution of 1950 was adequate. However, there were elements in it that would exacerbate regional problems, and would cause deadlocks without providing a way out. They were the composition of the legislative body, the lack of trust between the political parties, and the lack of escape clause should Parliament unable to create a government, except by destroying the democracy itself.

The first problematic element of the Constitution of the 1950 was the structure of the legislative body. One of the main features of the new government created by the Constitution was the unicameral body, in contrast to the bicameral federal system. Until the election that would take place in near future, the provisional House of Representatives was comprised of 236 seats. Of these 236 seats, 50 seats represented the Republic of

Indonesia, 79 seats represented the states and territories of former USI except the Republic of Indonesia and the State of Pasundan, 19 seats represented the State of Pasundan, 29 seats were from the USI Senate, 46 seats were from the Working Body of the KNIP (the Republic of Indonesia's parliament), and 13 seats were from the Supreme Advisory Council of the Republic of Indonesia. Since the State of Pasundan was implicated in the Westerling Revolt mentioned above, the Republic of Indonesia would appoint members to replace the old representatives of the State of Pasundan.³¹ In other words, since around 170 members of the House of Representative came from the Republic, the new House of Representatives was seen as dominated by people from either the Republic or from Java. This would further increase the list of grievances from the regions.³²

The second element of the Constitution of the 1950 was that the government would be chosen by and thus responsible to the Parliament. This would not create much difficulty if not for the lack of trust between various parties in the Parliament. As mentioned in Chapter 2, there was significant distrust between the Masjumi and the Nationalist parties. This distrust was further exacerbated by a widespread belief that had the election been held at that time, the Masjumi would completely demolish other parties and would ram the Islamic State through its majority in the Constitutional Assembly. Moreover, there were several Darul Islam (House of Islam) rebellions that erupted in many places, most importantly was in West Java under the leadership of Kartosuwirjo, which would tie down the Siliwangi Division until the 1960s. The Masjumi, however,

³¹ Feith (1962) 94-5

³² Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Changing Pattern of Indonesia's Representative Government," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (May, 1960) 222

never openly condemned the rebellion, which of course did not buy any goodwill from the PNI.

As a result, the Masjumi was not very willing to give concessions to the PNI, while the PNI itself, distrusting the Masjumi's intentions, tried to break the Masjumi's powerbase, by, for example, cajoling the traditionalist NU, which also felt slighted within the Masjumi due to the perception that the NU simply did not have any capable intellectuals. Not surprisingly, even though the election was supposed to be held in the "near future," there was no political will from any parties besides the Masjumi to hold the election. This postponement of the election, in turn, caused an aura of uncertainty to prevail.

The third element of the Constitution that directly linked to the second element was the fact that there was no escape clause from this predicament. During the Revolution, in the face of deadlocks and unfavorable situations, such as the period after the Renville agreement, the Republic turned to Hatta to save the day by having him created an extra-parliamentary cabinet. An editorial in *Merdeka*, a newspaper not particularly friendly to Hatta, stated that "it is only someone like Hatta who can overcome party infighting." In this Constitution, however, Hatta's role was set as the Vice President of the new Republic with only ceremonial duties. The Constitution made no possibility of having a non-parliamentary cabinet. In Hatta's words:

One line of thought, espoused by Masjumi supported the continuation of a Presidential Cabinet with me as Prime Minister while concurrently Vice President, which clearly had been successful in safeguarding the nation in times of crisis. The alternative view, put forward by the PNI and supported by the PSI and others, was that I should choose to be Prime Minister or Vice President in a unitary state.³³

³³ Rose (1987) 174

The reason for Hatta's exclusion was surprisingly simple: Hatta was seen as too powerful, too competent, and too close to the Masjumi.³⁴ From both the PSI and the PNI's point of view, the highly competent, incorruptible, and popular Hatta was a major obstacle in their pursuit for power.

The PNI, under the leadership of Sidik Djojokusarto, saw both Hatta and the Masjumi as threats to its position. The PNI was also upset that Hatta never acceded to their requests for bureaucratic and diplomatic posts and a share in the ex-Dutch colonial properties. Therefore Sidik decided to build strategic alliances between the PNI with the Communists and other leftist groups, who still held grudges against Hatta for his strong-armed policy after Madiun.³⁵ The left also criticized Hatta for accepting the Round Table Conference when it did not completely break Indonesia from the Netherlands, and for what they perceived as him being easily influenced by the United States.³⁶

On the other hand, even though the PSI maintained a close relationship with the Masjumi, its ultimate loyalty was to Sjahrir. The PSI seemed to hope that with Hatta

³⁴ Even though Hatta never considered himself a member of the Masjumi, and in fact, he was by and large a neutral figure in Indonesian politics, he had a close relationship with the technocratic leaders of the Masjumi such as Natsir, Burhanuddin Harahap, and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara. Therefore, he could count on the Masjumi's loyalty and support for his policies. Feith (1962) 91, 96, Rose (1987) 169

³⁵ The PNI's courting of the leftists and the Communists most likely was based on strategic calculation only. The PNI might have believed that the Communists, with their strength depleted, having been purged by the Army, and tarred with the stigma of the Madiun Rebellion, might be an easy group to control. Sukarno might have also concluded the same thing. On March 23, 1950, he mentioned to Cochran in passing the name of Darsono, an old Communist leader who recently returned to Indonesia. Sukarno believed that "he could be used profitably." In another conversation, Sukarno told Cochran that "Sidik reminded Sukarno his group had helped put down Communist rebellion 1948" and "Sidik made reservation that friendship for US should not be proclaimed loudly but be definitely understood and demonstrated by acts." Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, March 23, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 990, Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, March 14, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 615

³⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 15, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1032

unavailable and Sukarno not interested in running the day-to-day affairs of the government, Sjahrir would be able to return as the Prime Minister.³⁷

As a result, Hatta was sidelined. As Hatta was too principled and too strict to push the limits of his office and to involve himself openly in Indonesian politics, preferring to work within the limits of his office, when the political situation became critical in 1955, Hatta could not take the reins of government to help stabilize the situation. Theoretically, Hatta's exclusion from the government should not have been a problem. However, in light of a very charged political situation, where parties had reasons to distrust others, the absence of the strong and stable government that Hatta would have provided, poisoned the relationships between political parties further. Without Hatta, the only other way out from political instability was to destroy the democracy.

Following the third constraint, which was the Provisional Constitution of 1950, the fourth constraint was the role of President Sukarno in Indonesian politics. Sukarno's power was also limited with a similar constitutional constraint to that of Hatta,³⁸ yet unlike Hatta, he was actively testing the limits of his power. His excellent oratory skills proved to be a huge asset, as he could make speeches everywhere and advocate his goals. He further perfected the symbols that he had acquired during the revolutionary period by:

³⁷ A very bitter Hatta would later call the PSI as "a group of intellectually brilliant people but yet immature and blind to the realities of Indonesia's domestic situation." Several years later, on January 19, 1955, in the middle of a cabinet crisis, Djuanda Kartasasmita, a respected non-party technocrat who was close to Sukarno, in a conversation with Hugh S. Cumming, the United States Ambassador to Indonesia, complained that the PNI had been trying to include the PSI in the Cabinet only to receive a demand from Sjahrir that he would be made the Prime Minister. Feith (1962) 96 n83, Rose (1987) 174, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, January 19, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 125

³⁸ Legge further noted that Sukarno's powers during this period were more circumscribed than during the revolutionary years. See J.D. Legge, *Sukarno: A Political Biography* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 2003) 269-70

(1) using his position as a figurehead president effectively as the "mouthpiece of people's will" (*penyambung lidah rakyat*), (2) utilizing nationalistic issues such as the question of Irian Barat to extend his influence, and most importantly, (3) building on the first two, he became a power broker in Indonesian politics, where his will was a command. As Feith noted, Sukarno's authority was so great that politicians, especially from the PNI, obeyed because they calculated that his power would keep increasing and thus it would be imprudent to offend him.³⁹

In fact, the third factor contributed significantly to the breakdown of the Constitutional Democracy and ended Indonesia's brief experimentation with democracy. However, in the beginning of this period, Sukarno was neutral: while he was wary of both the Communists and the PSI, he did not have any problem with either the Masjumi or the PNI. In fact, this period started with Sukarno supporting the Natsir government.

The "Sukarno factor" in turn was closely linked with the fifth constraint, the unfinished dispute over Irian Barat, which would haunt the Constitutional Democracy. Sukarno was the catalyst who made the issue of Irian Barat salient and important in Indonesian politics due to his position as head of state and his ability to stir popular opinion. It needs to be stressed here that Sukarno did genuinely want Indonesia to obtain Irian Barat. However, it cannot be ignored that Sukarno had spent most of his time hammering this issue and did gain massive political capital from pushing this issue, as he became a rallying point for the opposition to the government, especially those who believed that they could push this issue for its maximum benefit. In the meantime, Sukarno could keep pushing the limits of his power.

³⁹ Feith (1962) 215

Counterfactually, Robert C. Bone, in his analysis of the Irian Barat problem, argued that, "had President Sukarno never been born, the Irian issue would yet have come into being."⁴⁰ Bone was right to the extent that the issue of Irian Barat was an explosive one for Indonesians and it became a major foreign policy headache for succession of prime ministers. The PNI, for one, before they finally gained the position of prime minister, always emphasized the importance of the issue of Irian Barat to further bolster its nationalist credentials and to attack the Masjumi's prime ministers.⁴¹

Thus, according to Bone, it was highly likely that had Sukarno not been nor the President of Indonesia during that period, there would be people within the Indonesian political elite willing to use this issue to increase their power and possibly to overthrow the government. Still, his assertion neglects the fact that Sukarno was the only acceptable figure in Indonesian politics who would transcend every single political group. In fact, as will be seen later in this chapter, none of the political parties in Indonesia were able to use this issue effectively without Sukarno's active participation in pushing this issue and in giving them implicit backing.

On the other hand, the issue of Irian Barat was also detrimental for Indonesian foreign policy, especially in regard to the Dutch and the Australians. While Australia had supported Indonesia's independence movement, it had a change of heart in 1950, especially after the victory of the Communists in Beijing in 1949. The fear of the Communist expansion to Southeast Asia, the uncertainty over Indonesia's future,⁴² and the fear that Indonesia would later extend its claim to *Australian* New Guinea (Papua

⁴⁰ Bone (1962) 38-9

⁴¹ Feith (1962) 141, 158

⁴² David Goldsworthy, *Facing North: A Century of Australian Engagement with Asia: Volume 1* (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 2001) 210-11

New Guinea), made Australia less receptive to Indonesia taking control of Irian Barat, as noted by P.C. Spender, Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs in his press statement during his visit to Holland in August 1950:

Australia has a deep attachment to the people of Australian New Guinea, an attach-[sic] which was cemented during the Japanese war when they fought and suffered together and succoured one another. If the claim of Indonesia to Dutch New Guinea were conceded to any degree at all, it would be but a matter of time, no matter how genuine may be assurances to the contrary, when the claim will be pushed further so as to include the trust territory of Australian New Guinea and its people.

Experience has shown to Australians how strategically vital to Australian defence is the mainland of New Guinea.... Quite apart from its military and strategic significance, one cannot disregard the ever-increasing Communist pressure in Asia. Communism has not got any foothold yet in Australian New Guinea. Australia is determined so far as it can to ensure that it will not.⁴³

Later, Spender further told Chapin, the United States Ambassador in the Netherlands, he believed that the Indonesian claim to Irian Barat was simply a matter of "prestige" and declared that "Australian public opinion will never permit Indonesian control over NNG either in form of transfer of sovereignty, joint trusteeship or condominium." More important was the fact that Australia believed that Irian Barat was vital to the Australian security and "Australians would use all means prevent it falling into Asian hands."⁴⁴

As the Australian's position switched from hedging its bets with the Indonesians during the revolutionary period of 1945-9 to opposing Indonesia in regards to the issue of Irian Barat, it was in the Australian interest to maintain the status quo regarding to the

⁴³ L. Metzemaekers, "The Western New Guinea Problem" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (June, 1951) 140

⁴⁴ Australia's intentions were not always benign. As early as March 1950, Australia actually had tinkered with the idea of merging both Irian Barat and Australian New Guinea, administered by Canberra. The Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk) to the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Military Affairs and Military Assistance (Burns), March 22, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 986, Telegram From the Ambassador in the Netherlands (Chapin) to the Secretary of State, August 30, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1059

question of Irian Barat.⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, the ill feelings generated in Indonesia by this switch of position ran high, and this was reflected pointedly in the Asia Africa Conference of 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia, where both Australia and New Zealand were uninvited.⁴⁶

In turn the Irian Barat problem also worsened the already tense relationship between Indonesia and the Netherlands. The Dutch had been accused of deliberately dragging its feet in integrating the former KNIL troops with the Federal Army.⁴⁷ The Dutch were also seen as being complicit in the Westerling rebellion by assuring the Indonesian army, which was busy dealing with the Darul Islam, that it would control the situation in Bandung. In reality, however, it did nothing, leading Cochran, who was appointed to be the first United States ambassador in Indonesia after the transfer of sovereignty in 1949, to complain that the Netherlands military "were spoiling entire results RTC by their intransigence."⁴⁸

Moreover, Indonesians also accused the Dutch of supporting the rebellions all over Indonesia from its bases in Irian Barat, and that the Dutch "old line reactionaries" provided funding to the rebellions. There were also reports of the involvement of high-

⁴⁵ Feith (1962) 157. In an analysis on Australian's stance to the question of Irian Barat, Norman D. Harper argued that "...Underlying (Australian stance) is a desire to see New Guinea administered by a nation whose attitude towards the Communist bloc is clear." See Norman D. Harper, "Australia and Southeast Asia" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Sep. 1955) 215

⁴⁶ While Indonesia was only one of the countries who sponsored the conference (the others were India, Pakistan, Burma, and Sri Lanka), these other four were aware of the anti-Australian feelings in Indonesia and thus this matter was ignored. See Anak Agung (1973) 217. Officially, the reason for exclusion was that both Australia and New Zealand were not parts of Asia and constituted a separate continent. Guy J. Pauker, *the Bandung Conference* (Massachusetts: Center for International Studies, 1955) 3

⁴⁷ On January 24, 1950, Cochran informed Washington, "Evidence is strong that Netherlands officers themselves either not disposed or incapable of commanding and directing their forces including KNIL in such fashion to contribute to law and order Indonesia." Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, January 24, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 970

⁴⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, January 24, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 972

ranking Netherlands military officials in the Westerling Revolt. The Dutch further earned great hostility for bringing the "Republik Maluku Selatan" rebellion to the United Nations. On July 21, in a telegram to the State Department, Cochran concluded that "Netherlands Government itself has large responsibility for unfortunate development in east Indonesia particularly Ambon and does not come to us with clean hands."⁴⁹ Not surprisingly, aside from its nationalist aspirations, the argument often used to support Indonesia's desire to take over Irian Barat was the desire to stop the Netherlands from subverting the Republic.⁵⁰

It would be unfair to completely blame the Dutch for all the problems in this period. However, it cannot also be denied that the Dutch actions in turn had dangerously weakened the Indonesian government.⁵¹ The Dutch's policies since the end of Renville to

⁴⁹ On March 23, Cochran reported that Sukarno complained that the Dutch "phantom" planes dropped weapons to the Darul Islam groups in West Java from the Netherlands bases in Irian Barat. On April 7, Hatta further complained that the Dutch generals in Indonesia were hoping to stir rebellions in East Indonesia. Furthermore, the Dutch military intelligence intercepted the Indonesian army's dispatches from Irian Barat and sent them directly to the rebels. Chapin, the American ambassador in the Netherlands, noted that "there were many pro-Ambonese organizations collecting funds in the Netherlands and that many individuals wished the Republic of South Moluccas luck." Penders (2002) 199, Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, March 23, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 990, Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, April 3, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1001, Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, April 7, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1006, Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 21, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1036

⁵⁰ Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk) to the Secretary of State, December 29, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1103

⁵¹ R. Allen Griffin, the of Griffin Mission, who was to provide technical assistances to Indonesia, had harsh words on the Dutch intentions:

Chief difficulty expected is probably lack cooperation Dutch official different levels civil service and advisory capacities. Mission arrived Djakarta imbued with necessity doing all possible retain Dutch administrative and technical personnel Indonesian service. Efforts to work with Dutch and with Indonesians relying on Dutch, however, revealed in many instances recalcitrance, defeatism, indifference, "unconscious sabotage". It is obvious that many Dutch desire failure and collapse this country some perhaps expected be called back to run it. Many are marking time until departure Holland, abilities some overrated. Dutch in government circles expected to "drag feet" more than a little and cause frustration.... Indonesian officials have made favorable impression, have energy, good will, high intentions, integrity but are handicapped by almost complete dependence upon Dutch advisers. Telegram From the Head of the United States Technical

the 1950s, while perhaps based on the belief that the Indonesians were simply unprepared for self-government, fatally undermined Hatta's technocratic and capable cabinet. Even though Natsir, who replaced Hatta, was presiding over a competent cabinet, the damages that the Dutch had inflicted from their policies, notably the inability of the Hatta government to finish its rationalization plan on the military and to completely crush the Communists in 1948, and the issues of Irian Barat and regionalism, proved a very difficult obstacle to surpass.

The sixth constraint that affected Indonesian policy makers in this period was the relationship between Indonesia and the United States. Growing tensions between the United States and the Communist bloc due to the Korean War affected the United States policy toward Indonesia in regards to the Irian Barat and Indonesia's alignment in world politics.

In the matter of Irian Barat, the United States started to see the entire problem from the lens of the struggle against the Communists. On March 22, Dean Rusk wrote to the Department of Defense, inquiring about the strategic value of Irian Barat, while stating the State Department's position on this matter:

It has been the view of the Department that the interests of the inhabitants of Dutch New Guinea would be best served by the continuation of Dutch control in some form. Furthermore, it is believed that Dutch control would provide better insurance against possible Communist infiltration into or military domination of Dutch New Guinea than would incorporation of the territory into Indonesia.⁵²

Assistance Mission to Southeast Asia (Griffin) to the Secretary of State, April 22, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1015

⁵² A month later the Defense Department replied by stating its belief that there were no major strategic interests of the United States involved in the settlement of Irian Barat. The Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk) to the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Foreign Military Affairs and Military Assistance (Burns), March 22, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 986, 987 n2

Reflecting the State Department's attitude, when Sukarno questioned Cochran on the United States position on Irian Barat in the event of a Third World War, Cochran replied, "Our technical defense people might be happier to see Netherlands defense force looking after such places as New Hollandia rather than inexperienced Indonesians."⁵³ Still, the State Department realized that their open support for the Dutch position would mean the loss of the entirety of Indonesia to an anti-American regime. Therefore, the United States position on Irian Barat had to be neutral, which in turn exasperated the Indonesians who wanted the United States to support their struggle to acquire Irian Barat.

As for Indonesian foreign policy, the United States started to push Indonesia to choose sides in the Cold War, especially after the Truman Administration produced NSC 68 (National Security Council Report 68) that pushed the United States toward the policy of containing and defeating international Communism.⁵⁴ On May 24, 1950, Cochran received instructions from Washington to push for Indonesia to accept a bilateral security agreement, aptly named the Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949, which would provide military and economic aid to Indonesia, while committing Indonesia to the United States' side.

While Hatta secretly agreed to accept equipment for Indonesian police force and a mobile brigade without letting his own government know,⁵⁵ he balked at signing the defense agreement, as the agreement would severely hurt his position. Even though Hatta himself assured Cochran that Indonesia was sympathetic to the United States' policy in

⁵³ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, March 23, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 990

⁵⁴ Leffler (1992) 313-4

⁵⁵ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 15, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1032, Telegram From the Charge in Indonesia (Benninghoff) to the Secretary of State, October 18, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 718

stopping the Communists since "Indonesia fears Russia," he argued that the act must be ratified by the Parliament and at this point, the ratification was impossible with the leftists' agitation. Furthermore, Hatta and his colleagues worried that any formal agreement would be used against himself and his moderate colleagues by the opposition in Parliament, undermining their position further. He further warned that the act would be used by political opponents to bring down any government that signed the agreement. Still, he tried to assure the United States by stressing that "Indonesian Government policy while officially 'neutral' was in reality pursuing a policy against Russia and its satellites" due to the Indonesians' fear that the Soviet Union might pursue an aggressive policy on Indonesia.⁵⁶

Both Cochran and Washington however were not satisfied, believing that Indonesia had become too soft in fighting against the Communists and did not realize the dangers of Communism. Cochran also felt that Indonesia did not appreciate the United States' help, as he had been obliged to "play down" the United States' assistance to Indonesia such as police equipment, economic support, and various experts.⁵⁷ Moreover, they prefer Indonesia to fully commit itself to the United States' side. As a result, they would keep pushing Indonesia to make this commitment, to the detriment of the relationship between the United States and Indonesia.

⁵⁶ Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, May 24, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1025-27, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, May 18, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1028-9, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 26, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1038-9, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 26, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1052

⁵⁷ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, August 26, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1056-57

These six constraints: the problem of regionalism, the role of the Army, the creation of the Provisional Constitution of 1950, the role of President Sukarno, the unfinished dispute of Irian Barat, and the growing tensions in the relationship between Indonesia and the United States, heavily limited the options that the successive Indonesian governments could take in this period. Probably it is not incorrect to say that the deck had been stacked against the survival of the democracy in this period. Still, this does not mean that the collapse of the Constitutional Democracy was inevitable. By the end of the day, the choices of the leaders in Indonesian politics were equally critical and responsible for the tension and distrust during this period that would culminate in the collapse of the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia and the emergence of successive authoritarian regimes in Indonesia that would only end in 1998.

4.3. Prime Minister Natsir (September 1950 – March 1951)

Mohammad Natsir was the first Prime Minister of the Constitutional Democracy period and a leader of the Masjumi. He assumed the position of Prime Minister on September 6, 1950, leading a cabinet dominated by the Masjumi and the PSI. He was selected by Sukarno to lead the first cabinet because he was the Chairman of the Executive Council of the Masjumi, the largest party in the Parliament.⁵⁸ Moreover, Natsir

⁵⁸ Feith (1962) 148

was a staunch anti-Communist,⁵⁹ even though he was not interested in aligning Indonesia too closely to the United States.⁶⁰

Right from the beginning, his cabinet was attacked by parties and prominent members in the Parliament, including Sukiman, because he was excluding the PNI from his cabinet. During the negotiation on the creation of the cabinet, the PNI had demanded two major cabinet positions: the interior ministry, which would appoint governors, residents, and regents (useful in preparation for the incoming election), and education (adding an Islamic influence to the government educational system).⁶¹ In the end they could not reach an agreement.⁶² The cabinet had a bad start. The exclusion of the PNI would dog this cabinet through its entire period in power: the PNI's opposition would increasingly be dedicated simply to bringing down the cabinet and securing seats for itself. Two months later, on October 25, 1950, the PNI, in conjunction with several small parties, again submitted a motion in the Parliament demanding the cabinet to resign.

⁵⁹ Sukarno told Cochran on August 26, 1950 that "he had asked Natsir to form a government because of strong opposition of Natsir and his Masjumi Party to Communism. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, August 26, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1056

⁶⁰ George McT. Kahin, "Indonesian Politics and Nationalism," In William L. Holland, *Asian Nationalism and the West* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953) 138

⁶¹ Feith (1962) 148

⁶² There are several explanations for this exclusion. Feith attributed the exclusion of the PNI to the Army's pressure – the Army found Abdul Hakim, Masjumi's candidate for the minister of defense who had been approved by both the Masjumi and the PNI, to be unacceptable. As Natsir was unwilling to offend the Army (with whom he had good relations), he proceeded to change the nomination. Outraged, bolstered by its suspicions of the Masjumi's intentions, and sensing a split within the Masjumi itself over this issue, the PNI refused to budge and Natsir crossed the Rubicon by excluding the PNI from his cabinet. Feith (1962) 149-50. Deliar Noer in his master thesis on the Masjumi claimed that the PNI did not seriously intend to cooperate with the Masjumi anyway. Deliar Noer, *Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia* (M.A. thesis, Cornell University Press, 1960) 219-20. Brackman stated that the PNI refused to participate because the PNI saw the cabinet as "too socialist-minded," indicating its unwillingness to work with the PSI and its dissatisfaction at seeing so many members of the PSI in the cabinet. Brackman (1963) 145

Although in the end the cabinet was approved by the Parliament by 118 to 73, the damage was done.⁶³

Starting from very shaky ground, Natsir was to face both the problem of the Mutual Defense Assistance Program (MDAP) and the problem of Irian Barat that was supposed to be discussed a year after the end of the Round Table Conference. On October 9, Indonesian Foreign Minister Mohammad Roem told Cochran that Indonesia did not want to work through MDAP as it "would not be in harmony with foreign policy of independence and freedom of action," though he insisted that this meant "no unfriendly attitude toward US... or lacking in appreciation." While Natsir did prefer to pursue an independent foreign policy, it was certain that part of the calculation in refusing the MDAP was also the fear that his shaky cabinet would be open to attacks from the PNI and the Communists. As Roem noted, an agreement would "seriously endanger life of Natsir Government."⁶⁴

This in turn however, sealed the fate of Irian Barat. In December 1950, the negotiations between the Indonesians and the Dutch at The Hague had stalled as the Dutch refused to budge from their stance to have the sovereignty over Irian Barat vested in the Netherlands - Indonesian Union, implying that the status of Irian Barat and Indonesia should be equal instead of that Irian Barat should be a part of Indonesia. On the other side, the Indonesian delegates refused this interpretation and kept insisting that Irian

⁶³ Kahin (1953) 141-2

⁶⁴ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, October 10, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1078-9

Barat was a part of Indonesia and that the transfer of authority should be completed by July 1, 1951. On December 26, 1950, the negotiations completely collapsed.⁶⁵

While Natsir was hoping that the United States would pressure the Dutch to be more cooperative, the support was not forthcoming.⁶⁶ As mentioned above, the State Department saw the Dutch as more reliable in keeping the Communists out. As a result, when Sukarno asked Cochran whether the United States could take an active part on behalf of Indonesians, Cochran replied that he hoped both the Dutch and the Indonesians "would soon settle differences through friendly negotiations, without drawing others into controversy."⁶⁷ By this time, the United States was far more impressed by the attitudes of both the Netherlands and Australia, who, unlike Indonesia, were fighting alongside the United States in Korea. It was not surprising that the United States thus refused to help Natsir even though the State Department was aware that the outcome of this deadlock would undermine Natsir's cabinet.⁶⁸

In a meantime, President Sukarno had proclaimed the importance of the issue of Irian Barat on August 17, 1950. As the one year period since the end of the Round Table Conference had passed, he signaled his desire to abrogate the Round Table Conference Agreement and put pressure on Dutch businesses in Indonesia.⁶⁹ Sukarno had put a great deal of his prestige on the issue of Irian Barat and behind the Round Table Conference and he needed a way out. On December 29, Pringgogidgo, who at this time had become the Chief of the President's Cabinet, told Cochran that Sukarno had pressured Natsir to

⁶⁵ Metzmakers (1951) 138

⁶⁶ Anak Agung (1973) 89

⁶⁷ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, December 8, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1096

⁶⁸ Andrew Roadnight, *United States Policy toward Indonesia in the Truman and Eisenhower Years* (New York: Palgrave, 2002) 88

⁶⁹ Feith (1962) 163

dissolve the Netherlands-Indonesian union or he would resigned. Pringgodigdo further noted that it was "absolutely hopeless for anyone to try to change resident's mind on subject of NNG, to which he has given so much attention and on which he has spoken so firmly."⁷⁰

As the negotiation deadlocked, the fury of the Indonesians toward the Dutch was at an all time high. Nationalists and the Communists held rallies denouncing the Dutch and on December 31. On January 5, President Sukarno demanded, in a cabinet meeting, the confiscation of Dutch properties and the expulsion of Dutch citizens from Indonesia. He asked for a vote of confidence. Essentially, Sukarno had started to move out from his limits as a figurehead president to influence the policy-making process of the government. The meeting did not end well. According to Brackman:

Natsir trembled with anger. He asserted that he had not become Premier to make war, that Sukarno did not understand the implications of his request. Natsir said he prayed to God never again to see men, women, and children – Dutch or others – confined in concentration camps. The reference to the Japanese occupation hit home. Sukarno flushed. Natsir declared: "I will hear no more."

Considering that even Sukarno later in his memoir still painfully recalled and tried to justify his "collaboration" with the Japanese, and notwithstanding the fact that during the critical period in 1945 this accusation had dogged him and was used liberally by the Dutch and his political opponents such as Sjahrir to denounce "the Japanese collaborators," Natsir had essentially opened an old wound and rubbed salt on it. Later, Natsir also decided to curb Sukarno's speechmaking further and to relegate him back to a

⁷⁰ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, December 29, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1099

figurehead role.⁷¹ Sukarno, never one to forgive and forget slights, started to encourage and to support PNI efforts to bring the cabinet down.⁷²

While Natsir had made one of the most powerful persons in Indonesia his enemy, he also found another headache: the Communists were staging a comeback. Following the debacle of Madiun, the Communist Party had regrouped under the leadership of Alimin and Tan Ling Djie who wanted to keep the PKI out of the limelight and who focused on creating a small yet elite-structured party, and worked within and through other parties.⁷³

Opposing Alimin and Tan Ling Djie was Dipa Nusantara Aidit, supported by the younger faction in the PKI and by the Soviet Union.⁷⁴ On December 2, 1950, Alimin and Tan Ling Djie made a major blunder: declaring that they favored the creation of a "Republic of West Guinea" which in essence supported the Dutch's position in the stalled negotiations. Aidit's faction struck, deposing both leaders and creating a new Politbureau where Aidit would dominate.⁷⁵

Under Aidit's leadership, the PKI further consolidated the SOBSI, the Indonesian labor union which had already been strengthened by its popularity among disgruntled

⁷¹ Brackman (1963) 147. Deliar Noer also mentioned this incident in his discussion on Natsir. Noer, however, stated that in the confrontation Natsir only stressed that the cabinet was the one which conducted policies and the President was a Constitutional head of the state, rejecting Sukarno's efforts to influence his cabinet's policies. Noer (1960) 226-7. Legge's description on the event was similar to Noer's, though he further added that the Cabinet also warned Sukarno that as constitutional president he should refrain from taking up public positions that varied from those of the government. Legge (2003) 277. Feith interestingly did not mention this event in his book except in a footnote, quoting Louis Fischer, who interviewed the President in 1958. In that interview, Sukarno stated "In 1950 I urged the confiscation of Dutch properties, but Prime Minister Natsir and his Cabinet were opposed." However, Feith claimed that he found no confirmation of the truth of that statement. See Feith (1962) 163, Louis Fischer, *The Story of Indonesia* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959) 300

⁷² Feith (1962) 171

⁷³ Justus M. van der Kroef, *the Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1965) 45

⁷⁴ Brackman (1963) 150-1. In addition, Moscow considered Alimin and Tan Ling Djie as too independent.

⁷⁵ Van der Kroef (1965) 48

workers under the capable leadership of Njono.⁷⁶ The PKI's influence on the labor unions was growing so well that it began to pursue a much more militant stance. By early February, it managed to provoke 500,000 plantation estate workers to strike. The strikes grew so serious that Natsir had to issue Military Decree No. 1 which prohibited strikes. However, before Natsir could clamp down on the PKI, his cabinet fell.⁷⁷

The exclusion of the PNI from the cabinet, the problem of Irian Barat, and Sukarno's hostility to Natsir, coupled with a domestic problem concerning *Regulation 39*, a government regulation on elections that was seen as benefiting the Masjumi the most,⁷⁸ rankled the leaders of Masjumi. On March 5, 1951, in an interview with Aneta, the Dutch News Agency, Jusuf Wibisono, one of the leaders in Masjumi, expressed concerns about the exclusion of the PNI and the failure of the talks on Irian Barat. He further stated that Natsir should return his mandate to improve the government.⁷⁹ Before the interview, two ministers had resigned from Natsir's cabinet. On March 20, the day on which Natsir was to have his showdown in the Parliament over *Regulation 39*, two more ministers from a small party in Natsir's coalition resigned. The session itself was boycotted by the PNI, the

⁷⁶ Brackman (1963) 149

⁷⁷ Brackman (1963) 152, Feith (1962) 174-5

⁷⁸ *Regulation 39 of 1950* was a regulation concerning the election that supposed to take place in the near future. This regulation assumed that since it would be a while before an election based on individual suffrage could be held, the members of legislative councils at the county level (*regency/kabupaten*) would be elected by an electoral college composed of representatives from every established organization in every subdistrict. These organizations could be political parties or labor, peasant, women's, youth, religious, or social organizations. To be considered to "exist" however, these organizations must have a presence in at least three counties of the province concerned and they had to have been organized at the subdistrict level as of June 30, 1950. The members of a provincial council would be elected by an electoral college composed of members of all regency and municipal councils in the province and each legislative council would elect executive councils who would work with the centrally appointed "head of region." See Feith (1962) 165-6, 169. This regulation was seen as heavily favoring the Masjumi since only the Masjumi had a major presence in many counties all over Indonesia as the Masjumi still maintained its organization which was first created during the Japanese period. The rest of the parties mostly had a presence in Java and small parties did not have much of a presence at all.

⁷⁹ Noer (1960) 231-2

PKI, and various other small parties, which made Natsir unable to get a vote of confidence. That was the last straw. With the withdrawal of those two ministers, a cabinet reshuffle was necessary, which would be impossible in that situation. On March 21, 1951, Natsir resigned.

Meanwhile, having been rebuffed by Natsir's government on the MDAP, Cochran on February 3 floated the idea of a "Pacific Pact," which essentially was an alliance system to counter the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia, in particular, in combating the Chinese aggression from the north,⁸⁰ to Mohammad Roem. Roem, while acknowledging the fear of the Indonesians about Communist China, said it would not be consistent with Indonesia's foreign policy to enter such a defense agreement, though he still expected Americans to defend Indonesia in case of Communist invasion. Cochran retorted that he was "receiving little reciprocity" and declared that "friendships even between nations must be two-sided if they are to work." After that conversation, Cochran cabled the State Department, suggesting that Washington to force Indonesia to

Face realities of world situation. US aid should not be taken for granted no matter how close our friendship has been or may continue with Indonesia. Indonesia will not only itself become a problem but will contribute to strengthening Asiatic-Arab bloc, thereby creating much bigger problem, if we continue too gentle policy with this country.... In addition to cutting down on economic aid... I recommend

⁸⁰ Cochran probably felt that the defense pact against China might be more appealing due to the fact that some of Indonesian leaders actually worried about the Communists' influence in Southeast Asia. During the USI era, Hatta stressed that the Indonesian government "exercising increased vigilance against the Communist dangers from within." Cochran also noted that "Masjumi leaders inform Embassy their party realizes Indonesia must eventually take side with US.... Admit however that present US military reverses Korea cause fear at least temporarily among lower ranks of party." Sukarno himself admitted to Cochran that he was worried over Chinese infiltration into Sumatra and West Borneo. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, July 15, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1032, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, September 25, 1950, *FRUS*, 1950, Vol. 6, 1067

Indonesians be brought face to face firmly with policies we advocate on allocation strategic materials at such conference as London rubber meeting.⁸¹

Acheson agreed with Cochran's position. The United States was prepared to use its economic might to force Indonesia to "face realities of world situation" and agreed that "Indonesia's stubborn clinging to notions of so-called 'neutrality'" should not be countered by "financially unnecessary doles of a few million dollars."⁸²

On February 14, following Cochran's further recommendations, the State Department decided to cut part of its economic aid programs in Indonesia, citing difficulties in justifying the aid to the Budget Bureau and the Congress due to the "great and continuing improvement" in Indonesian economic position.⁸³

⁸¹ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 3, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 146-7

⁸² Memorandum by the Director, Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Lacy) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk), March 19, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 623

⁸³ Thanks to the Korean War boom, Indonesia's dollar holding had increased by US\$ 60 million in eight months and its gold holding increased by US\$ 30 million. Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, February 7, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 594-5, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, February 14, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 595-6

However, Cochran incurred the wrath of the Economic Cooperation Administration section of the Truman administration. In an outburst, Colonel Allen Griffin, the ECA assistant administrator for the Far East, declared that Cochran's usefulness was at an end as he "has made an abysmal mess of American relations with Indonesia" and that he had "a psychopathic obsession that he and he alone understood what U.S. policy toward Indonesia should consist in." It was highly possible that another reason why Cochran asked to cut the aid to Indonesia was because he wanted to kick the ECA out of Indonesia, which he believed was trying to meddle in Indonesian politics, part of Cochran's turf. The ECA resisted Cochran, who they saw as too secretive, vain, and egomaniac. Moreover, Cochran was frustrated over the ECA publicity, while Cochran preferred intimate and secretive discussions with the leadership of Indonesia. In short, this was an inter-departmental rivalry on whoever would have the biggest influence in Indonesia. Not surprisingly, the State Department defended Cochran's performance, noting Griffin was a "Johnny-come-lately" representing an organization full of "Johnny-come-latelys" and it was impossible for them to understand or gain the three year experience of Cochran in dealing intimately with high Indonesian officials. Paul F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997) 102-3, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director, Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Lacy), February 15, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 599-600, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, December 5, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 740, 742

Moreover, Cochran himself was supported by Sukarno. In an interview with Richard D. McKinzie from the Truman Library on July 16, 1975, Samuel P. Hayes, who was the ECA mission chief in Indonesia, recalled that at one time Cochran was recalled to Washington and there were rumors that he would be

Similar to Sjahrir in the previous chapter, Natsir had made too many enemies in his short tenure as Prime Minister. His bad start in creating his cabinet had alienated the PNI, then the second largest party, and factions within his own party. A close association with the United States was also out of the question due to the domestic politics problem, even though Natsir clung to the hope that the United States might throw its weight behind the issue of Irian Barat. Worse, as the problem of Irian Barat dragged on, he also alienated Sukarno, who then would support the opposition to bring the cabinet down. *Regulation 39* was the final straw that broke the cabinet's back.

Having alienated the PNI and parts of his party from the beginning, Natsir had very little breathing space available. Any weaknesses within his cabinet would be attacked immediately, and Irian Barat was a very convenient weapon to discredit and bring down the government. As a result, Natsir's hands were tied and he could not make any compromise regarding to Irian Barat. A willingness to retreat from the Indonesian position of regaining Irian Barat would be political suicide. On the other hand, Natsir was also well aware that Indonesia was not in any condition to push for a radical policy in regard to Irian Barat. The economy was still devastated from four years of the

transferred. However, Cochran met Truman and he showed Truman a letter from Sukarno "describing in glowing term all that Cochran had done for Indonesia and meant for Indonesia and saying that if Cochran were to be transferred now, it'd be a slap in the face to Indonesia, which appreciated him so greatly. And Truman said, 'You're going back to Indonesia.'" Hayes however was unable to confirm this rumor with Truman. Richard McKinzie, *Oral History Interview with Samuel P. Hayes* (<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/hayessp.htm>) 67-68

Cochran himself did not emerge from this event unscathed. Much later, his recommendation to cut the economic aid was exposed to the Indonesians, thus wrecking his legacy and the United States' reputation. Kahin, in several discussions with Sukarno between 1954-5, reported that Sukarno found Cochran "had forfeited his trust as a consequence of his duplicity over economic assistance and thereby helped undermine the Indonesian president's generally positive feelings toward the United States." Kahin and Kahin (1995) 78, 259-60n

Independence war, and Indonesia's exports were about one-half of the prewar volume.⁸⁴

In addition, the proverbial cupboard was bare: in 1950, the government predicted a deficit of 1.5 billion guilders,⁸⁵ though the Korean War, which started in late June 1950, created an export boom which helped assuaging the economic problems through the United States' orders to supply its troops in Korea.⁸⁶

In fact, the goal of Natsir's cabinet was to push for economic recovery and development that would require cordial cooperation with the Netherlands, which had all the technical experts needed for economic development, and the United States as the source of capital. This effort was strongly led by the fiscally rigid, stingy, tight, puritan, incorruptible Finance Minister Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, who always rejected any patronage requests, which not surprisingly did not buy him many friends among those who were interested in perks and patronage.⁸⁷

Still, not everyone accept this point of view, either due to their conviction that national pride should take precedent over economic ties or they simply wanted to politicized the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia. Even within the Masjumi, there was grumbling that the government was "too careful as if it had no conviction at all as regards the country's strength."⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Roadnight (2002) 83. On February 13, 1950, Ir. Djuanda Kartasasmita, who was the minister of Welfare and Economics, was hoping in an interview that the exports of Indonesia could reach pre-war levels within five years. See Raymond Edward Stannard, Jr., "The Role of American Aid in Indonesian-American Relations (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 1957) 26

⁸⁵ Hatta (1953) 448

⁸⁶ Indonesia supplied 35% of US' tin imports and 30% of US' natural rubber import. Roadnight (2002) 90, Stannard (1957) 35

⁸⁷ According to Cochran, Sjafruddin was "doing his best to keep budget within reasonable limits, restrain Ministers from expenses other than of productive character, and avoid inflation." Herbert Feith, *The Wilopo Cabinet, 1952-3; A Turning Point in Post-Revolutionary Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1958) 6, Feith (1962) 169, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 17, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 604

⁸⁸ Noer (1960) 227

Unlike Sukarno, Natsir was well aware of the severity of the Indonesian economic situation, which would explain his outburst during the January 5 Cabinet meeting. It is interesting to notice that while Irian Barat remained an important foreign policy issue for Indonesians that would be brought up to the United Nations every year, there were no longer any attempts to settle the Irian Barat issue with force, until the period of Guided Democracy. Thus, it was highly possible that both Natsir and Sukarno would have clashed anyway regardless of whether there was an Irian Barat crisis or not. Irian Barat was simply a convenient weapon to use. Of course, while the United States could change the outcome by persuading the Netherlands if Washington found Indonesia to be friendly enough, the domestic politics consideration made Natsir unable to pursue closer relations with the United States, leading to inactivity from the United States on this issue, and resulting in the further undermining of the cabinet.

Moreover, both Natsir and Sukarno were independent and highly ambitious politicians, working under strong constraints and trying to increase their freedom of action. Even without the benefit of the hindsight of "Guided Democracy," Natsir would have noticed Sukarno's behavior during the revolution and would have deduced that by acquiescing to Sukarno's demands, Natsir would have set a precedent, where Sukarno could and would interfere and dominate the Cabinet, as he would later do by the end of the Constitutional period. By standing firm to Sukarno, Natsir had temporarily curbed Sukarno's ambition, though he was still unable to control Sukarno's rhetoric, and the confrontation also drove Sukarno to find support from other parties, notably the PNI, with which he worked to wreck Natsir's premiership.⁸⁹ Not surprisingly, several months

⁸⁹ Legge (2003) 278-9

after the collapse of his cabinet, in a speech in front of parliament on June 1, 1951, Natsir complained:

The huge mountain of motions which in the past formed a curtain separating the government and Parliament, with a result that the government considered it necessary to resign, appears to be a mountain of snow which has been melted away by the highly rising temperature.... Where was the need for a cabinet crisis except... that only ... the opposition should be able to implement a political program formulated and being carried out by another party.... If a cabinet is forced by the opposition to resign, this is a natural phenomenon in a parliamentary system.... What we regret is the carelessness and the destructive attitude of the opposition to wreck a program while it has apparently no other instrument at its disposal.⁹⁰

In short, Natsir believed, probably correctly, that the attacks that had plagued him during his entire premiership were attacks for the sake of opposition, not a legitimate disapproval of government policies – considering that the new cabinet under Sukiman would pursue almost the same program as Natsir's cabinet.

It was very difficult to determine whether Natsir was successful as a leader, and it depends on how one measures success as a leader. If success is measured by the length of premiership, Natsir clearly failed. He made so many enemies that it hurt his chance to survive. Counterfactually, had the issue of Irian Barat not been there, Natsir's tenure would probably have been much longer. In addition, had he shown more tact in dealing with Sukarno, Sukarno might not have thrown his weight behind the opposition to bring down the cabinet. However, if Natsir is measured by his ability to maintain the integrity of his office and block Sukarno's bid for power, then his premiership could be called successful. That would then stretch the definition of success in the study of leadership, though, and it is therefore prudent to claim that he failed in his tenure.

⁹⁰ Noer (1960) 242

4.4. Prime Minister Sukiman Wirjosandjojo (April 1951 – February 1952)

A month after the fall of Natsir's cabinet, both the PNI and the Masjumi were still unable to make arrangements for the new government. At one point, the PNI had pondered the possibility of forming a government without the Masjumi and depending on leftist parties. However, most of leaders of the PNI refused to consider taking in a Communist minister.⁹¹ Sukarno then interfered by appointing Sidik Djojokusarto,⁹² the chairman of the PNI, and Sukiman Wirjosandjojo, the chairman of the Masjumi. Sukarno played a huge role in breaking the deadlock between the PNI and the Masjumi over who would be the Prime Minister, cabinet allocation, and the problem of Irian Barat by throwing his weight in appointing Dr. Sukiman.⁹³

The appointment of Sukiman, however, caused furor in the Masjumi. First, during the negotiation, Sukiman had agreed to PNI's demand that the new cabinet should be headed by someone other than Natsir.⁹⁴ Second, while the Masjumi's Central Leadership Council authorized Sukiman to be its representative in selecting the new Prime Minister, the authorization was only for a certain period and Sukiman did not seek the council's permission for extension and for selecting the Cabinet. Still, on April 27, 1951, a day after Sukiman announced the composition of his cabinet, Natsir declared that there was

⁹¹ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, April 16, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 636

⁹² Roem stated that Sartono, the former formateur, had been inclined to include the extreme left and as a result, Sukarno decided to drop him and put Sidik as a formateur. He also blamed Sukarno for the difficulties in the negotiation due to Sukarno's insistence on denouncing the Statute of Union on the Netherlands and Indonesia as the government's central platform. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, April 19, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 638

⁹³ Kahin (1953) 144-5

⁹⁴ Feith noted that Sukiman's agreement to the PNI's demand led to the tension between Natsir's and Sukiman's supporters. Feith (1962) 179-80

no split within the Masjumi. On May 19, 1951, the Masjumi Central Leadership Council decided to give Sukiman's cabinet a chance.⁹⁵

Regardless of the rhetoric, there was a noticeable dissatisfaction about this cabinet. For one, there was no representative from either the PSI or Natsir's faction in the new cabinet. The press was also unenthusiastic, noting that the new ministers were unproven with numerous accusations of "cow trading" (political horse trading) going on. Worse, as the cabinet was made in haste under Sukarno's intervention, it was lacking underlying common goal or interests among its ministers, causing frequent internal discord during the entire tenure of Sukiman's cabinet. In Feith's words, "[the cabinet] included a good number of men who were without intense personal commitments to problem-solving policies of any kind, men whose primary orientation was to political power as such."⁹⁶

Right from the beginning, Sukiman's cabinet tried to shore up its nationalistic credentials by rejecting the United States' efforts in asking the United Nations to put an embargo on the delivery of strategic war materials to China, especially rubber. On May 7, Foreign Minister Subarjo declared that Indonesia "should be permitted to sell her raw materials to everyone, even to the Devil if this would serve the people's interest."⁹⁷ The

⁹⁵ Roem, who was excluded from the Cabinet due to his support for Natsir, was "slightly bitter" and noted the involvement of both Sukarno and Hatta in forming the cabinet. The ministers were chosen on the basis of whether they would "carry out Pres's ideas." He said the reason why Natsir finally agreed to this cabinet was "to permit formation Cabinet which wld prevent Sartono from tying PNI up with Leftist elements." Noer (1960) 238-241, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, April 27, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 642

⁹⁶ Feith (1962) 182-3

⁹⁷ Max Maramis, a secretary in the Indonesian Embassy in the United States, assured the State Department that the statement was made "as a result of pressure from the Indonesian press, and the remarks were not indicative of any change in Indonesia's attitude." Brackman (1963) 154, Feith (1962) 184, Kahin (1953) 177, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, May 11, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 647 n2

reason was not that Indonesia had much sympathy for China: it was because the Indonesians felt that the embargo was a U.S. plot to keep the price of raw materials down, as stated in the influential Jakarta newspaper *Merdeka* on May 15:

The real aim of America with the ban is not to break the resistance of the Chinese People's Republic and North Korea, but to push down prices of raw materials in Southeast Asia in accordance with America's wishes thereby to become a single-buyer.

America would then have the power to include Southeast Asian countries in its bloc and compel them to abandon their policy of independence.⁹⁸

Washington reacted with anger. On May 9, the State Department informed the Indonesian embassy in Washington that should Indonesia in fact sell materials to the People's Republic of China "it will mean that Indonesia has moved away from its independent policy and will be considered by the United States to have chosen the Soviet bloc."⁹⁹ On May 18, the United Nations passed an embargo prohibiting trade with the People's Republic of China.¹⁰⁰ The Indonesian public was outraged, especially when the adoption of the embargo was followed by a very substantial fall in the price of rubber.¹⁰¹ On May 18, L.N. Palar, the Indonesian representative in the United Nations, complained that the fall in rubber price had cost Indonesia \$200 million.¹⁰² Still, following Washington's pressure, the Sukiman government used the United Nations' embargo as a

⁹⁸ Kahin (1953) 177

⁹⁹ Ali Sastroamijoyo, *Milestones on My Journey* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1979) 231

¹⁰⁰ Brackman (1963) 154

¹⁰¹ Feith (1962) 184, Kahin (1953) 177. Stannard attributes the collapse of the price of rubber to the fact that the United States had approached its goal in stockpiling rubber. Stannard (1957) 28, 35. In fact, the global supply of rubber was too high. At the Rome meeting on April 1951, the Rubber Study Group estimated that the world production of natural and synthetic rubber would exceed consumption by 360,000 tons in 1951. The U.S. was the world largest producer of synthetic rubber, and due to its domestic constraints, notably strong opposition from the rubber product manufacturing industry, it could not easily cut its synthetic rubber production. Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, May 18, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 657-8

¹⁰² The State Department, however, claimed that Palar's assertion was "without basis." Telegram From the Secretary of State to the United States Mission at the United Nations, May 23, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 660

face-saving measure, and declared its intention to respect the United Nations embargo on May 24.¹⁰³

The cabinet found itself in another crisis on June 7, 1951, when Muhammad Yamin, the Justice Minister, released 950 political detainees without bothering to secure either the cabinet's or the military's approval – a politically damaging oversight as all these detainees had been arrested by the Army during the Hatta and Natsir cabinets. The Army reacted with outrage: within a few days, the Army rearrested most of the men and soldiers were moved to Yamin's residence. On June 15, Yamin resigned.¹⁰⁴ The result of this action was that the Army no longer backed the Sukiman government.¹⁰⁵

Smelling blood in the water, the Communists struck. In June, the PKI-influenced labor union, the SOBSI (Serikat Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia/All Indonesian Central Organization of Labor) declared a strike to demand Lebaran (Islamic New Year)

¹⁰³ While Indonesia agreed to respect the embargo, the Sukiman government still asked Cochran to have the United States help prop up the price of rubber. Cochran admitted to the Sukiman Cabinet that the loss to Indonesia due to the drop in rubber price was serious, but "insisted it was not calamitous and should not be overplayed." He also warned that the United States would react to any attempt to play on this issue by increasing "US tendency to depend more importantly upon synthetic rubber." While Cochran seemed to be the "bad guy," in reality he was following the instructions from the State Department to be firm in negotiation with respect to the price of rubber, giving him very little leeway to work with. To his credit, he managed to persuade the State Department to give Indonesia the exemption from the Kem Amendment, which banned foreign aid to countries shipping goods of war to the Communist bloc. The State Department, however, instructed Cochran to "continue disabuse Indos of any belief that NSC exception their favor under Kem amendment represents weak or compromising policy, since exception may be revoked at any time NSC determines warranted." Kahin (1953) 177, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, May 25, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 663-4, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, June 1, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 671, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, August 7, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 695-6, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, August 23, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 699-70, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, September 20, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 702, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, September 26, 1951, *FRUS*, Vol. 6 Part 1, 706, Telegram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, September 29, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 708

¹⁰⁴ Brackman (1963) 154, Feith (1953) 185

¹⁰⁵ Feith argued that while the Army never actively tried to bring down Sukiman's government, the Army's dissatisfactions with Sukiman Government "were used effectively by political leaders attempting to persuade their parties to disavow the Cabinet." This persuasion would later play an important role in the collapse of the Sukiman Government. Feith (1958) 67

bonuses in spite of the ban against strikes that was passed during Natsir's administration. By the end of June, the strike had paralyzed the entire country. The strike continued for the next several months until August, alarmed by the increase of violent attacks on police posts and a grenade attack on a fair, when the government struck back and arrested around 15,000 individuals by the end of the month.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, *Java Post*, a Surabaya-based newspaper, published an allegation of a foreign-backed attempt to overthrow the government, an implicit attack on the PKI and the People's Republic of China.¹⁰⁷

Even though the PKI was gambling on both the government's weaknesses and the possible backlash from the public against what was seen as the government's heavy-handed approach to the strikes, the hope of the PKI for gaining power was quashed when Sukarno backed Sukiman's action by castigating those who were playing with strikes and warned the PKI not to sell the national soul for "a dish of international lentils."¹⁰⁸ Sukarno's backing proved to be decisive. Even though there were criticisms in the

¹⁰⁶ As early as May 28, 1951, Djuanda was informed that the Attorney Generals "already has list of Communist leaders against whom action is proposed soon as govt feels sufficiently solidified to back such action." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, May 28, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 667

¹⁰⁷ The relationship between Indonesia and China was always ambivalent. While they had established a diplomatic relationship, Sukiman remained wary of the Chinese intention in Indonesia. This fear was further strengthened by the Chinese major blunder: its ambassador to Indonesia was a former Medan school teacher and a member of PKI who was expelled by the Dutch for communist activities. He returned dressed in drab uniforms and gave an impression of discipline and militarism, which brought back the memory of 1942, when various Japanese nationals who were expelled by the Dutch returned to Indonesia as members of Imperial Army! During the entire strike, Sukiman also blocked the arrival of fifty additional members of the Chinese Embassy, believing that the Embassy was supporting the PKI. Of course, when Alimin, an elder statesman in the PKI, sought sanctuary in the Chinese Embassy during the entire crackdown, the fear of Chinese involvement was further ratcheted up. Brackman (1963) 141, 154-5

¹⁰⁸ Brackman (1963) 154-6, Feith (1962) 187-9, 216, Kahin (1953) 188-9, Rose (1987) 176

Parliament, on November 1, the Parliament defeated the motion criticizing the government for the raid 91 to 21. In this debate, Natsir supported Sukiman.¹⁰⁹

Aidit had made a fatal mistake: instead of bringing down the government, the strikes created a united anti-Communist front among parties who were alarmed by the Communists' radicalism. The Communists were completely isolated and the PKI would later concede that the raid was a heavy test for the party.¹¹⁰ They, however, learned from this mistake. Aidit would change his strategy later in his bid for power by trying to work within the Parliamentary system, embracing national symbols such as the struggle for West Irian, and aligning the party with Sukarno.¹¹¹

As early as January 1952, Aidit declared a new strategy of the formation of a united national front, "including the national bourgeoisie," the liquidation of the Darul Islam rebellion, and the development of a Communist mass movement. Particularly striking was the mention of the "Darul Islam" rebellion, which was an implicit attack on the Masjumi. This particularly struck a chord in the secular PNI which had become increasingly alarmed by the growth of the Darul Islam rebellion. The attack ruffled the Masjumi so much that in the same month, Natsir had to counterattack by declaring that "no one should be so foolish as to weave Stalinism and democratic socialism on the same loom, although both are based on Marxism. It is just as foolish and dangerous to compare the Masjumi with the Darul Islam."¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Feith (1962) 191

¹¹⁰ Brackman (1963) 155

¹¹¹ Van der Kroef (1965) 51-2

¹¹² Brackman (1963) 171-2

In the meantime, Washington remained wary about Indonesia due to Indonesia's willingness to sell tin and rubber to Czechoslovakia and Indonesia's independent foreign policy, even though Cochran noted that the Sukiman Government was "basically friendly"¹¹³ to the United States. Moreover, the Sukiman Government signed the Japanese peace treaty in San Francisco on September 8, 1951 in spite of domestic opposition in Indonesia and a badly split cabinet in which ten ministers voted in favor of signing and six against. While the cabinet survived the attacks in the newspapers and in the Parliament, the damage was done: Subarjo was accused of bending to the United States' interests at the expense of Indonesia's interests.¹¹⁴ This action, however, did not register in the State Department as proof of Indonesia's willingness to accommodate the interests of the United States.

This relationship between the U.S. and Indonesia would be complicated further when on October 10, 1951 the U.S. Congress passed the 1951 Mutual Security Act, consolidating defense and economic assistance under one agency and one single person, the Director of Mutual Security. According to this act, all aid recipients needed to meet new criteria were specified in Section 511 of the act within ninety days. Section 511(a) provided for military, economic, and technical assistance, and in return, the recipient

¹¹³ This, however, did not make Cochran budge from his argument that the ECA program in Indonesia should be terminated, citing great progress in Indonesia's financial standing. Of course, the real reason was as stated previously: he wanted to kick the ECA out for interfering with his turf. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, June 1, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 671, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, December 5, 1951, *FRUS*, Vol. 6 Part 1, 740-1

¹¹⁴ Mohammad Roem, who belonged to the Natsir faction, considered the San Francisco treaty to have been fabricated by the winners of the Second World War, notably the Western bloc. By signing it, Indonesia was abandoning its independent foreign policy and was aligning itself with the United States. The supporters of the treaty argued that regardless of Indonesia's opinion, the treaty would pass anyway and Indonesia would be better off signing it to establish a basis to negotiate reparations and a fishing zone agreement with Japan. Feith (1962) 194-5, Kahin (1953) 191, Noer (1960) 249, Sastroamijoyo (1979) 243-4, Stannard (1957) 37

government was required to commit itself to making a full contribution to the maintenance of the defensive strength of the free world (in other words, committing itself to the U.S. bloc). Section 511(b) only provided economic and technical assistance in exchange for the recipient government promoting international understanding and good will and eliminating causes of international tension.¹¹⁵

The main difference between Sections 511 (a) and (b) was under Section 511 (b), there was no provision for a military aid. By agreeing to Section 511 (a), Indonesia could buy arms and equipments from the United States or Europe. While technically Indonesia could buy arms from the United States outside the MSA, it would be difficult for Indonesia to obtain them as the priority would be given to the members of the alliance or those who agreed to the Section 511 (a). Getting arms from the Communist bloc was unthinkable due to vehement domestic opposition that would exceed the opposition of getting arms from the United States. Moreover, should Indonesia agree to Section 511 (b), Indonesia had to reimburse any military aid that it had received from the United States, including the aid for national police and mobile brigade that Hatta had secretly agreed to. On November 23, Cochran was instructed to ask the Sukiman Government to sign Section 511 by January 8, 1952, though it was up to Sukiman to choose which section he would agree to.¹¹⁶

On December 11, Cochran met with Indonesian Foreign Minister Subarjo, and Cochran decided to press Subarjo to choose Section 511 (a) since "particularly bad impression wld now be created if we obliged Indos commence paying for balance long

¹¹⁵ Stannard (1957) 40. Full text of the Mutual Security Act 1951 Section 511 can be found in Stannard (1957) Appendix I.

¹¹⁶ Feith (1958) 63, Airgram From the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, November 23, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 729-30

promised constabulary equipment." Moreover, Cochran argued that under Section 511(b), the secret agreement that Hatta had agreed had to be debated and might embarrass Hatta.¹¹⁷ After some minor changes in wording, on January 5, 1951, Sukiman, even though he was concerned about the expression of "free world" in the MSA, allowed Subarjo to sign the agreement, though without consultation with the entire cabinet. Learning of the acceptance, the State Department praised Cochran to "have been responsible for persuading the Indo Govt to take additional step toward alignment with West."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 18, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 266

¹¹⁸ Feith (1962) 198-9, Gardner (1997) 106, Kahin (1953) 192-3, Stannard (1957) 40, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, December 11, 1951, *FRUS*, Vol. 6 Part 1, 749-50, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, January 7, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 246-7, Telegram From the Secretary of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, January 8, 1951, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 248, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 11, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 258. Hayes, who completely disliked Cochran due to bureaucratic clashes between Cochran's embassy and Hayes' own ECA, recalled:

Unbeknownst to us, Cochran had arranged, before we got there, for (Indonesians) to get military aid of a kind, that is, constabulary equipment for their national police -- walkie talkies, maybe motorcycles, and stuff like that. It was not what you think of really as military aid, but it had been purchased and made available to them under the military aid legislation. The Foreign Minister said, "We're happy to sign this agreement which qualifies us for economic and technical aid, but we can't sign this business that we stand behind the free world, because we have an independent foreign policy. We're not lining up on either side of the cold war."

Cochran said, "Well, you can't get military aid if you don't sign it."

"We don't want military aid."

Then Cochran said, "You're already getting military aid."

"Oh, well, we don't need that. We can pay for whatever we want to buy." (It was a piddling amount, about two million dollars a year.)

And then Cochran said, "Do you want it announced that the United States has been forced to terminate its military aid to Indonesia which it has been supplying for nine months or so?"

"Do you mean that you'd say that we've been receiving military aid? Our cabinet doesn't know we've been receiving military aid."

I don't know whether the Cabinet knew it or not. But they were shocked that they were now going to be exposed as committed to the American side of the cold war, getting military aid. So, they made an alternative proposal, "Couldn't the wording go like this?"

Cochran said, "I don't have time to send it back to Washington, because by the time it would get there and anybody would approve it and get it back, it'd be too late for the deadline. We've got to announce at 12:01 on the morning of January 11 what our arrangement is."

He finally persuaded them they had to sign the agreement stating their support of the free world. But they said, "Well, we'll do this, but you've got to keep it absolutely secret."

Subarjo's agreement to sign Section 511(a) of the MSA should be seen from the perspective of Indonesian foreign policy as a whole. At that time, the negotiation between the Dutch and Indonesia on the matter of Irian Barat had deadlocked. On November 15, Subarjo complained to Cochran that the relationship with the Netherlands had worsened as the Dutch wanted to amend the Dutch constitution, and define Irian Barat as a part of the Netherlands' territory.¹¹⁹ On December 6, Sukarno asked Cochran for:

a rapid and satisfactory settlement of the Union Statute and Netherlands New Guinea issue. Otherwise, the President averred, the Indonesian Parliament would probably vote a unilateral denunciation of the union; if the present government opposed such a move, it undoubtedly would fall from power.

Cochran however told Sukarno that any unilateral abrogation would be seen negatively by the West, including Washington.¹²⁰ At this point, with both Australia and the Dutch adamant against Indonesia getting Irian Barat, it is highly possible that Subarjo believed that by agreeing to MSA Section 511 (a), Indonesia could persuade the United States, who held a neutral position, to back Indonesia and to prevent the Dutch amendment. Apparently Cochran had intimated that by signing Section 511 (a), the United States might help back Indonesia's position.¹²¹ Moreover, if Subarjo could represent this issue tactfully, especially by hiding the fact that Indonesia could choose Section 511 (b), he could persuade the Indonesian Parliament to ratify it.

I might say that although I was the head of the ECA mission and our program was obviously being negotiated about, naturally, he didn't tell me a thing about what was going on. Hayes (1975) 70-2

¹¹⁹ Telegram From the Ambassador in France (Bruce) to the Secretary of State, November 16, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 722

¹²⁰ Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Lacy) to the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Allison), December 7, 1951, *FRUS*, 1951, Vol. 6 Part 1, 746 n2

¹²¹ Roadnight (2002) 97, 214 n75

Unfortunately for him, the agreement was leaked to the press on January 29, 1952, and it was heavily condemned as a gross interference in Indonesian politics. Among Indonesians, Cochran earned the dubious honor of getting the sobriquet of "Indonesia's unofficial Governor General," running an American-dominated Indonesia. The protest grew to hurricane level when it became public that Burma, India, and Pakistan had entered into a similar agreement with the United States without having to adhere to Section 511(a).¹²²

At this point, with the Sukiman Government under fire, on February 12, the Masjumi Executive Council, under Natsir, decided that the Masjumi was unable to be responsible for the signing of the agreement and decided to withdraw the ministers from the cabinet.¹²³ Natsir's action was in concert with the PSI, which, having been excluded from the cabinet, had worked to undermine it and had persuaded Natsir's faction that a

¹²² Everett D. Hawkins, the ECA Program Planning Officer in Indonesia, and Samuel P. Hayes were the ones who leaked the information to the press and to some highly-placed Indonesians. Djuanda, a respected technocrat who was close to Cochran, told the latter that he was informed by one of his associates that "Hayes of ECA had let him know it was not necessary for Indo to give assurances under 511 a to have econ aid, assurances under 511 b sufficing therefore." While Cochran later reminded Hayes that his action "contributed to strengthening of opposition to govt and consequently might be contributing also to fall of Sukiman govt," Hayes ridiculed the idea and defended "his right to answer questions with respect to act of Congress under which his office operating." It is clear that Cochran's actions in trying to kick the ECA out had backfired: the ECA managed to put him in a very difficult spot by leaking this act.

While it is true that Burma, India, and Pakistan managed to get aid using Section 511 (b), all these countries had facilities for manufacturing their own arms and they could receive armaments from the United Kingdom. On the other hand, Indonesia did not have any arms factories and the United States was its only arms supplier. Without Section 511(a), it would be difficult for Indonesia to request arms from the United States. Feith (1958) 63, Gardner (1997) 106-7, Stannard (1957) 65, Kahin (1953) 194, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, February 12, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 259-61, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 11, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 258, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 19, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 268-9

¹²³ It is very likely that Natsir's decision to overthrow Sukiman's government was payback for the collapse of his old cabinet. Djuanda told Cochran that Roem had approached him several days before the crisis broke to sound him out on the prospect of a new cabinet. Djuanda further stated that "this crisis is purely one of internal politics maneuvered principally by Socialists." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 11, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 257

"business cabinet" would be a much better arrangement than Sukiman's Government, especially in preparation for the election.¹²⁴ On February 13, PNI followed suit and urged the Cabinet to resign. On February 21, Foreign Minister Subarjo resigned. The pressure mounted on the Cabinet, since Subarjo was seen as a scapegoat, but Sukiman was also seen as having some responsibility over the entire fiasco. On February 23, the entire cabinet returned its mandate to the President.¹²⁵

Compared to Natsir, Sukiman started from a much stronger political position even though the Cabinet was marred by a lack of coordination and unity. Unlike Natsir's cabinet, Sukiman had a much stronger powerbase in term of support from both the PNI and the Masjumi. The support from the latter was due to Natsir preferring a more conciliatory approach in letting the Cabinet work, due to his fear of the leftists being in the new cabinet.

¹²⁴ Feith (1958) 65

¹²⁵ Feith (1962) 204-5, Kahin (1953) 194, Noer (1960) 257-8. On February 21, Sukiman asked Cochran to replace Article 511(a) with Article 511(b), claiming that the Cabinet would not approve the agreement. Cochran, however, submitted Sukiman's request with the recommendation that it be denied because the United States would suffer tremendous risk of losing prestige should the act be passed through the hostile parliament. When the State Department asked whether the Indonesian government understood that it could opt for article 511(b), Cochran replied that he could not believe the department would risk such humiliation. On the evening of February 24, Sukiman informed Cochran that the cabinet had returned the mandate; nevertheless he planned to lobby in Parliament for an economic assistance agreement and suggested reverting to Article 511(b). Cochran replied, "I do not intend to ask my government to suffer further humiliation while Indonesian leaders are playing domestic politics and are not willing or able to defend the relationship with the United States." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 22, 1952-1954, *FRUS*, Vol. 12 Part 2, 270, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 11, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 274-5, Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Secretary of State, February 24, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 275. Hayes gleefully summed Cochran's final months in Indonesia:

Cochran, by bulldozing [the Sukiman Government] into this thing, lost a friendly government, and a much more neutralist government came in as a result.... We had this situation of a guy pushing the other government too far, and then the government isn't there anymore and a much less satisfactory government comes in.... [Cochran] was very unhappy, and he kind of withdrew and didn't have as much to do with things as he had had previously. Eventually, he retired from the Foreign Service and went to the International Monetary Fund. Hayes (1975) 75-6

The most important supporter, however, was President Sukarno. The reason was rather personal: Sukiman was a long-time associate of Sukarno and so were several principal figures in the Cabinet, including Mohammad Yamin, who invoked the Army's wrath by releasing 950 political prisoners without the Army's approval. The Cabinet went the extra mile to defer to Sukarno: from appointing Sukarno's associates, giving Sukarno more leeway to embark on speechmaking tours and less constraints in the political content of his speeches, to increasing the budget for the Presidential establishment. Sukarno returned the favor by backing the Cabinet in many difficult situations.¹²⁶

Sukarno's support was critical in backing Sukiman's controversial decisions. During the raid on the Communists in August, Sukarno declared in his Independence Day speech on August 17, 1951 that the government was determined to destroy armed bands regardless of ideology.¹²⁷ While Sukarno felt some discomfort with the policy of the cabinet, especially with its moderation on the issue of Irian Barat, where he condemned those "who forgot to move the masses for the settlement of the Irian question and thought that the question could be solved simply over the discussion table,"¹²⁸ he did not bother to push for drastic actions, unlike during Natsir's cabinet.

Particularly striking was that even though on January 15, 1951 Sukarno had declared, "if the Indonesian people are really united, I am convinced that West Irian will return to our fold before the dawn of January 1, 1952," and on November 10, 1951 he further called for Indonesians to make their own plans for the acquisition of Irian and not to rely on negotiations with the Dutch anymore, nothing happened at all and he did not

¹²⁶ Feith (1962) 214-5

¹²⁷ Brackman (1963) 156

¹²⁸ Feith (1962) 215

say anything to undermine the cabinet as the dawn of January 1, 1952 arrived.¹²⁹ He might have realized that there was no appetite for adventurous foreign policy among the moderate elites such as Natsir and Sukiman.¹³⁰ However, he might have also wanted to preserve the Sukiman cabinet, which was friendly toward him.

Sukarno's backing was also critical in pushing Sukiman to approve the MSA Section 511 (a). It was simply inconceivable that Sukiman would push such a policy without strong political support from Sukarno. Even though Sukiman belonged to the Masjumi, Natsir still held a great deal of influence in the Masjumi, and held a grudge for what he saw as Sukiman's betrayal to his previous cabinet, making the Masjumi's support unpredictable. The only significant power source was Sukarno, and Sukarno might have had a hand in approving the treaty.

It was also noticeable that while the entire country was thrown into an uproar over the controversial Section 511(a), there was only silence emanating from the Presidential Palace in Jakarta, which was located directly across from the Embassy of the United States. Considering that he had assumed most of the symbolism in Indonesian politics from the idea of nationalism to Irian Barat, it was inconceivable that Sukarno would stay silent when a Prime Minister was perceived as willingly surrendering Indonesia's independence in foreign policy!¹³¹ In a striking similarity with both Linggadjati and Renville, Sukarno abandoned the Cabinet when the floodwaters of public protest crept to

¹²⁹ Bone (1962) 112

¹³⁰ Brackman (1963) 154

¹³¹ On a telegram dated February 12, 1952, Cochran noted to Acheson that Sukarno told him it was to his regret that the Natsir government did not have the temerity to accept the American military aid program. Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, February 12, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 264

the doorway, and both the PNI and the Masjumi were obliged to repudiate the Mutual Security Act agreement.¹³²

Another consideration in pursuing a close relationship with the United States was economic. As noted above, the Korean War boom was ending as the United States cut the price for rubber. This led to only high-quality rubber-seeking buyers in the international market. At the time, rubber was produced mostly by large foreign-owned plantations. These plantations had a difficult time producing rubber due to the growing unrest among the laborers following Communist agitation, while the small plantations could not supply the market as they only produced low-quality rubber.¹³³ To make the situation worse, the Indonesian foreign exchange was depleted, squandered on expensive luxuries while government expenses soared thanks to the expansion of the civil service. Unlike the financially-disciplined Natsir government, the Sukiman government was much more generous in providing perks and favors to politically important figures. By early 1952 when the Cabinet fell, the number of civil servants in Indonesia was 571,243, compared with 144,974 in the Netherlands Indies in 1930, leading to Sjafruddin Prawiranegara's lamentation that the government service had become a charitable institution.¹³⁴

As economic crisis gripped the country, a new rebellion erupted in the middle of 1951, led by Kahar Muzakar, a former guerilla leader whose unit was supposed to be

¹³² One of the reasons for Sukarno's unwillingness to back Sukiman's cabinet on the MSA was the lack of gain that he could get from it. On February 12, Sukarno tried to persuade Cochran that the latter should use a "weapon" to effectively eliminate all misunderstanding. Cochran correctly guessed that Sukarno wanted a public statement by the United States Government favoring Indonesia's position over Irian Barat. Cochran, however, flatly refused to give that assurance. Feith (1958) 66, Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, February 12, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 263

¹³³ Justus M. Van der Kroef, "Indonesia's Economic Difficulties," *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Feb 1955) 18, Stannard (1957) 35. The price of rubber in the meantime had collapsed from 2.60 Straits-Dollar per pound in February 1951 to 73 Straits-Dollar cents at the end of September 1952. Feith (1962) 246

¹³⁴ Feith (1958) 8-9, Feith (1962) 219

incorporated into the National Reserve Corps on August 17, 1951. He ran away with more than two million rupiah in cash in addition to military equipment that had already been issued for his unit, and immediately pledged allegiance to the Darul Islam rebellion in West Java. The West Java Darul Islam rebellion had raged for years and in 1952 it cost the government at least Rp. 9,981,000. It was not surprising that these factors contributed to the 1952 budget estimation of a three billion rupiah deficit (1952: Rp. 11.40 = U\$1).¹³⁵ The Sukiman government was aiming to step up its military operation to clean out the rebel operation and at the same time planned to fix the economy. Thus, close cooperation with the United States was an attractive option for Sukiman, leading to the signing of the Mutual Security Act that broke the cabinet's back.

At this point, the primary question is how much freedom of choice Sukiman had during his tenure. Compared to Natsir, Sukiman had much greater leeway, thanks to Sukarno's political backing. The question of Irian Barat, however, remained a sticking point, forcing him to submit to the Section 511(a) in order to get the United States to back Indonesia's position. This was an innocent, yet fatal blunder that was used by the opponents of Sukiman's cabinet and Cochran's enemies to bring down the Cabinet,¹³⁶ though if the MSA could have led to the solution of the Irian Barat problem in Indonesia's favor, public reactions might have been very different.

Ironically, by the time the MSA became public knowledge, Irian Barat was no longer in the forefront of the public's consciousness and thus the Dutch Parliament's

¹³⁵ Bruce Glassburner, "Economic Policy-Making in Indonesia, 1950-7" *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Part 1, (Jan 1962) 124, eith (1958) 10-11, Feith (1962) 213-4

¹³⁶ Cochran bitterly reported to the State Department that "Sukiman govt might fall result accumulation domestic factors, but effort wld be made tie crisis to one internatl problems, such as Hague or Tokyo negots or charges of violation independent policy. Chance struck our MSA issue." Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, February 18, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 266

approval of the incorporation of Irian Barat into the Kingdom of the Netherlands on February 15, 1952, which was one of the reasons why Subarjo agreed to the Section 511(a) in the first place, received no attention in Indonesia. In light of the Cabinet crisis and the repudiation of the MSA, Washington no longer felt imperative to find a solution to the problem and preferred to maintain formal neutrality.¹³⁷

The fallout from the collapse of Sukiman's cabinet was the growing disenchantment of Indonesia and the United States with each other. From the Indonesian side, there were growing suspicions about the intent of the United States. Mochtar Lubis, a journalist who was among the first to publish the Mutual Security Act agreement remembered:

I received the news, as I recall from a source in the Department of Foreign Affairs. I reported it immediately to Natsir. Natsir said, "This is very bad; we cannot accept it." Cochran's action affected the attitudes of many Indonesians. Before, the status of the United States was very high. It seemed to embody our ideals of freedom. When this occurred, my generation and that of Natsir were shocked. We became very suspicious of the United States.¹³⁸

From this point, successive Indonesian governments would take pains to distance themselves from the United States and to bolster their foreign policy credentials by pushing for an independent foreign policy in order to prevent the opposition from accusing them of being too close to the Western bloc.

On the other hand, the Truman Administration pondered whether future Indonesian governments would ever accept security agreements that Washington regarded as essential. There was disappointments that Indonesia was not a true friend in this relationship, especially after the United States had bent backward to accommodate

¹³⁷ Roadnight (2002) 98-9

¹³⁸ Gardner (1997) 106-7

Indonesia's interests. Cochran's bitter telegram on April 9 probably reflected the United States' attitude toward Indonesia from that point on:

For almost four years I have taken responsibility of vouching for good intentions and sympathetic attitude moderate Indo leaders. I have obtained important financial and other aid for them on what amounted to my personal guarantee. I have "covered" their secret missions to US for security training and police equipment. I have assisted in obtaining priorities for exports to Indo of type accorded our allies in arms.

For their part, Indos have failed to make any move toward ratifying bilateral ECA agreement negotiated Oct 1950. They threw out Sukiman govt because it gave those assurances required by US legislation to permit Indo receive type assistance it actually needs. They took this action in spite our having made every modification or permitted every interpretation requested by Indo Govt. They are now threatening do business with Commies if we do not meet their trade demands as well as terms on which they willing accept our taxpayer money.

Believe our attitude henceforth must be absolute firm. Indos must be brought to understand that it now devolves upon them to show their good intentions toward us. Through their acts they must convince us we have been justified in adopting generous policy we have consistently followed in past and that this course shld be pursued in future.¹³⁹

Several months later, on September 3, 1952, Cochran further stressed that the United States should not be "weak and indulgent and incur further disrespect on part of Indo, but to be firm and demand that full respect of which US as great power most friendly to Indo is entitled."¹⁴⁰ Unknowingly, this would be the foundation of the United States policy toward Indonesia from this point on.

¹³⁹ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, April 9, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 281

¹⁴⁰ Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, September 3, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 313

4.5. Prime Minister Wilopo (April 1952-June 1953)

The tenure of Prime Minister Wilopo was a particularly significant point in the constitutional period. The split between the PNI and the Masjumi became more pronounced and the Masjumi itself faced an internal crisis when an influential organization within it split and created its own party, the Nahdlatul Ulama. In the meantime, Aidit was steering the Communist party toward a new direction of cooperation with the rest of the political parties, thus managing to negate the effects of Sukiman's purge to some degree. In addition, as mentioned above, in this period the intra-Army tension reached a boiling point, which led to a demand from the technocrat-oriented officers to dissolve the Parliament in the October 17 crisis. The October 17 crisis itself would hasten the preparations for the national election, which had been discussed but never really seriously considered by the Parliament. In turn, the preparations for the election renewed the fear among the non-Javanese of Javanese domination of the central government.

This period would also mark Sukarno's further consolidation of power, as he split his political rivals, and concentrated political capital on his hands, paving the way for his complete political dominance over Indonesia. These internal developments would have a significant impact on Indonesian politics for years to come. The seeds that led to the collapse of the Constitutional Period and the political struggle during the Guided Democracy period of 1957-1965 were planted in this period. Thus, while there were very few achievements in foreign policy in this cabinet, the massive importance of this time period merits a through discussion.

In forming the Wilopo cabinet, both the Masjumi and the PNI were represented respectively by Prawoto (a supporter of Natsir) and Sidik. They received a presidential mandate on March 1, 1952. While they both agreed on the cabinet program and the next Prime Minister, who would be Mr. Wilopo from the PNI, they were unable to agree on the candidates for ministers, especially the interior minister, as this position would play a significant role in the election (with responsibility for the allocation of governors, regents, etc.). When they deadlocked, Sukarno appointed Wilopo as a formateur. To both the PNI and Sukarno's surprise, Wilopo formed a "business cabinet," with unity and a common policy orientation even at the risk of uncertain party and parliamentary support.¹⁴¹

Sukarno was very much displeased with the new government. For one, Sukarno suspected Wilopo represented the PNI's liberal wing, had close relations with the PSI and was susceptible to "Sjahrir-mindedness."¹⁴² Wilopo's choice of the members of his cabinet was also not in Sukarno's favor: many of them had come into conflict with him during Natsir's tenure.¹⁴³ In an unprecedented step, President Sukarno said that he would wait and come to a decision after discussing the matter with Vice President Hatta, who was then out of Jakarta. Even though within two days Sukarno approved the list, presidential displeasure was evident.¹⁴⁴ He was powerless to either prevent the formation of the Wilopo cabinet or to put in any of his supporters inside the cabinet, unlike the Sukiman

¹⁴¹ Feith (1962) 227-28.

¹⁴² Pringgodigdo, Chief President Sukarno's Secretariat, possibly under approval from Sukarno, privately told Cochran that Sukarno was not happy over the new cabinet since the cabinet included Mukarto Notowidigdo, who was seen as too young. There was also unrest in the PNI over what it considered to be "Wilopo's stupidity in having been outmaneuvered by pro-Socialist Masjumi and Sjahrir." Brackman (1963) 173, van der Kroef (1965) 58. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, April 7, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 1, 279

¹⁴³ Feith (1962) 244

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 229

period. Many Indonesian intellectuals interpreted the cabinet as evidence of Sukarno's declining influence, and believed that it indicated hope for a "new atmosphere" in political affairs.¹⁴⁵ It was wishful thinking, and Sukarno would later disprove it with vengeance. However, he could not do so without the rapid political developments during this period, in which he became a catalyst to inflate events into major issues that would pull the carpet out from under his political enemies.

The formation of Wilopo's cabinet caused a deep split within the Masjumi. The Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), a large Muslim organization which together with the Muhammadiyah formed a majority of the Masjumi, expressed its displeasure over the cabinet, especially as the new Minister of Religion came from the Muhammadiyah. The NU always believed that the post of the Minister of Religion should be reserved for a member of this organization. Before the creation of the cabinet, they had lobbied to have that position. This disappointment in turn further aggravated the ill will of the NU itself about its powerlessness inside the Masjumi.¹⁴⁶

It seemed that Sukarno had a role in this entire dispute. Even before the selection of both Prawoto and Sidik, probably around the end of February or early March, Sukarno had a conversation with Kiai Haji Abdul Wahab, one of the leaders of NU. While the content of the conversation was unknown, there was a great deal of speculation that they were discussing the formation of the new cabinet.¹⁴⁷ The fact that both of them shared a

¹⁴⁵ Brackman (1963) 173, Feith (1962) 230

¹⁴⁶ The Masjumi Executive Council's intention was to nominate someone from Muhammadiyah because they believed that not only did Muhammadiyah have superior candidates to those proposed by the NU, but they also intended to rotate the ministry among major Islamic organizations. Greg Fealy, "Wahab Chasbullah, Traditionalism and the Political Development of Nahdlatul Ulama," In Greg Barton and Greg Fealy, *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1996) 22

¹⁴⁷ Noer (1960) 260, Feith (1962) 235

dislike of Natsir, and that Sukarno and Wahab had enjoyed warm personal relations from the early 1940s, made Sukarno's influence on Wahab critical.¹⁴⁸

In turn, Wahab's position was supported by the Sukiman faction – either out of ethnic solidarity or because the NU was a close ally of the Sukiman faction in Masjumi, and of course Sukiman was close to Sukarno. On March 9, Abdul Wahab and Jusuf Wibisono, a prominent Masjumi leader from the Sukiman faction, declared that they desired Sukiman to be the new Prime Minister. The former also declared the NU's interest in getting the post of Minister of Religion. Moreover, Abdul Wahab also emphasized that the NU would review its affiliation with Masjumi should its wishes be denied. Hamka, a prominent leader in the Muhammadiyah, in response to Wahab's demand, noted that as the NU had held the Minister of Religion post three times already, it was time to have a member of the Muhammadiyah in the position.¹⁴⁹

On March 20, the NU as an organization further upped the ante by stressing again the wish of NU to have an NU leader in the post of the Minister of Religion, with the threat that the organization would fight using any means to see its desire fulfilled. On March 23, Jusuf Wibisono met with Wilopo. He intimated that the President wished to have him as Vice-Premier, even though Wilopo had nominated Prawoto to fill the Vice-Premiership.¹⁵⁰ After heated internal squabbles within the Masjumi, Kiai Wahab contacted Wilopo personally and submitted all the wishes of the NU. The Masjumi Executive Council regarded these as a rejection of possible compromise within the party,

¹⁴⁸ As noted in Chapter 2, they had met back when Sukarno was still in Surabaya, living under Tjokroaminoto. Fealy (1996) 27-8

¹⁴⁹ Noer (1960) 262-3. It is important to note that Sukiman and top members of his group were members of Muhammadiyah, so what happened here was a split between the Sukarno-backed Javanese members of Masjumi and the Sumatran Natsir's group. See Feith (1958) 74

¹⁵⁰ Noer (1960) 266-7

and ignored the NU in submitting the list of possible Ministers of Religion. In late April, in an NU congress in Palembang, the NU decided to secede from Masjumi and create a new political party. Only the NU's delegates from Sumatra opposed the split.¹⁵¹

In analyzing the split between the Masjumi and the NU, one cannot help but wonder whether the Masjumi underestimated the potential of the NU to be a serious hurdle to its political goals. As would be proven during the election of 1955, the NU in fact would split the Muslim voters by carrying Central and East Java. In the end, the NU would end up as the third largest party in Indonesia, causing political problems for the Masjumi, whose leaders expected to win the election.¹⁵²

However, without the benefit of hindsight, the split itself was actually welcomed. The reformist Masjumi leadership under Natsir had grown disenchanted with the NU, especially in respect to what they perceived as the abuse of power in the Ministry of Religion. The poster child of this abuse was the mismanagement of the funds for transportation for Mecca pilgrims in 1951 by Wachid Hasjim, an NU Religious Affairs Minister, causing a personal disagreement between the former and both Natsir and Sjafruddin.¹⁵³

In addition, as noted earlier, the NU was not known as a party of intellectuals but as a party of kiais, traditional religious leaders.¹⁵⁴ Very few people among Jakartan elites took the organization seriously. Even after the split, Isa Anshary, a member of the Masjumi from a radical Islamic movement, sarcastically asked Kiai Wahab whether the

¹⁵¹ Feith (1962) 236

¹⁵² Herbert Feith, *The Indonesian Elections of 1955* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1957) 58

¹⁵³ Brackman (1963) 173, Feith (1962) 235

¹⁵⁴ In a conversation with Geertz, a young modernist Muslim remarked that, "NU has all the kijajis (kiai)." Clifford Geertz, *Religion of Java* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) 158

NU had enough capable people to involve itself in politics.¹⁵⁵ In 1955, as the election loomed on the horizon, Sjahrir was recalled to have agreed:

A leader of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* had come to him to ask if he would not place a few intellectuals in his group at the disposal of the NU, which had practically no cadre. It was a possibility, for acquiring influence.... "But I couldn't help him; my people find it much too boring to deal with people of that level," Sjahrir added cheerfully.¹⁵⁶

To further confirm Natsir and the Muhammadiyah's steadfastness over the entire NU affair, the feared secession of the Sukiman faction from the Masjumi failed to materialize, and the Sukiman faction remained in the Masjumi. Moreover, only seven parliamentary members of the Masjumi defected to the new NU.¹⁵⁷ Thus, in the short term, the secession was actually favorable for Natsir. His position inside the Masjumi was much stronger than before, while Sukiman's power dropped.

The secession of the NU from Masjumi was welcomed by Aidit's communist party. Having weathered Sukiman's crackdown, Aidit had rethought the overall strategy of the Communist party and decided to integrate the Communist party into the power structure. On April 22, the PKI declared that they would support Wilopo. This was followed by the SOBSI's announcement on April 30 to suspend all strike actions to support the government. Other PKI-dominated labor groups followed suit. On April 29,

¹⁵⁵ In a typical traditionalist fashion, Kiai Wahab sarcastically replied:

"If I am going to buy a new car, the car dealer certainly will not ask, "Can you drive, sir?" That is an unnecessary question, as even if I can't drive a car, I can put an advertisement looking for a driver. I am certain there will be many prospective drivers will line up on my doorstep!" Andree Feillard, *NU vis-à-vis Negara: Pencarian Isi, Bentuk dan Makna* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1999) 46

¹⁵⁶ Rudolf Mrazek, *Sjahrir: Politics and Exile in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 1994) 432

¹⁵⁷ Feith (1962) 236-7. Although Sukiman himself was under fire over the NU's decision to leave the Masjumi. Noer argued that Sukiman was present during the Palembang Congress and he was given the chance to speak before the Congress. However, Sukiman refused on the grounds that the NU was a sovereign organization. Only after the voting did he speak, urging Muslims to cooperate with each other in spite of the withdrawal of the NU. See Noer (1960) 271

the Public Works Workers' Union ended a strike in Central Java and six days after that a SOBSI-affiliated oil workers' union called off a threatened strike. On July 24, Aidit stated directly that the PKI supported the Wilopo cabinet.¹⁵⁸

The charm offensive kept building. The PKI also wooed the Masjumi, the PNI, and Sukarno himself. Both the Masjumi and Sukarno proved to be tough nuts to crack,¹⁵⁹ but the PNI was willing to listen. The PNI had grown hostile to the Wilopo cabinet, even though Wilopo himself was a member of the PNI. The inclusion of the PSI in the government was an irritant.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, many of Wilopo's policies were seen as being hostile to the PNI, especially his insistence on economic reforms and military rationalization. Moreover, among the leaders of the PNI, there was a genuine fear of the Masjumi's domination in the upcoming election, the date of which was not specified yet, but was being planned by Wilopo. In fact, the biggest question in Jakarta was not who would win the election, but how big the Masjumi's plurality would be. Would it be able to govern by itself and then create an Islamic state?¹⁶¹ Since the PKI at that time only had 7,910 members (March 1952), the PNI probably assumed that it could dominate the PKI. Moreover, Sukarno stood between the PKI and complete political domination of Indonesia.

In the beginning, Sukarno was not at all appreciative of the PKI's overtures. The PKI had heaped abuse on him since the failure of the Madiun coup of 1948, and as many

¹⁵⁸ Brackman (1963) 174-5, Feith (1962) 238-9

¹⁵⁹ Aidit sent Alimin, an elder statesman of the PKI, to meet Haji Agus Salim, an elder statesman of Masjumi, much to the latter's amusement. Both of them had not spoken to each other since the 1920s. Still, Salim rejected Alimin's overtures. Brackman (1963) 175

¹⁶⁰ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 80

¹⁶¹ Feith (1958) 145, van der Kroef (1965) 59

of his former friends and enemies knew, he was not someone to easily forgive slights.¹⁶² As late as May 20, in light of the PNI's rapprochement with the PKI, Sukarno urged caution and warned against trust, "lest one party not be sincere in its concern for national unity and cause another Madiun affair" – a direct slap to the PKI.¹⁶³ However, Aidit was undaunted and ratcheted up the charm offensive. On May 23, 1952, the thirty-second anniversary of the PKI's founding, Aidit went further:

At a plenary session, Aidit called for a national front in all areas of Indonesian life and pledged that the Communists would not "interfere in internal problems of other parties." Alimin (one of the founders of PKI) then addressed the meeting and voiced the slogans "Long Live Sukarno! Long Live the PKI!" The audience gasped, unprepared. With Aidit's visible encouragement, Alimin repeated the catch phrases. There was a pause, followed by shouts from the delegates of "Long Live Sukarno! Long Live the PKI!" The demonstration, in Communist language, was tempestuous. The new line was launched.¹⁶⁴

Jakarta political elite was shocked. Aidit went further by ordering the party to display Sukarno's picture with those of Marx and Lenin at meetings and rallies.¹⁶⁵ Sukarno was elevated from the enemy of Communists to the "national rallying point of all true anti-imperialistic forces... a kind of symbol of the PKI's own multi-structured united front."¹⁶⁶ Thus began the political cooperation between the PKI and Sukarno that would last until 1965, in which Sukarno would use the PKI as a propaganda tool to project his larger-than-life figure and to balance his political enemies. In return, the PKI would receive presidential protection. Brushing aside concerns of the growing strength of

¹⁶² A short list of common insults from the PKI to Sukarno: "a collaborator with the Japanese," "a false Marxist with both Sjahrir and Tan Malaka! (one could only wonder whether Sukarno was more offended with the term "false Marxist" or with the fact that he was associated with two of his most hated enemies)," "stooge of American-Dutch imperialism," and condemnation of the pomp and luxury of his palace and the large number of his cars. Feith (1962) 239, van der Kroef (1965) 59

¹⁶³ Brackman (1963) 175, Feith (1962) 244

¹⁶⁴ Brackman (1963) 175-6

¹⁶⁵ Feith (1962) 239

¹⁶⁶ Van der Kroef (1965) 59

the Communists, Sukarno assumed that he could easily thwart any Communist effort to seize power simply because he was Sukarno.¹⁶⁷

These two major political developments overshadowed Wilopo's assumption of the office of Prime Minister. In the meantime, he also faced major bureaucratic and economic crises. To his chagrin, Wilopo found that no budgets had been set for 1951 and 1952.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, as the Korean War ended and exports collapsed, a huge budget deficit loomed: the government faced a prospect of a four billion Rupiah deficit (1951: Rp. 11.40 = U\$1).¹⁶⁹ In addition, the year also marked a disappointing rice harvest, forcing the government to import 600-700,000 tons of rice and large quantities of wheat in 1952. This food import cost Indonesia 20% of its foreign exchange. With the population expanding at a rate of 800,000 annually, these developments were a recipe for economic disaster.¹⁷⁰ The cabinet had no other choice but to pursue an austerity program and cut back on the excesses of the Sukiman administration which had been funded by the Rp. 1.3 billion surplus from the Korean War boom that was gone in 1952.¹⁷¹

In the meantime, Washington was cautious about the Wilopo cabinet, believing it to be leftist, though it changed its mind by September. It also worried about the fact that the PKI supported the cabinet, seeing the PKI's move as geared toward increasing

¹⁶⁷ Feith (1962) 245. Still, this did not mean that Sukarno blindly trusted the PKI or even lowered his guard. On the contrary, he remained wary of their agenda. On May 1, 1954, Pringodigdo privately told U.S. Ambassador Cumming that Sukarno "was leaning more and more toward US, partly because of real liking for Americans and American ways and partly because of distrust of the PKI activities. Cumming stated that he doubt that Pringodigdo made this approach without foreknowledge of Sukarno, even though Cumming was also wary to be dragged into the "confused currents of Indonesian politics." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, May 1, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 424-5

¹⁶⁸ Roadnight (2002) 101

¹⁶⁹ I.N. Soebagijo, *Wilopo 70 Tahun* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1979) 120

¹⁷⁰ Boyd R. Compton, "Indonesia: The Continuing Revolution," *American Universities Field Staff* (December 1953), Brackman (1963) 174

¹⁷¹ Feith (1962) 247

pressure on the new government to resist United States aid. Cochran corrected this misperception, however, by pointing out to the State Department that the PKI's support was more of a tactical decision.¹⁷²

Regardless of the PKI's assurances and the early support from both the Masjumi and the PNI for his cabinet, Wilopo took no chances. In May, he immediately requested permission to replace the controversial Mutual Security Act with the less binding *Technical Cooperation Administration* (TCA) over Cochran's objections,¹⁷³ while trying to ameliorate the United States' fear about the PKI by stating in an interview with *the Christian Science Monitor*:

A strong and stable Indonesia from within is our big contribution not only to our own welfare but to world peace as well.... Indonesia must direct all her efforts toward the solution of home affairs. I cannot emphasize this point too often. Foreign policy is secondary.... MSA is not the most important aspect in the good relations between the United States and Indonesia.... The issue has become magnified out of proportion. [As for Communism] we do not consider Communism in Indonesia a problem today.... The Indonesian people find little appeal in Communism. On the contrary, their way of life actively opposes it. The overwhelming majority of the people in this country are non-Communist and would combat any attempts to impose Communist ideology on them.¹⁷⁴

While Indonesia got what it wanted, there were still sticking points in the relationship between the United States and Indonesia. First, under TCA, the Indonesian allotment for U.S. assistance dropped sharply, falling between three and five million

¹⁷² Roadnight (2002) 100

¹⁷³ According to a participant, the meetings between Wilopo and Cochran were not particularly pleasant – even though later it was said that the relationship between Wilopo and Cochran remained friendly even after this incident:

In one of the meetings, Ambassador Merle Cochran in a shrill tone stated that Foreign Minister Subarjo's note to him constituted a binding international agreement and changing its content would have adverse effects.... "This is a heavy blow to my career as an ambassador," Cochran said, adding that he would no longer have the confidence of his government and should therefore resign as ambassador.

"That's entirely up to you," the Prime Minister replied, "but don't do it yet... later after you have obtained your government's agreement for technical and economic aid under the TCA." Gardner (1997) 109, Soebagijo (1979) 128

¹⁷⁴ Brackman (1963) 174

annually for fiscal years 1953 and 1954. This was seen as retaliation by the United States for Indonesia's rejection of the MSA, even though the cuts were part of a general budgetary slash in Congress unrelated to the Indonesian situation.¹⁷⁵ Second, the falling commodity prices were also seen as another plot by Washington to exploit the Indonesian economy.¹⁷⁶ Third was the problem of Irian Barat, brought again to the forefront after the collapse of Sukiman's cabinet and after the election in the Netherlands on June 1952 that brought the Drees cabinet to power. In September, Drees declared that he saw no value to resuming discussions with Indonesia about the status of Irian Barat. On November 10, 1952, Sukarno demanded a tougher stand in the struggle for Irian Barat.¹⁷⁷

In the meantime, the Wilopo Cabinet experienced a major crisis arising from the effects of the rationalization program on the Army. The Army, the size of which was already reduced to 200,000, was to be reduced further by the end of 1952 through the gradual retirement of 80,000 soldiers who could not meet minimal health and educational standards. As noted above, the PETA group was not at all enthusiastic over this rationalization: they correctly assumed that most of the cuts would come from their group, thus weakening their position vis-à-vis the Dutch-trained technocrat officers.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ An editorial in *Siasat*, the PSI's newspaper, on September 14, 1952 declared, "This aid is insulting, the more if we compare it to the obligations and commitments it imposes on us." Stannard (1956) 50-1

¹⁷⁶ Roadnight (2002) 101. To the United States credit, it had not opposed Indonesia's attempts to stabilize the price of rubber, which had been declining after the end of the Korean War. The United States had also purchased 18,000-20,000 tons of tin annually from Indonesia since 1952. As Indonesia's tin production was 34,000 tons annually and it accounted for 10% of its foreign exchange earnings, it helped support the Indonesian economy. Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay), August 27, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 378-9

¹⁷⁷ Feith (1962) 244, 287

¹⁷⁸ Feith (1962) 250. McVey stated that the final tally of the Army was planned to be 100,000 men, a 50% cut in the number of personnel. McVey (1971) 145

President Sukarno was also offended by the entire rationalization program, especially after the Army closed the Chandradimuka Military Academy at Bandung in order to have funds available to set up a new staff college. The closure was seen as personal: the academy was an ideological refresher school for Army officers where many of Sukarno's associates in the Peta occupied positions of leadership. This action was tantamount to an attempt to reduce Sukarno's influence in the Army. Furthermore, Sukarno used to lecture on *Pancasila* (the state ideology) there and he saw his lectures as an important counterbalance against the military's growing technocratic tendencies (or, rather, the PSI ideas).¹⁷⁹ This brought Sukarno into conflict with Abdul Haris Nasution, the Army Chief of Staff.

Supported by Sukarno, Colonel Bambang Supeno, the former head of the military academy and a distant relative of Sukarno, was agitating to have Nasution replaced. The Army swiftly reacted: on July 12, in a special meeting of senior officers, chaired by Colonel Gatot Subroto, Supeno was reprimanded for acting improperly, disregarding military hierarchy, and violating the officers' code. In addition, he was also condemned for making contact with the President and party politicians to rally support against Nasution. As tempers rose, Supeno walked out.¹⁸⁰

The next day, Supeno wrote a letter to the Defense Minister, the Prime Minister, and the Defense Section of Parliament, declaring that he no longer had any faith in his superiors, rejecting the Army's general policy and more importantly, alleging that they had lost the revolutionary spirit. Meanwhile, Sultan Hamengkubuwono (the Defense

¹⁷⁹ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 81-2

¹⁸⁰ A.H. Nasution, "17 Oktober 1952" In *Wilopo 70 Tahun* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1979) 359, Feith (1962) 250, Noer (1960) 272, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 82

Minister), Major General Simatupang, and Colonel Nasution met the President personally to discuss this issue. The Sultan made it clear that the government accepted Nasution's reforms, which had received backing from every cabinet since 1948. Simatupang seconded the Sultan and complained that interference from the politicians hampered his ability to carry out his duties properly. Nasution also offered his resignation should he no longer enjoy the confidence of either Sukarno or the Army leaders.

While Sukarno made it clear that his sympathies lay with Supeno, he did not accept Nasution's resignation. However, the meeting grew heated over the references to Sukarno's own role in the entire affair, especially between Sukarno and Simatupang, and it almost grew into a shouting match. The meeting ended without any agreement and Simatupang wrote a letter to the cabinet explaining the position of the Army's leadership. On July 17, 1952, Colonel Nasution suspended Supeno. He also wrote a letter to the cabinet, accusing the President and other politicians of working actively with Supeno and his allies in the Army to ruin him.¹⁸¹

Nasution incurred Sukarno's wrath with his suspension over Supeno, and Sukarno refused to sign the letter of suspension, which caused a problem with the legality of the suspension.¹⁸² The entire affair spiraled out of control as Sukarno and Supeno's allies in the Parliament started to interfere. Zainul Baharuddin, a strong parliamentary critic of the Army leadership, assembled the Defense Section of the Parliament to discuss the letter. Beginning on 28 July, four secret and seventeen public sessions were held, criticizing virtually every aspect, major and trivial, of military policies. There were criticisms over

¹⁸¹ Feith (1962) 251, Legge (2003) 287, Nasution (1979) 361, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985)82-3, Sundhausen (1982) 66

¹⁸² Manai Sophiaan, "Wilopo dan Peristiwa 17 Oktober" In *Wilopo 70 Tahun* (Jakarta: Gunung Agung, 1979) 294, Nasution (1979) 362

the Army's rationalization plan and modernization bid. The Parliament claimed that Indonesia could not in the near future fight anything but a guerilla war, thus it needed an army that "close to the people" – an implicit rebuke of the Army in support of Supeno's claim that the Army lacked revolutionary spirit.¹⁸³

After two months of relentless criticism, on September 24, Zainul Baharuddin tabled a motion expressing "no confidence in the policy adopted by the Defense Minister to end the conflicts within the armed forces," though the motion was modified on the PKI's initiative on October 10 to remove the direct reference to the Sultan, who was held in high esteem in Central Java, in order to make the motion attractive to the PNI. The end result called for "reformation and reorganization of the leadership of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces."¹⁸⁴ While the real purpose of the motion was to break the power of Ali Budiardjo, Simatupang, and Nasution, the Sultan insisted that he would treat it as a vote of no confidence in him, causing the PSI, the Protestant Party Parkindo and the Catholic Party to insist that they would withdraw their ministers should the Sultan resign. A cabinet crisis was looming on the horizon.¹⁸⁵

Unwilling to see another cabinet crisis just several months after the collapse of the Sukiman cabinet, on October 13 Kasimo of the Catholic Party, backed by Natsir, tried to defeat Baharuddin's motion by giving a countermotion asking the government to establish a state commission to investigate the entire debate objectively and to present within three months a concrete suggestion. The countermotion was supported by Natsir's Masjumi. The PNI, however, refused to sign it, demanding a stronger motion. On October 14, the

¹⁸³ Feith (1962) 251, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 83

¹⁸⁴ Feith (1962) 255, Sundhaussen (1985) 67

¹⁸⁵ Feith (1962) 255

PNI with the NU sponsored the Manai Sophiaan motion, which was identical to the Kasimo motion except for the added possibility of the dismissals of the controversial top figures.¹⁸⁶

In the meantime, the Army was seething with anger over what they saw as an unwelcome parliamentary intrusion in the Army's matters. There was fear that the Parliament could put a motion on every single officer in the Army at their leisure – a very dangerous precedent from the Army's point of view.¹⁸⁷ The Army also felt that the attacks from the Parliament were unfair, particularly on the rationalization plan. The only ones who were discriminated against in the entire rationalization plan were those who refused to undergo further training. Furthermore, the Army was underpaid and under-equipped – TNI soldiers earned 40 percent less in 1951 than KNIL personnel in 1949, the per capita expenditure on housing amounted to 20 percent of what had been spent for KNIL soldiers in 1949, and only 60 percent of all weapons were battle-ready. In 1952, the defense budget of Rp. 2.8 billion which comprised a third of the national budget was halved. They were patient enough not to demand higher budgets and even willing to cut their size to conform with Wilopo's austerity's policy, which contrasted with what they saw as the politicians' extravagant and wasteful lifestyle.¹⁸⁸

In addition, the Army was outraged at the ways that the Army "dirty linen" was being aired in the Parliament, since Zainul Baharuddin was using parliamentary privilege to read classified documents of the Army. They also had not forgotten how in late 1947

¹⁸⁶ Feith (1962) 256-7, Noer (1960) 273-5, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 83. In his recollection, Manai Sophiaan claimed that his motion was a middle road approach between what he saw as a very lenient Kasimo motion and a very harsh Baharuddin motion. Sophiaan (1979) 297

¹⁸⁷ Nasution (1979) 362

¹⁸⁸ Brackman (1963) 178, Feith (1962) 261, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 85, Sundhaussen (1982) 69

this same person had attacked the revered General Sudirman and the Army. Moreover, they felt incensed at the fact that the PKI, which had backstabbed the beleaguered Republic in the dark days of 1948, was allowed to attack the party in the Parliament – in addition to the unelected Dutch collaborators from the Dutch-created federal states which comprised two-third of the Parliament having the nerve to sit and judge the Army!¹⁸⁹ In comparing what they had sacrificed and what they saw as politicians' callousness to Indonesia's dire straits, there was a growing dissatisfaction with this Parliament.

Jakarta was heavy with tension in the last days before the voting. On October 11, all seven territorial commanders met and agreed to stay in Jakarta to wait for further developments. From October 14, the Parliament building was heavily guarded by military guards, and Zainul Baharuddin spoke of the dangers of a military coup. On October 15, voting on which motion to be passed commenced after the Sultan gave his final reply. In the reply, the government accepted the Kasimo motion but the Sultan did not mention the Sophian motion at all.

Apparently in the afternoon, in a meeting with the PNI executive leadership, Wilopo managed to persuade the majority of them to withdraw the Sophian motion. He proceeded to inform the Sultan, who then anticipated the withdrawal of the Sophian motion. The motion, however, was not withdrawn. At this critical moment, Sukarno threw a wrench in Wilopo's plans. On October 15, he discreetly invited Iskaq and Sunario, top leaders of the PNI, and pressured them to support Sophiaan's motion.

¹⁸⁹ Feith (1962) 256, Nasution (1979) 364, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 85

Nobody would learn of this matter until much later.¹⁹⁰ Nasution had slighted him and he would not let it pass unpunished. On October 16, the Sophiaan motion passed 91 to 54 while the Baharuddin motion was defeated 80 to 39.¹⁹¹

The President had outfoxed Wilopo and the leaders of the Army. The enraged Sultan almost resigned. He made it clear that he regarded attacks on the leadership of his ministry as attacks on himself.¹⁹² Natsir reflected the general feeling of helplessness among the political elites when he said, "I don't know what will happen now."¹⁹³

The next day on October 17, 1952, Jakarta faced a major demonstration. At eight in the morning, a crowd of approximately 5,000 appeared, claiming that they were representing regular people and demanding the dissolution of the Parliament, gathered outside the Parliament building before moving to the Presidential Palace. By the time they arrived in front of the palace, the crowd had grown into approximately 30,000 strong. During the demonstrations, the Army moved in. Troops were posted at strategic points around the capital, and there was a huge demonstration in front of both the Presidential palace and the Parliament building.

When the President came out to address the demonstration, he saw before him two tanks, several armored cars, and four cannons, with some of the cannons and machine guns trained at the President. Undaunted, Sukarno addressed the crowd, rebuked them and soothed them, and promised to hold an election as soon as possible. He also told them that he could not dissolve the Parliament because it would bring to naught what

¹⁹⁰ On October 18, Pringgogidgo informed Cochran that Iskaq was critical in overruling the agreement made by Wilopo. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 20, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 332-3

¹⁹¹ Feith (1962) 257-8

¹⁹² Possibly to justify himself, Manai Sophiaan later claimed that he had discussed his motion with both Wilopo and the Sultan and both of them agreed with his motion. Sophiaan (1979) 297

¹⁹³ Feith (1958) 120

the people had fought so long and hard to win, and he told them to leave. In an uncanny resemblance to the Ikeda Affair on September 19, 1945, the crowd cheered and left. Once again, Sukarno showed that he could control the masses.¹⁹⁴

After Sukarno addressed the crowd, senior military officers arrived to meet him in two groups at 10:15 AM and 10:30 AM. There were seventeen of them altogether, including five of the seven territorial commanders, came to see him, demanding that the President dissolve the Parliament. Their principal spokesman, the Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant Colonel Sutoko, told Sukarno that the group saw the existing unrepresentative Parliament as the root of the country's political instability. Colonel M. Simbolon, the North Sumatra commander, spoke of the danger of political interference in the Army and deplored the fact that former collaborators with the Dutch in Parliament were lecturing the Army about patriotism. Both of them spoke with tears in their eyes.¹⁹⁵ Colonel A. E. Kawilarang, the commander of the Siliwangi Division of West Java, noted the explosive state of feelings among his soldiers and the danger of catastrophic consequences if there were further provocations. The President, however, was unwilling to commit himself and the officers left the President without getting anything. Later that day, the military further arrested six members of Parliament, including Sukiman, and imposed curfews. In three days, however, these people were freed and the Army activities were returned to normal level.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Feith (1962) 258-9

¹⁹⁵ Pringgodigdo noted that the "scene was tearful with army leaders appealing Sukarno who they understood had at outset championed cause their PNI opponents." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 20, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 334

¹⁹⁶ Feith (1962) 259-61, Legge (2003) 283-4, Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 87, Sundhaussen (1982) 71. Pauker argued that Sukarno, having demonstrated his power over the masses, was able to intimidate the officers. Moreover, the officers were divided in what they wanted: for example, Nasution was inclined toward an authoritarian outlook, while Simatupang was against a military dictatorship. Guy J. Pauker,

One major question is what was behind the demonstration on the morning of October 17, 1952. There were various interpretations of the events. Manai Sophiaan, in his reminiscences on that day, declared that the entire demonstration was a coup attempt, led by Colonel Dr. Mustopo and leaders of the PSI,¹⁹⁷ to force Sukarno to dissolve the Parliament. The entire demonstration was therefore a staged event, comprised of criminals commanded from Tanjung Priok, a port area of Jakarta, where even today with the right price people can gather a significant crowd for the purpose of political demonstrations.¹⁹⁸ In a nutshell, Sophiaan believed that "the entire affair was caused by a paid demonstration to the people's house and people's palace."¹⁹⁹ Jusuf Wibisono of

"Military in Indonesia" In John J. Johnson, *the Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962) 208-9

¹⁹⁷ Sophiaan was not clear in stating who the leaders of the PSI were. However, from the discourse that happened during that period, he might be implicating Nasution and other Army leaders who were believed to be close to the PSI such as Simatupang. Sophiaan (1979) 288. However, Pringgogidgo stated that the Socialists had nothing to do with the demonstration and Sjahrir himself was "in ignorance of what was going on and was awaiting Pringgo's arrival for fill-in." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 20, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 335. Still, several days later, Sukarno told Cochran that part of the mob belonged to the PSI-influenced young officers and civilians. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 22, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 337

¹⁹⁸ Sophiaan's accusation might not be off base, considering there were still connections between the old laskars during the revolution and criminal gangs in Jakarta. Imam Syaifei'i, who before the Independence War was a criminal boss of Senen, a market area in Jakarta, led a laskar (militia) group during the Independence War. After the end of the revolution, he joined the Siliwangi Division while continuing to manage his criminal fiefdom. He acquired a reputation as one who could produce necessary crowds on the streets of Jakarta for political demonstrations. Cribb noted that he was said to be responsible for many of those who demonstrated on October 17, 1952. Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991) 183. Feith also notes that Colonel Dr. Mustopo was known as having a considerable influence among members of gang-like organizations in Jakarta. It would only be natural that both Syaifei'i and Dr. Mustopo would know each other and work together to get enough mass for this event. Still, those who know Dr. Mustopo suggested he was simply "a small screw of a large machine." Feith (1962) 261-2. A Cochran telegram to the Department of State on this matter also confirmed that young army officers and Colonel Mustopo were responsible in recruiting demonstrators from Tanjung Priok and nearby towns. This "rag-tag outfit" then moved into the city in army trucks at night, passing outposts and patrols "which would normally stop such night movements." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 20, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 333

¹⁹⁹ Sophiaan (1979) 299. It also needed to be noted that Sophiaan wrote this recollection in 1979 where his political career had ended and Indonesia was ruled by a military autocracy under Suharto. At this point, the PSI was somewhat rehabilitated – many of its main figures were holding important positions in the government and Nasution himself, even though politically curtailed, remained a revered figure and an

Sukiman's faction in the Masjumi agreed that the demonstration was "not spontaneous."²⁰⁰ As Feith noted, "It may be regarded (in Jakarta) as established that Colonel Nasution was engaged, for several months before October 17, in working out plans for a type of military coup."²⁰¹

In his memoir, Sukarno also declared the entire event to be a coup. With his usual exaggeration, he narrated what was going on that day:

Early morning of October 17, 1952, two tanks, four armored cars, and thousands of soldiers stormed the gate of *Merdeka* (Presidential Palace) carrying "Dissolve Parliament" signs. An artillery battalion with four cannon rumbled into the surrounding square. British 25-pounders were wheeled up and leveled at me. The show of force reflected the hysteria of the times. It was scarcely intelligent since the commanders who'd engineered it were inside the *istana* (palace) with me.

Colonel Abdul Haris Nasution, in charge of this attempted "half a coup," as he later termed it, pleaded their case. "This is not against you personally, Pak, but against the government system. You must abolish Parliament immediately." My eyes blazed with anger. "You are right in what you want, but wrong in your method of bringing it about. Sukarno will never yield to pressure. Not for the whole Dutch army and not for one Indonesian battalion!"²⁰²

The real question is whether it was an attempted military coup. As noted above, while Nasution was believed to be the mastermind of this "coup," Nasution himself rejected this belief. In his recollection of the entire event, he rejected that the Army was planning to commit a coup, and instead believed that what happened that day was an overreaction. He said that there had not been orders from the high command to train the artillery on the palace. In fact, the artillery pieces were all empty and, quoting Sutoko, "the aiming of the cannons to the palace was due to the troops' anger toward the entire

"elder statesman" in this regime. To directly naming Nasution and "members of PSI" as responsible for the coup would be similar to hitting a hornet's nest.

²⁰⁰ Noer (1960) 277

²⁰¹ Feith (1962) 262, Sakirman, "The Positive Aspects of Guided Democracy," In Herbert Feith and Lance Castles, *Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970) 125

²⁰² Adams (1965) 266

parliamentary system."²⁰³ The troops in fact were not planning violence at all for the coup. Facing the rejection from the President of their demands to dissolve the Parliament, they simply left, as they did not have any plan beyond petitioning the President. The requests were hardly intimidating, and Sutoko described that they had come "like children going to their father."²⁰⁴ In fact, Feith noted that most of the divisional commanders were taken completely by surprise by the demonstration – including the Defense Minister.²⁰⁵

An interesting fact, however, was volunteered by Nasution. In his recollection, he claimed that the Sukarno actually was aware and was briefed by Dr. Mustopo the night before that there would be a demonstration on October 17. In turn, Dr. Mustopo also reported Sukarno's awareness to Nasution.²⁰⁶ If that was the case, then Sukarno again had pulled a huge coup on the Army as he knew that the Army would not intend to use force to press their demands. Of course, at that point, nobody was aware yet that Sukarno was instrumental in pushing Sophiaan's motion in spite of Wilopo's persuasion to the PNI leaders. In fact, the officers believed that the President must be on their side. In Sundhaussen's description, the military officers:

believed that they were so obviously right in their requests that the head of state must surely agree with them. And those officers, including Nasution, who saw more clearly the political dimensions of the power struggle between the Cabinet

²⁰³ Nasution (1979) 366-7. Interestingly, a Cochran telegram stated that "Pres may have turned incident to his own advantage. At very time it was taking place there were tanks on side Palace with guns pointing toward it." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 20, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 334

²⁰⁴ Sundhaussen (1982) 72-3

²⁰⁵ Feith (1962) 264

²⁰⁶ Nasution (1979) 366. Nasution's recollection was supported to some degree by Cochran's telegram to the Department of State, in which Cochran noted that some sources stated that Mustopo had briefed Sukarno and the latter told him to call off the demonstration "but could not because of the short time available after the President's request." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, October 20, 1952, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 333

and its critics, simply did not consider involving the Army deeper in this conflict by threats of using force.²⁰⁷

The politically naïve officers were simply duped by the master politician who, as usual, remained uncommitted and bided his time before he struck. Of course Sukarno was unwilling to dismiss the Parliament and to call the election. He was well aware of the possible strength and organization of the Masjumi, the only power in Parliament which could and did stand against him, personified by Natsir. Also, as noted above, the question in Jakarta was not who would be the winner, but how much of the vote would the Masjumi, as the winner of the election, receive. At this point, however, the Parliament was neutralized in his favor, especially with the recent split within the Masjumi, even though Natsir's faction and the PSI proved to be troublesome.

Moreover, should Sukarno support the Army's demand for dissolution of the Parliament, it would mean supporting the PSI-dominated army leadership, which in the end would strengthen Natsir and the PSI under Sjahrir, whom he intensely disliked. Besides, to base his power simply on a military junta would be too dangerous, lest they would dominate him in the end.²⁰⁸ He still needed the Parliament. By staging the "coup," the Army however had shown its potential as a formidable force to be reckoned with. Something had to be done before the Army grew strong enough to disturb the entire political order in which he dominated.

In Jakarta, a standoff ensued between the Parliament and the Army, though the Parliament seemed to give way. On October 18, the Manai Sophiaan motion was postponed, the Sultan did not immediately resign and the cabinet continued in the office.

²⁰⁷ Sundhaussen (1982) 73

²⁰⁸ Pauker (1962) 208

On October 21, Prime Minister Wilopo stated in a radio address that there was no cabinet crisis and the territorial commanders had made a statement of loyalty to the government.²⁰⁹ However, it was the calm before the storm, as the President struck elsewhere, trying to tear down the pillars of support of the leaders of the "October 17 Affair."²¹⁰

The first crack was in the East Java division, the stronghold of the Peta and the ones hurt the most by the Army rationalization. The pro-October 17 Acting Commander of this division was overthrown by officers who were sent by Sukarno to instigate anti-Nasution feelings on October 19. The replacement, Sudirman (not to be mistaken with General Sudirman, the commander of the Republican army during the revolution, who died in 1950 from tuberculosis), condemned his superiors for the misuse of powers in demanding the dissolution of the Parliament and the repressive manner in which these demands had been made.²¹¹

On November 16, Gatot Subroto, the commander of East Indonesia, was arrested by Warouw, his chief of staff, with the active participation of the PNI. On November 23, another mutiny happened in South Sumatra. During November, Sukarno also tried to wrest the control of the Siliwangi Division in West Java from Kawilarang by personally approaching his subordinate. He was rebuffed, however.²¹² At this time, the position of the pro-October 17 group was weak enough that Wilopo was forced to suspend Nasution, Sutoko, and Parman on December 15, 1952. The next day, he appointed Colonel

²⁰⁹ Feith (1962) 265

²¹⁰ Sundhaussen noted that Sukarno had threatened counter-action against the "army reformers." Sundhaussen (1982) 73

²¹¹ Ironically, one of the members of Sukarno's "delegations" to incite the East Javanese division was Colonel Sungkono. He was sacked by the Sultan for corruption and abuses of power in 1950 as mentioned above.

²¹² Feith (1962) 266-8, Sundhaussen (1982) 73-4

Bambang Sugeng as the Acting Chief of Staff of the Army. Colonel Bambang Sugeng immediately appointed Warouw the acting head of East Indonesia, leading to the Sultan's resignation from the position of Minister of Defense in early January 1953.²¹³ The Army, which was one of the sources of backing for Natsir's Masjumi and the PSI, was broken.²¹⁴ Nasution later admitted that he had made grave mistakes. Both his and the Army's political naiveté had cost them dearly, but they learned their lessons well. The fiasco of the half-hearted coup was not to be repeated in the next confrontation.²¹⁵

Still, one other outcome from the entire October 17 Affair was that the drive for the national election was gaining force. While the affair broke the Army, it also raised the question of the legitimacy of an unelected Parliament. Wilopo's cabinet took advantage of this, and on October 21, it made a formal decision to hasten the holding of elections. By November 25, the election bill was submitted to the Parliament. Wilopo himself believed that the election would provide political stability due to the legitimacy conferred on the government. However, the PNI, finding that it had no election funds ready, was unenthusiastic. It was supported by various other small parties which would stand to lose the most in the election since they were not as well-funded or well-organized as even the PNI.²¹⁶

Efforts to delay the bill by the PNI and various small parties were met with intense opposition by the press. An editorial in the Medan daily *Waspada* thundered, "What seems like a majority of the honorable members are now acting as if they were

²¹³ Noer (1960) 278-9, Sundhaussen (1982) 75

²¹⁴ On January 10, 1953, Ambassador Cochran observed Sukarno to be confident of his ability to control the situation, elated by the appointment of Colonel Bambang Sugeng as permanent Chief of Staff, and optimistic on trends within the Army. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cochran) to the Department of State, January 10, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12 Part 2, 350

²¹⁵ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 90

²¹⁶ Feith (1958) 156-7, Feith (1962) 277

intentionally sabotaging the bill so that their seats in parliament can be safe still longer." Moreover, Masjumi was having a field day humiliating both the PNI and the PKI, which wanted to postpone the election. Isa Anshary bluntly accused the PNI of being afraid of elections and Natsir condemned the PKI for trying to delay the elections. The opponents conceded defeat. The bill passed on April 1, 1953.²¹⁷

In the meantime, however, the Wilopo cabinet was struggling. Even though the election bill was a major success, it had lost a great deal of political capital. In the meantime, a controversy between the President and Isa Anshary over the President's speech in Amuntai, South Kalimantan, had embarrassed Masjumi. In that speech on January 27, 1953, Sukarno refused the idea of an Islamic state, declaring that it would destroy the unity of Indonesia. Isa Anshary retorted that the President's speech was undemocratic, unconstitutional, and in conflict with Islam. While other Islamic groups also expressed their displeasure with Sukarno's speech, the PNI singled out Isa Anshary, declaring him as a fanatic and an unscrupulous agitator and "a new friend of the Darul Islam [rebellion]." The PKI further increased its campaign to tar Masjumi by linking it to the Darul Islam.

On April 12, Anshary further ratcheted up the tension by declaring a demarcation line between the Islamic and the non-Islamic group, with no place for "those who are half and half" as the Qur'an was absolute. In a comment remarkably similar to the rhetoric surrounding Madiun rebellion of 1948, Gatot Mangkupraja, a leader of the PNI, asked the voters to "choose between Isa Anshary and Bung Karno [Brother Sukarno]."²¹⁸ A battle

²¹⁷ Feith (1958) 142-3, Feith (1962) 278-9

²¹⁸ Feith (1958) 161, Feith (1962) 282-3

line was drawn. Fear of Masjumi and Islamic dominance had grown sharply. Sukarno and his allies sought a way to blunt the Masjumi's strength.

By April 1953, the PNI leaders had started to consider overthrowing the cabinet and replacing it with a cabinet that would exclude Masjumi, with the calculation that they would then benefit the most when the election was held. Moreover, they were disgruntled with what they saw as Wilopo's unwillingness to meet the PNI's demands for perks that were supposed to come from holding office. He also had proven himself unwilling to fall in line with the party's position. With the election looming on the horizon, Wilopo had to go.²¹⁹

However, Wilopo was not willing to go without a fight. In an interesting twist, in April 1953, Ali Sastroamidjojo, then Indonesian ambassador to the United States, surprised the department officials by raising on a personal basis the possibility of the United States sending a military training mission to Indonesia. On May 15, the request was renewed on instructions from the Indonesian government, leading Washington to speculate whether Indonesia considered its "independence" required alignment with the United States.²²⁰ The United States had reason to be surprised, considering that Wilopo had formally rejected the MSA on the basis of an Indonesian independent foreign policy. Still, this episode should be seen from the viewpoint of Wilopo and his technocratic cabinet: with the Indonesian military in tatters, a collapsing economy, and a hostile Parliament, he needed a quick fix. Unfortunately, Washington was completely blind to

²¹⁹ Feith (1962) 297-8

²²⁰ The Under Secretary of State (Smith) to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson), June 23, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, 363-4. The memoir of Ali Sastroamidjojo did not mention this incident at all. By the time the United States was ready to pursue this opening, Wilopo's cabinet had fallen and Iwa, the new Defense Minister, flatly rejected the US mission. Roadnight (2002) 118

the situation in Indonesia: Cochran had resigned and Eisenhower and Dulles took office in 1953, replacing the Truman Administration.

Cochran had tendered his resignation, effective on February 27. In his farewell message to the State Department, Cochran stressed the need for Dulles "to practice understanding, patience and to exercise unswerving firmness" and to convince Indonesians "it was up to them to show Washington what they wanted and what they deserved." Surprisingly, Cochran acknowledged his fault in pushing Indonesia too quickly into the United States' camp. He suggested that the United States move cautiously and underplay rather than overplay its hand. However, he also warned about the menace of Communism and the growing PKI's infiltration of the PNI. Furthermore, Cochran noted that Sukarno believed American support to Indonesia's claim for Irian Barat would be critical to keep Indonesia free of Communism.²²¹

Cochran's advice would prove to be correct, but at this point, Washington was waiting for further developments in Indonesia. Moreover, Cochran left Jakarta on March 15 and until Hugh S. Cumming, Jr., his replacement, arrived in Indonesia on October 12, Washington was effectively blind to political developments in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, in Jakarta, the otherwise silent Muhammad Hatta, the Vice President of Indonesia, had become troubled over the political developments whereby his close associates in the Army were losing power and the PKI were growing stronger.²²² There had been many efforts by many politicians from both Masjumi and the PSI during the

²²¹ Robert J. McMahon, "The Eisenhower Administration and Indonesia, 1953-1960" In Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns, *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (Latham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006) 78, Roadnight (2002) 105-6

²²² Rose (1985) 177

tumultuous Wilopo tenure to have Hatta returned to the government. During the October 17 Affair, the demonstrators went to Hatta's palace right before coming to Sukarno's and it was rumored that Nasution had spent some time with him before the October crisis. The possibility of Hatta's return was so real that the leadership of the PNI were seriously pondering it when they tried to bring down the Wilopo Cabinet, simply because they did not want it.²²³

Unlike Sukarno, the bookish Hatta was always legalistic, following rules to the letter, even though he was also bitter about losing his power when he was kicked to the Vice Presidency. An article in *Pikiran Rakyat*, a Bandung-based newspaper, nicely summed up the difference between Sukarno and Hatta:

As far as we can see and hear, Hatta is able to control himself and remains within the constitutional boundaries; in other words, he does not interfere in executive affairs. But as far as we can gather, it is torture for Sukarno to remain within constitutional limits and not interfere in the executive and, because of his impulsiveness he violates the limits of the Constitution.²²⁴

²²³ Feith (1962) 258, 262, 298

²²⁴ Rose (1985) 179. Hatta's being so serious and so strict was legendary and there were a lot of anecdotes concerning this behavior. For instance, during his exile, Hatta was known to have an organized regime he imposed upon himself – he kept on his schedule so strictly that it was said that people kept track of time simply by observing Hatta's activities. Mrazek (1994) 144. During his arrest after the Dutch attack on Jogjakarta on December 19, 1948, to the amusement of his fellow internees, Hatta imposed a water regulation, noting, "...if we bathe we must not use as much water as we please. I have measured the volume of the water for bathing and it turns out that there will be enough water if you use only ten dippers of water each time you bathe." Sastroamijoyo (1979) 173. Regardless of the love and hate relationship he had with Sukarno, Sukarno in his autobiography fondly described Hatta:

Hatta and I were never on the same wavelength. The best way to describe Hatta is to relate the afternoon he was enroute somewhere and the only other passenger in the car was a beautiful girl. In a lonely, isolated area the tire went flat. Bachelor Hatta was the type who flushed when he met a girl. He never danced, smiled, or enjoyed life. When the driver returned with help two hours later, he found the girl snuggled into the farthest edge of the motorcar and Hatta in the other corner snoring away. Uggghh, that man was a hopeless case. We never thought alike on any issues. Adams (1965) 119

However, after the fall of the Wilopo cabinet, he would be politically more active and became a rallying point for the PSI and the Masjumi – and another power to be taken seriously by Sukarno, though unlike Sukarno, he would not actively interfere in politics.

The trigger of the cabinet's fall was the Tanjung Morawa incident near Medan, North Sumatra, when police tried to evict illegal squatters, leading to a confrontation that left five people dead. As the outrage over the incident grew, there was pressure to fire the Masjumi-governor of North Sumatra and Mohammad Roem, the Masjumi Minister of Interior. The PNI demanded a motion of no confidence in Roem. However the Masjumi declared its full support to Roem. By June 1, the PNI was under pressure by its branch in North Sumatra to act forcefully lest they would secede from the party. On June 2, the cabinet decided to dissolve itself.²²⁵

Wilopo's administration was probably a showcase in the triumph and tragedy of an individual's use of power. Here, we saw how Sukarno masterfully regained the initiatives lost after the MSA fiasco. He had again proven to the entire political elite that he was a force to be reckoned with. Wilopo with his fellow technocrats from the Army, the PSI and Natsir's Masjumi were badly outmaneuvered, even though in the beginning they had been trying to press their advantage by curbing presidential power. First, they refused to submit to Sukarno's demands by putting several people he deemed friendly in the cabinet. Then, the cabinet limited the number of occasions on which the President was able to deliver speeches and further reduced the budget allocation for the

²²⁵ Feith (1962) 296

President.²²⁶ However, the President struck back by slowly breaking the pillars of support of his political opponents, from Masjumi to the revered Army, while building up his own political foundation through his patronage of the anti-Nasution and anti-October 17 faction in the Army, the PNI, and most importantly, the PKI.

There have been several analyses of Sukarno's behavior in this period. Legge argues that Sukarno was a reluctant politician with limited power "to be what he could get away with." Sukarno was always content with his position as a figurehead in this period. Only in 1953, after several cabinets fell and his dissatisfaction with the Parliamentary debacles rose, did he begin to assert his power. He was also influenced by his messianic belief that only he could save Indonesia from what he saw as a spiritual decline. He had tested the political arrangements and begun to distinguish friends from foes, thus creating a new political constellation.²²⁷

Events that unfolded even in the first three years (1950-2) of Constitutional Democracy, however, contradicted Legge's assertions. As we have seen, Sukarno was not only operating with "what he could get away with." He was actively trying to break formal barriers and the constraints of his presidential power, and he was successful in doing so. The entire political arrangement that emerged after 1952 could not have existed without his intervention. It was not that he learned to distinguish friends from foe: he made friends and foes depending on his interests and whether they could be of use to expand and strengthen his power further.

In turn, this also negates Feith's argument that Sukarno's reluctance to support Wilopo was due to "his unwillingness to set himself against the symbols of radical

²²⁶ Ibid. 245

²²⁷ Legge (2003) 271-2, 289

nationalism."²²⁸ Similar to Sukarno's choice in 1945 when he had to choose between Tan Malaka's *perjuangan* (struggle) and Sjahrir's *diplomasi* (diplomacy) approaches, he had a free choice, and he made the choice for things that he believed could increase his power. Aidit had learned that a direct confrontation with the President was fruitless, and he decided to ingratiate himself and court Sukarno's favor. Nasution, away in political exile, would later learn to play the same game.

Thus, Wilopo's tenure was a tragedy: Wilopo was a capable administrator who wanted to extract Indonesia from its economic mess. In doing that, he created a cabinet based on intellectual expertise and inadvertently set it on a collision course with Sukarno, who was still seething from the fall of the Sukiman cabinet, which he blamed on Natsir and the PSI. As a result, Wilopo's tenure was marked by a succession of crises, initiated by the restless President to increase his power, while at the same time working to undermine Wilopo's bases of support from both Natsir's faction and the technocratic leaders of the military.

4.6. Conclusion

It is a shame that this period after the transfer of sovereignty, which started with a dash of optimism, ended with acrimony and pettiness as parties and factions tried to take the reins of the government. Hatta was the first casualty as both the PSI and the PNI decided that Hatta was too competent to be the Prime Minister. Hatta however graciously heeded the will of the Parliament and stepped aside.²²⁹

²²⁸ Feith (1962) 245

²²⁹ Years later, when during a cabinet crisis, Subadio, then chairman of the PSI, urged Hatta to take on the Premiership, Hatta retorted resentfully, "Why? It was you people who wanted a parliamentary cabinet so

The Natsir faction then decided to create a business cabinet based on a coalition with the PSI, excluding the PNI and the Sukiman faction, which automatically made this cabinet have a very weak political support in the Parliament. Without Hatta's prestige backing the cabinet, when Natsir managed to offend Sukarno on the issue of Irian Barat, the fate of the cabinet was sealed. Natsir's choice had put the cabinet on a weak footing, and finally Sukarno's choice to break the cabinet had made the collapse of Natsir's cabinet inevitable.

As a form of payback, the PNI and the Sukiman faction of the Masjumi created the second cabinet that excluded both the PSI and the Natsir faction from the government. However, mismanagement and bad policies plagued this cabinet while at the same time both the Natsir faction and the PSI tried to bring down the cabinet. The culmination was the Mutual Security Act fiasco, which by itself was just a spark that lit the powder keg of resentment from the Natsir faction, the PSI, and the leftists who had been purged by the Sukiman cabinet.

The Wilopo cabinet saw further fragmentation of the political elite as the NU split from the Masjumi and there was a more pointed disagreement between the Natsir faction and Sukiman faction. The cabinet also tried to curb Sukarno's power and, considering the fact that Sukarno disliked this cabinet, the Presidential wrath was imminent. Worse, the Army was also dragged into the elite squabbles in Jakarta as the issue of rationalization was politicized in order to undermine the PSI's influence in the Army. The October 17

much! According to the 1950 Constitution, I cannot possibly hold office as Prime Minister again!" Subadio answered: "We never guessed that it would turn out like this!" Hatta also permitted himself a sip of revenge once in a while, such as in 1952, when Sjahrir, having spent much of 1951 overseas, sought out Hatta, and felt rebuffed when Hatta showed more interest in listening to the National Sports Week broadcast than in listening to Sjahrir. That was Hatta's way to remind him that thanks to the PSI, Hatta's role as Vice President was highly circumscribed, relegated to officiate at occasions such as the opening of the National Sports Week. Rose (1987) 174, 176

Affair was a culmination of this politics of acrimony. Even though it ended with the Parliament remaining intact and the Army badly split, it started the wheel of motion that would end up with a united and resentful army.

As noted earlier, while the Dutch were responsible for the highly explosive political landscape, at the end of the day, it is the choices of these leaders that further ratcheted up the tension and distrust among various competing interest groups. Thus, this chapter has been all about squandered opportunities.

The possibility for a much more stable Hatta cabinet that would govern until the election, thus providing stability and reducing tension, was quashed right from the beginning. Natsir's stubbornness in refusing to compromise with the PNI prevented an opportunity to reduce the tension between the PNI and the Masjumi. The charged political atmosphere that marked the tenure of the Sukiman cabinet prevented the development of a much closer relationship between Indonesia and the United States. In turn, the collapse of the Sukiman cabinet and the rise of the Socialist-dominated Wilopo cabinet, which was believed to be caused by the PSI, crystallized the partisanship. Finally, the possibility of the Indonesian army to emerge from this period as a depoliticized, professional entity was also prevented by the discord between politicians during the Wilopo cabinet.

These were the squandered opportunities that in the end would lead to the collapse of the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia.

CHAPTER 5

TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY OF LEADERSHIP:

THE COLLAPSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY

(1953-1957)

Professor Guy Pauker, then of the University of California at Berkeley... was in Indonesia observing the elections [of 1957]. He told us of one family of four he had interviewed. By family agreement the father, a good Mohammedan, had voted for the Masjumi party, the Muslim party. His wife had voted for the PNI, the Nationalist Party; the older son had voted for the PSI, the Socialist Party; and the younger son had voted for the PKI. They told Pauker they believed all the principal parties should be represented as everyone should work together.

John M. Allison¹

For the Indonesian people, who still live in a period of transition which is still pervaded with the influence of the remnants of feudalism, it is necessary to have leaders who are "solidarity makers" ..., and what is more, leaders who possess what is called "Charisma." It seems wrong to blame these types of leaders almost totally for the economic and administrative chaos in [Indonesia]. It is not fair to make them "the scapegoats" for the difficulties in our community without taking into consideration the internal and overseas situation at the time.

Ali Sastroamijoyo²

America was kind to me my first trip there.... I find only one fault with Americans. They're too full of fear. Afraid of B.O. Afraid of bad breath. They're too full of fear they'll never get rid of dandruff. This state of mind I cannot understand.

Sukarno³

¹ John M. Allison, *Ambassador from the Prairie or Allison Wonderland* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973) 305

² Ali Sastroamijoyo, *Milestones on My Journey* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1979) 259 Note: Ali Sastroamijoyo was one of the leaders whom Feith called "solidarity makers."

³ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 275

5.1. The First Cabinet of Prime Minister Ali Sastroamijoyo (July 1953-July 1955)

The first tenure of Ali Sastroamijoyo was marked by further confrontation between the Masjumi and the PSI on one side versus the PNI and the PKI⁴ with the backing of the President on the other side. While this cabinet was significant for being the longest-serving cabinet in the Constitutional Period, this distinction was achieved thanks to the implicit support from Sukarno, especially in forming the political coalition that would constitute the Ali cabinet. This period was also marked by a very active foreign policy that would later culminate in the world-famous Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in April 1955, which would be the crowning achievement of this cabinet. However, within three months after the conference, the cabinet had collapsed – brought down by active opposition from the Army. By the time this cabinet collapsed, it had reached the achievement of being the longest serving cabinet in this period.

After the collapse of the Wilopo Cabinet, the Masjumi advanced a demand for a cabinet led by Mohammad Hatta, who due to his stature in Indonesian politics would have put together a strong business cabinet. Natsir, for one, declared that "the state is in fact in danger at this time, although this is not evident on the surface." However, the PNI,

⁴ The PNI and the PKI had an ambivalent relationship in this period. On November 23, 1953, Mr. Sunario, Ali's foreign minister from the PNI, stated to U.S. Ambassador Cumming that even though the government accepted the PKI's support, arguing that "No parliamentarian could refuse to accept vote from any source," he stressed that the government could survive without the Communists as it had sufficient votes in the Parliament without addition of the Communist votes. Moreover, he stressed that the PNI was well aware that the Communists were planning to infiltrate the government and to push the government into a position where the Communists' vote would be essential, but the government of the PNI had its own strategies to circumvent these plans. Interestingly, he also mentioned that both the Masjumi and the PSI were also willing to do anything to bring the government down, including participating in the Communists' plots. Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, November 24, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 401

the PKI, and the President disagreed and the President decided to appoint the cabinet the usual way by selecting formateurs from the PNI and the Masjumi.⁵

The entire formation of the Cabinet was marked by tension and disagreement between the PNI and the Masjumi, even though at one point they seriously worked together. It seemed that the PNI simply waited for further concessions from the Masjumi, considering that they felt their position had been improving from political developments during Wilopo's tenure. A cabinet without the Masjumi was undesirable, but possible with support from the PKI and various small parties.⁶ On the Masjumi side, there was an unwillingness to accept that its bargaining position had grown weaker by this point, considering that the Masjumi was the largest party in the Parliament, and the biggest potential winner in the expected election. Moreover, the Masjumi hoped that as the formateurs failed, Sukarno then would be pressured to appoint Hatta as Prime Minister.⁷

Hatta reacted positively to this possibility, though he noted that he would agree to be a formateur "only if the Parliament requested this." The President however refused to consider naming Hatta as the formateur, claiming that he "still upheld the basis of our constitution and parliamentary traditions," and adding: "So far there is unanimity between Vice President Mohammad Hatta and myself."⁸

Based on this point, the President appointed Wongsonegoro from the PIR, a small nationalist party. To both the Masjumi and the PSI's increasing apprehension,

⁵ Deliar Noer, *Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia* (M.A. thesis, Cornell University Press, 1960) 287-8, Herbert Feith, *the Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962) 332

⁶ J.D. Legge, *Sukarno: A Political Biography* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 2003) 290

⁷ Feith (1962) 333, 335-7, 341

⁸ Ibid. 336. Rose argued that Sukarno's addition was significant since it was an acknowledgement of growing strains between him and Hatta. Mavin Rose, *Indonesia Free: A Political Biography of Mohammad Hatta* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1987) 178

Wongsonegoro gave the appearance of working very closely with the President, and he did not even bother to hide it: he conducted many of his hearings with party leaders at the Presidential palace. Again, the Masjumi was stonewalling in order to force Wongsonegoro to fail and thereby force the President to appoint Hatta. Natsir was also reassured by the NU's assurances that the NU would not participate in a cabinet without the Masjumi.⁹

Thus it was a huge surprise and a huge blow to the Masjumi when they found out that Wongsonegoro had made a cabinet without the Masjumi, the PSI, and the two Christian parties (which rejected any cabinet without the Masjumi in it). Wongsonegoro instead created a cabinet led by Ali Sastroamijoyo (the PNI)¹⁰ and gave more seats to the NU, several minor nationalist parties, and two Communist-sympathizing groups. The Masjumi was furious with what it considered to be the NU's betrayal and the relationship between the Masjumi and the NU deteriorated further.¹¹

Moreover, the Masjumi was aware that this cabinet was the handiwork of Sukarno. Observing this Javanese-dominated cabinet, Mohammad Roem from the Masjumi noted in an interview that Ali was "a creature of Sukarno.... Ali's top priority was not to differ from Sukarno's wishes, thus Sukarno was behind the scenes

⁹ Feith (1962) 337, Noer (1960) 299-300

¹⁰ During the formation of the cabinet, Ali was the Indonesian ambassador to the United States. He admitted in his memoir that his appointment caught him by surprise and he was apprehensive to accept the position of Prime Minister since he did not know any of the ministers. Only Sidik's (a main leader in the PNI) assurance of complete support from the PNI made him agree to take the post. Sastroamijoyo (1979) 251-2

¹¹ Feith (1962) 338, Noer (1960) 300. As noted in the previous chapter, the NU's abandonment of the Masjumi could not be explained without adding into the mix the personal relationship between Sukarno and Wahab Chasbullah, one of the most important leaders in the NU who was responsible for the split of the NU from the Masjumi. Moreover, both Wahab and Sukarno also realized that they both benefited from this association: Sukarno could counterbalance the Masjumi, while Wahab could expect Sukarno's support in the upcoming election. See Greg Fealy, "Wahab Chasbullah, Traditionalism and the Political Development of Nahdlatul Ulama," In Greg Barton and Greg Fealy, *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1996) 27-8

manipulating Ali."¹² In fact, the cabinet would not have existed without Sukarno's intervention. As Feith noted, "President's active support for Wongsonegoro made a number of waverers believe that this *formateur* would succeed and that they had therefore better not be left out."¹³

In addition to the Presidential support, the cabinet was also strengthened by support from the Communist party. Aidit for one was deeply opposed to the possibility of a Hatta cabinet. Unlike his approach to Sukarno, Aidit and the Communist party did not pursue a rapprochement policy with Hatta. In their eyes, Hatta remained "a traitor who sold out to the Dutch by signing the Hague Agreement."¹⁴ Thus, during the entire attempt to create the Cabinet, the PKI was opposing Hatta and proposed to create a United Front Government that excluded both the Masjumi and the PKI. At one point, Aidit almost committed a fatal misstep: the PKI's fervor was so great that it managed to frighten other parties' leaders, including the NU, such that Aidit had to turn down the pressure.¹⁵ When the Ali cabinet was formed, the PKI stressed its support to the government by organizing a mass demonstration comprised of peasant associations and trade unions.¹⁶

Still, Ali's position was far from secure. While the Masjumi was down, it was not yet beaten. Its parliamentary strength was still formidable. At this point, the Masjumi, the

¹² Rose (1987) 178

¹³ Feith (1962) 341, Justus M. van der Kroef, *the Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1965) 62

¹⁴ Mochtar Lubis, "The Indonesian Communist Movement Today," *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 11 (Nov. 1954) 163. Of course, the fact that it was Hatta's cabinet that oversaw the destruction of the Communist rebellion in Madiun in 1948 did not help improve Hatta's image in front of Aidit.

¹⁵ Feith noted an interesting side note in this entire episode. After realizing that he managed to alienate others with his brashness, Aidit then proceeded to be so modest and so polite in speaking to Wongsonegoro that the latter was obliged to ask another participant to be a microphone for Aidit. Softness in voice is an important part of refinement in Javanese culture, and Wongsonegoro was known as the prototypical representation of Javanese refinement! Feith (1962) 332, 334, 336

¹⁶ Van der Kroef (1965) 62-3

PSI, and the two Christian parties still held significant strength in the Parliament (71 seats altogether, out of 233 seats) and they could count on other parties' sympathy should the cabinet make blunders. In fact the cabinet did make several blunders during its lifetime that forced Ali to reshuffle it.

In addition, the Ali cabinet still experienced dissatisfaction from the armed forces. Even as the October 17 Affair was settled at the expense of the technocratic leaders of the Army, the problem was far from over. The Ali cabinet realized that it would have to tackle the problem of army reorganization sooner or later, and it would not be simple, as the Army remained dissatisfied¹⁷ and the Cabinet itself was lacking cohesion. In order to be able to exclude the Masjumi and the two Christian parties, more small parties were included, so that the cabinet had the dubious distinction of having the most parties in its cabinet since the beginning of this period.¹⁸ Of course, the problem was that should one of the parties pull out its minister, it would bring down the cabinet. Thus, the Masjumi might be lulled into a false sense of security as it also believed that time was on its side: when the election came, the Masjumi was expected to be the winner.

As the cabinet was aware that its position was very fragile, dependent mostly on whether the small parties could be kept in line, and with the threat of the election looming on the horizon,¹⁹ the cabinet pursued a very active foreign policy. Anak Agung noted:

¹⁷ CIA Special Estimate, "The Significance of the New Indonesian Government," September 18, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 387, Memorandum of Discussion at the 171st Meeting of the National Security Council, November 19, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 389

¹⁸ Excluding the non-party members of the cabinets, Natsir's cabinet was comprised of 7 parties, Sukiman's 8, and Wilopo's 8. The Ali cabinet had 10 parties.

¹⁹ The State Department believed that the Ali cabinet would "give a lip service to early holding of *general elections* but may procrastinate, since under present condition the Masjumi could probably count on a large popular vote." Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay), August 27, 1953, 374

The Ali cabinet... was a center-leftist administration with heavy backing from the Indonesian Communist Party but on the other hand with very stiff opposition from the middle-of-the road parties such as the Islam Masjumi party, the Indonesian Socialist Party, and other small parties as the Christian groups. Ali hoped to put Indonesia more ostensibly in the world picture by playing an active role in world diplomacy as champion of the anti-colonial forces.²⁰

As noted in previous chapters, Indonesia had always been obsessed with the idea of an active and independent foreign policy, not only as an ideal, but also in order to prevent any attacks from the opposition that Indonesia was too friendly to the United States. By realizing this ideal, Ali could reap a political windfall in Indonesia. It could help stabilizing his cabinet while preventing Natsir and his supporters from bringing down the cabinet like they did to Sukiman's.²¹

Moreover, there were several international events that greatly helped Indonesia in its pursuit of a free and active foreign policy. Most importantly was the death of Stalin in March 1953, which ended the Soviet Union's overt hostility to Indonesia.²² By March 1954, Moscow had opened an embassy in Jakarta. Another important development was the end of the Korean War on July 27, 1953. Even though the war ended in a stalemate, it forced a major revision in Chinese political thinking as the United States was determined to block the Communists' advance militarily. China also saw that the Communist insurrection that it covertly sponsored failed, notably in Indonesia during Sukiman's

²⁰ Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973) 210

²¹ Feith also noted that the Ali cabinet "was keenly aware of the integrative functions of an active foreign policy and of the consequent internal political advantages. Therefore the Cabinet set forth, under the vigorous leadership of its ex-diplomat prime minister, to make its foreign policy truly active." Feith (1962) 385. Another factor was the fact that unlike previous Prime Ministers, Ali built his career in Indonesian foreign policy. Thus, this factor might influence his interest in foreign policy, compared to Natsir, Sukiman, and Wilopo, all of them were not known for their interests in international affairs. Interestingly, even though as noted in the previous chapter, Ali had asked Washington for a military training mission to Indonesia, he did not reiterate this request after assuming the office of Prime Minister. Thus, the request could be seen two ways: either it was solely Wilopo's initiative or Ali's own initiative, as he was unfamiliar with the Indonesian political situation while he was in Washington. Thus when he returned and saw the realities in Indonesia, he immediately backtracked.

²² Anak Agung (1973) 186

tenure. China thus started to de-emphasize armed struggle and to pursue a policy of conciliation with its neighbors.²³ This in turn would help reduce the fear of the Indonesians to Communist China and as a result lessen Indonesia's ties to the United States.

The growing strength of the Communists and the "active" Indonesian foreign policy was seen with concern from Washington, as the implications of the Ali cabinet, which in order to be able to exclude the Masjumi had to incorporate many small leftist parties, started to sink in Washington. On August 1, Dulles was warned that the PNI "apparently believes it can cooperate profitably with the PKI."²⁴ On August 6, before Ali departed from Washington to take his post as Prime Minister, Eisenhower had registered his concern of news reports that the cabinet was dominated by the Communists and he further hoped that "Indonesia will be able successfully to preserve its independence."²⁵ It was a correct analysis; however it also raised the alarm further in Washington, especially when on September 18, a CIA analysis flatly predicted that "the Communists will increase their influence in Indonesia as a result of the tenure of the present cabinet," though the analysis also conceded that the Communists would not be able to achieve a dominating position militarily or politically in twelve months.²⁶

²³ Harold C. Hinton, *Communist China in World Politics* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966) 27

²⁴ Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Johnson) to the Secretary of State, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 366

²⁵ Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay), August 27, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 377. Surprisingly, Ali did not mention this conversation at all in his memoir.

²⁶ CIA Special Estimate, "The Significance of the New Indonesian Government," September 18, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 387

Both Eisenhower and Dulles were concerned enough that in early October 1953, Eisenhower left Hugh S. Cumming Jr. some instructions on the eve of the latter's departure to Jakarta to replace Merle Cochran. According to Cummings, the directives were a summary of the policy he was supposed to follow depending on opportunity. According to his notes, Eisenhower told him: "the problem of unifying such a country [Indonesia] would be a very great one, particularly since they had no tradition of self government, that as against a unified Indonesia, which would fall to the Communists and a break up of that country into smaller segments, he would prefer the latter." Dulles went into more detail:

As a matter of general policies, don't tie yourself irrevocably to a policy of preserving the unity of Indonesia. The important thing is that we help Indonesia, to the extent they will allow us, to resist any outside influence – especially Communism. The preservation of unification of a country can have danger. And I refer... to China. The territorial integrity of China became a shibboleth. We finally got a territorially integrated China – for whose benefit? The Communists. Now this is something that cannot be in writing, but you should know where my mind is running. You may arrive at a different conclusion yourself when you've been there. But this is my own feeling: As between a territorially united Indonesia which is leaning and progressing towards Communism and a break up of that country into racial and geographical units, I would prefer the latter as furnishing a fulcrum which the United States could work later to help them eliminate Communism in one place or another, and then in the end, if they so wish arrive back again at a united Indonesia.²⁷

Some scholars of U.S.-Indonesian relations pointed to these instructions as proofs of both Eisenhower and Dulles' paranoia toward Communism in specific and Indonesia in general. Dulles did have the reputation of a rabid anti-Communist and there was no love

²⁷ Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: the Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York: The New Press, 1995) 75, Robert J. McMahon, "The Eisenhower Administration and Indonesia, 1953-1960" In Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns, *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (Latham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006) 78-9, Andrew Roadnight, *United States Policy toward Indonesia in the Truman and Eisenhower Years* (New York: Palgrave, 2002) 106

lost between him and Ali, and later, Sukarno.²⁸ However, to simplify the Eisenhower-Dulles policy on Indonesia to those instructions and Dulles' unflattering view on Indonesia was an over-simplification of Dulles' foreign policy. As Kahin himself admitted, that policy lay dormant for at least another three and a half years.²⁹ During that period, the United States proved itself to be somewhat flexible in its dealings with Indonesia. It was not until long after the 1955 election, after Washington believed that Indonesia was on a path to Communism, that the United States started to covertly try to undermine the Indonesian government.

In the same month, Nixon visited Indonesia and committed the same blunder as Cochran did before by claiming that the U.S. would find it difficult to help Indonesia until it gave open and active proof of its anti-Communist alignment. He also warned of the growing pressure from the United States to enter into a military alliance. Surprisingly, Nixon returned with some upbeat assessments and recommendations: he emphasized the importance of stabilizing the price of rubber to avoid Indonesia's economic collapse and the need to increase the number of Indonesian students in the United States.

Moreover, he also noted Sukarno's sway over the masses and his central importance among Indonesian leadership, declaring that Sukarno was "our main card... a

²⁸ Anak Agung in his analysis of the U.S. foreign policy put the sole blame on Dulles for the deterioration between the U.S. and Indonesia. Anak Agung (1973) 185. Sukarno himself would later complain that Dulles was "personally responsible for recent lack of sympathy for Indonesia on part of US." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 24, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 48 Ali Sastroamidjono in his memoir also had a harsh remarks on Dulles:

The inflexibility and coarseness in Dulles's (sic) foreign policy resulted from his religious background, which caused him to see everything in the world in either white or black. It is probable that to Dulles white was the symbol of truth and goodness, whilst black was the symbol of everything that was false, wrong, wicked, and unjust.... It is well known that John Foster Dulles's (sic) foreign policy brought suffering to millions of people, especially in Asia. Sastroamidjono (1979) 236-7

²⁹ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 76

good card, a strong card, because he is a strong man" and his iron rule caused the Communists to be unable to make much headway. However, Nixon also believed the situation in Indonesia to be delicate. The country could go either way in the Cold War struggle.³⁰

Nixon's analysis on Sukarno's influence was further stressed by Allen Welsh Dulles, Director of the CIA. On November 19, he pointed out that Sukarno believed that he could "control and exploit the Communists for his own purposes." However, he also stated that the ongoing economic crisis, which was blamed on the United States, made everything move "in the wrong direction from the U.S. point of view."³¹ Still, Sukarno himself was not interested in picking a fight with the United States. In a speech on August 17, 1953, he referred to the "good" relationship between the United States and Indonesia.³²

On November 20, 1953, a new national security policy was formulated (NSC 171/1) that specifically noted the strategic importance of Indonesia to the United States due to its location and natural resources. Thus the prime objective of the U.S. policy was "to prevent Indonesia from passing into the Communist Orbit." This policy committed the administration to develop friendly relations with all anti-Communist and non-Communist groups and leaders, gain more support from both nationalists and Islamic organizations, and to exert influence on key individuals, especially Sukarno. However, the policy also stressed the need to stay neutral in regarding the Ali Cabinet:

³⁰ Roadnight (2002) 113-4

³¹ Memorandum of Discussion at the 171st Meeting of the National Security Council, November 19, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 389

³² Memorandum by the Secretary of State and the Acting Secretary of Defense (Anderson) to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Lay), August 27, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 375

Show the Ali Cabinet no special favors which would tend to strengthen its tenure of office; but, on the other hand, attempt to avoid those actions which might alienate not only the Ali Cabinet but Indonesia as a whole.

In addition, the Eisenhower administration was committed to aid Indonesia with resolving to its important economic problems especially if the Communists' influence was eliminated.³³ Still, this policy was simply a reaffirmation of the path taken before the Ali cabinet took office. To further help Indonesia economically, Eisenhower had ordered an increase in the U.S. rubber and tin stockpiles and had propped up the price of both materials without informing the industries, even though George M. Humphrey, the U.S. Secretary of Treasury, had a mixed feeling on this policy, noting that, "we cannot continue to buy everything some nation intends to sell to the commies," especially when the United States had stockpiled enough tin to last for five years and the domestic demands for tin was falling. Moreover, Humphrey also complained that the United States had spent so much on propping up the price of the rubber and tin that it added a heavy burden on U.S. tax-payers As a result of this policy. Dulles, however, shrugged off the complaints, reminding him that there were far more important concerns than "unemployment here and there in the United States."³⁴

Regardless of the attempts from Washington to shore up the price of both tin and rubber, Indonesia's economy collapsed thanks to botched attempts at "Indonesianization,"

³³ Memorandum by the Executive Secretary (Lay) to the National Security Council, November 20, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 398-9. Roadnight would argue that this new policy was a subtle yet significant departure from Truman's policy objectives for Indonesia. The latter put emphasis on economic development of Indonesia as an end, while the former saw the economy as one tool to save Indonesia from falling to the Communist camp. Roadnight (2002) 108

³⁴ Memorandum of Discussion at the 171st meeting of the National Security Council, November 19, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 390-2. See also Timo Kivimaki, *US-Indonesian Hegemonic Bargaining: Strength of Weakness* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003) 107

a policy that demanded a transfer of control and management of economic enterprises from foreign (Western and Chinese³⁵) to Indonesian hands. Led by Iskaq Tjokroadisurjo, a minister from the PNI, the program was mired in so much corruption and mismanagement that between September 1953 and June 1954, the government debt increased from Rp. 1.051 billion to Rp. 3.410 billion and foreign exchange reserves collapsed from Rp. 1.145 billion to *negative* Rp. 20 million. The total size of the money supply also drastically increased from Rp. 7.218 billion in July 1953 to Rp. 8.692 billion in June 1954, and by the time the cabinet collapsed in July 1955, the total size of money supply was at the staggering amount of Rp. 12.632 billion. The collapsing exchange rate also followed in the wake of this economic mismanagement: while the official rate was fixed at Rp. 11.40, in June 1953 the black market rates were Rp. 25.50, Rp. 27.00 in July 1954, and Rp. 46.40 in July 1955. In the meantime, the number of companies that were operated by "indigenous businessmen" that had exclusive import rights to certain categories of goods ballooned from 700 when the Cabinet took office to at least 2,211 and possibly 4,000 to 5,000 in July 1955.³⁶

The Masjumi struck, denouncing Iskaq for abuses such as giving preferential treatment to members of the PNI. In typical Indonesian wordplay, Jusuf Wibisono from

³⁵ The Chinese were targeted by this policy because the Ali cabinet believed that the Chinese: Even though long resident in Indonesia and in former Dutch East Indies had never been truly loyal to local government.... While government especially concerned with Communist infiltration and trying to formulate plans to meet this situation, its principal concern was not with whether Chinese were Communists or Nationalists, but whether they were subversive of government of the country in which they resided. Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, November 24, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 402

The fear of the Chinese survived long after the collapse of the Ali cabinet. On August 21, 1957, Subandrio stated his fear of the danger from the Communist China, which was possible as the Chinese community in Indonesia, which he believed as sympathetic to the Communist China, was deeply involved in Indonesian economy. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 21, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 417

³⁶ Feith (1962) 374-7

the Masjumi declared that Iskaq's policy was not a policy of nationalizing the economy but rather making the economy Indonesian Nationalist – a pun on the PNI's name. He also added that only ten percent of those who received licenses were bona fide traders. Moreover, the Masjumi also denounced the fact that licenses were granted under the condition that the recipients would make a contribution to the PNI for the general election war chest.³⁷ The public was outraged. The entire scandal threatened to bring down the government when both the NU and the PIR³⁸ (each held three seats in the Cabinet) threatened to leave the government unless Ali reshuffle the cabinet. Ali acquiesced. Iskaq resigned and Ali reshuffled the cabinet. When the Masjumi moved for a motion of no confidence *for the whole cabinet*, the Cabinet barely survived, thanks only to the support from the PKI and its sympathizers.³⁹

With the domestic situation in tatters, Ali pushed for his diplomatic offensive. He was fortunate that at the same time Sir John Kotelawala, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka,

³⁷ Feith (1962) 379-80, Noer (1960) 314, Sastroamijoyo (1977) 269. In a conversation between Ambassador Cumming and Pringgogidgo, Chief President Sukarno's Secretariat, Cumming noted that the latter remarked whether Cumming was aware that "the PNI 'preparations' [for the election] include the solicitation under pressure of funds from not only the Chinese element of the Indonesian population but also from foreign firms." Cumming also previously sent a telegram to the State Department on May 25, 1954 that there was "an increase in pressure on American and other foreign firm for "Indonesianization" of their operations at an accelerated and "unreasonable" rate [and] the increasing evidence of political graft, partly for individual enrichment but mainly as a means of filling party election campaign chests." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, June 11, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 428-9

³⁸ The Indonesianization debacle caused a split inside the PIR. From October 22, the PIR was in effect two parties, each claiming to be the original and denouncing the other. The two new parties were divided by region – the anti-cabinet PIR-Hazairin/Tajuddin Noor commanded the support of most branches of the PIR outside Java, while the pro-cabinet PIR-Wongsonegoro was supported by most of the Java branches and few of those in Sumatra. Feith (1962) 381

³⁹ Feith notes that the cabinet would not have survived had the PNI refused to have Iskaq to step down. Feith (1962) 382. Ali, while mentioning the entire crisis in his memoir, denied any intentional misconduct from Iskaq, though he conceded that there were abuses during this entire process. Interestingly, he also denied that the PKI was responsible for keeping his cabinet alive, which came out of blue, since he had not mentioned the PKI at all except when he discussed the beginning of his tenure, in which he also rejected the idea that the PKI's support was critical to the Cabinet's political survival. Sastroamijoyo (1977) 269-70, 315

believed that it would be pleasant to have a meeting of Prime Ministers of liberated countries, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Burma, and Indonesia, on April 28, 1954, without any agenda at all!⁴⁰

The agenda however, was conveniently supplied by a sudden burst of diplomatic activity in Asia during the siege of Dien Bien Phu in late 1953 and early 1954. With reports that Communist China was aiding the Vietminh and the collapse of the French empire seemed imminent, the United States found itself in a dilemma. Ever since the Truman Administration, the United States had been concerned with the growing strength of the Communists in Vietnam. During a debate in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in determining the budget for fiscal year 1951, Dean Rusk bluntly argue that Vietnam was a "part of an international war." He stressed that since Ho Chi Minh took his orders from the Kremlin, the fall of Vietnam would also be followed by the fall of Thailand, and all of Southeast Asia.⁴¹ Therefore, even though Eisenhower was apprehensive in light of the possible expanded involvement of the United States in Vietnam, the fear of the Communists' takeover was such that he insisted, "My god, we must not lose Asia – we've got to look the thing in the face." By February 1954, Eisenhower sent forty bombers and two hundred US air force mechanics to Vietnam to help the French.⁴²

The possible escalation in Vietnam not surprisingly became the main topic in the Colombo Conference that was held between April 28 and May 2. During this meeting,

⁴⁰ Ivor Jennings, "Politics in Ceylon Since 1952" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (Dec. 1954) 348-9. This version is supported by Sir John Kotelawala's autobiography. Anak Agung (1973) 204-5

⁴¹ Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 354

⁴² George C. Herring and Richard H. Immerman, "Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu: "The Day We Didn't Go to War" Revisited" *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (Sept 1984) 345-6

however, Prime Minister Ali proposed a large and high level conference of the independent states of Asia and Africa to be held in Indonesia in order to contribute to the relaxation of the Cold War tension and in order to be a rallying point for the struggle of Asians and Africans against colonialism. Both Nehru, the Prime Minister of India, and U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, were not enthusiastic in the beginning, simply because they did not think the large conference would be useful or feasible. In order not to offend Indonesia, though, they reluctantly gave their consent, giving Ali the whole responsibility of developing the idea further.⁴³

A series of developments changed Nehru's mind. In June, Zhou En Lai visited New Delhi and Nehru was convinced of the need to encourage a benign international outlook of China and to make the Chinese come to terms with its neighbors. Thus, when Ali visited New Delhi in September, Nehru gave his blessing to the Asian-African Conference project, provided that China was invited to attend. Both Nehru and Ali were hoping that the conference would make it easier for China to develop an independent diplomatic approach vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Moreover, both of them bristled over the U.S.-sponsored Manila Pact in September 1954 that created SEATO (South East Asia Treaty Organization), in which Pakistan would be included.⁴⁴

Still, the biggest boon from the conference would be for Indonesia. Facing internal crisis at home, Ali desperately needed a foreign policy triumph to quell critics back home. As Anak Agung noted:

⁴³ Anak Agung (1973) 207-8, Feith (1962) 387, Pauker (1955) 3

⁴⁴ George McT. Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956) 36-7, Michael Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983) 39

Ali was convinced that an Afro-Asian conference, as a manifestation of this policy of self-assertion on the part of Indonesia, would enhance the position of his cabinet, making it more difficult for the opposition to rally public opinion against his cabinet. Moreover, an election in Indonesia was approaching, and it was a matter of record that it would be held due in time.... An Afro-Asian conference convened on the initiative of the Indonesian government under his leadership would give credit not only to the government as a whole but also in the first place to Ali himself, and since he was the leader of the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) such a conference would also put the PNI in high esteem in the eyes of the Indonesian public which could become a great asset in the coming election.⁴⁵

Of course, there was always the problem of Irian Barat. In light of the domestic problems facing the Ali cabinet and the possibility of a Masjumi electoral victory, the issue of Irian Barat remained useful to bolster the cabinet's position. In August 1954, Indonesia requested that Washington support a "mild" resolution in the United Nations General Assembly in regards to Irian Barat. Washington, however, was split on this issue – part of the State Department was wary of offending both Australia and the Dutch. There were also fears that the Indonesian government had turned to the Communists. On the other hand, the United States to some degree was interested in pushing the Indonesian resolution, as they believed that even though the Ali cabinet was supported by the Communists; it was still salvageable since the cabinet seemed to block the Communists from the seat of power. Therefore, the United States still needed to maintain at least friendly relations with Indonesia to halt a further Communists advance. Still, Washington was also worried that the resolution, regardless of how mild it was, would be used by the Communist bloc as a propaganda tool.⁴⁶

Meanwhile, the Dutch were refusing to cooperate, as anti-Dutch feeling in Indonesia was at a fever pitch and vice-versa, following the arrests, mistreatment,

⁴⁵ Anak Agung (1973) 210-1

⁴⁶ Roadnight (2002) 119

botched investigations, and circus-like trials of thirty-four Dutchmen accused of being agents between the Dutch government and the Darul Islam rebellion.⁴⁷ On September 27, 1954, the Dutch ambassador to the United States stressed further that the Netherlands would ignore any recommendations from the UN.⁴⁸ On the other hand, the Indonesians were adamant to bring the issue of Irian Barat to the table especially with Sukarno's agitation, as stated by Cumming:

Sukarno from the outset has been prime leader in all moves to bring Irian problem to a head. There is no Indo party which does not subscribe to the belief that Irian is by rights Indonesian. Most leaders have, however, felt that it was not expedient or wise to press forward as rapidly as Sukarno desired or as his patriotic demagoguery on the subject required; on the other hand no leader or party could afford to be placed in a position of open opposition to steps proposed by Sukarno "to complete the revolution by regaining Irian."

Even the most reasonable Indo leaders with whom I have talked, firmly believe that it is Dutch refusal even to discuss the question which has forced Sukarno equally firmly to insist upon discussion.

Thus, the United States was placed in a very difficult situation, forcing Dulles to commit to neutrality, as Cummings noted in his report from Jakarta on August 18, 1954:

I do not see how in the light of our alliances with the Dutch and with the Aussies we can give "any favorable nod" to the Indonesians... on the other hand, in view of the present and future importance of Indonesia to American security interests in Southeast Asia, I do not see how we can give a favorable nod to the Dutch.⁴⁹

On December 11, 1954, after the vote of the draft resolution in the United Nations, the U.S. delegate, Henry Cabot Lodge was able to assure Dulles that the United States was not caught in the crossfire.⁵⁰ It was a close call: several months before,

⁴⁷ C.L.M Penders, *The West Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 228

⁴⁸ Robert C. Bone, Jr., *the Dynamics of the Western New Guinea (Irian Barat) Problem* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1962) 124

⁴⁹ Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, August 18, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 462-3

⁵⁰ Roadnight (120)

between June and early August 1954, both Indonesia and the Dutch negotiated to annul the Netherlands-Indonesia union and to modify the Round Table Conference agreements, leading to the Sunario-Luns Protocol, which dissolved the Union and cancelled several minor clauses from the conference's agreements. Reaction to the protocol was so hostile that the Ali government did not have the courage to submit the protocols to Parliament for approval.⁵¹

Thus, it was interesting to find that reaction in Indonesia was mild to the failure of the UN resolution, even though Sukarno had called for the formation of an All-Indonesian Irian Front on August 17 1954, in response to the Sunario-Luns Protocol.⁵² In a repetition of his treatment of Sukiman's cabinet, Sukarno never bothered to push the cabinet for a stronger position, considering that he felt the cabinet to be under his influence and thus he did not want to create a cabinet crisis that would bring the feared Masjumi to the seat of power and undo the PNI's attempts to win the election.

Still, in light of the Irian Barat problem, there were growing concerns in Washington about Indonesia, especially on the growing strength of the Communists. As early as December 1, 1954, Eisenhower pondered whether in the worst-case scenario Washington needed to send military forces to prevent Indonesia from falling to the Communists. Three weeks later, the administration formulated a new NSC policy to "employ all feasible covert means, and all feasible overt means, including, in accordance with constitutional processes, the use of armed force, if necessary and appropriate, to prevent Indonesia or vital parts thereof from falling under communist control."⁵³

⁵¹ Anak Agung (1973) 111-2, Feith (1962) 391, Penders (2002) 244-7

⁵² Bone (1962) 132

⁵³ Roadnight (2002) 123-4

In the meantime, Indonesia was to hold one of the most important international events in its history. The Asian-African conference started on April 18 through 24, attended by what the acting director of the CIA told Eisenhower was "a very odd assortment" of twenty-nine nations, whose "nearest common denominator... was a recent experience of Western imperialism." Not everything went smoothly. There were minor glitches and quarrels as delegates were not behaving as moderately as expected. Prime Minister Nehru and Prime Minister Mohammad Ali from Pakistan had a spat on the first day of the conference on a matter of procedures. In addition, tensions were sparked between the Western-oriented states that wanted to push the anti-Communist agenda versus the Communists and neutral groups that wanted to keep the Cold War off the agenda lest it wreck the conference.⁵⁴ However, moderation, especially from Zhou En Lai, saved the day. As Pauker noted:

In general, his diplomatic finesse and personal charm made Chou En Lai—throughout a crowded week—the great social success of the Bandung Conference. If, as was generally assumed, Nehru promoted the Asian-African Conference largely as a coming-out party for Red China, he was lucky in the choice of the debutante he introduced.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Hearing the report about the eclectic mix of the delegates, Eisenhower cracked that "perhaps the best way for the U.S. to handle this matter was to give a few thousand dollars to each of the delegates. Indeed (again facetiously), the President added he would approve of any methods up to but not including assassination of the hostile delegates." A. Doak Barnett, *Asia and Africa in Session: Random Notes on the Asian-African Conference* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, 1955) 20-1, Jason C. Parker, "The Eisenhower Administration and the Bandung Conference," In Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns, *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (Latham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006) 160-1

⁵⁵ Pauker (1955) 8

While the final communiqué of the Asian-African Conference was a fairly vague document full of high-sounding generalities,⁵⁶ the conference was seen as a major success of the Ali government. The national pride was at its peak, especially when Ali was elected as the President of the conference. The United States was also pleased. President Sukarno delivered a moving opening speech by quoting Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous poem, "Paul Revere's Ride," and associating the ride with decolonialization, much to the gratification of the wary Eisenhower administration.⁵⁷ In short, it was a glorious moment for Ali's government. As Feith argued:

It goes without saying that the glory of Bandung was important for domestic politics. Whereas opposition critics had been inclined up to the end of March 1955 to belittle and ridicule the planned conference and decry it as a gimmick designed to distract attention from pressing problems at home, they could no longer afford to do this when the conference came closer.⁵⁸

In addition to the public acclamation, Ali also managed to pull a public relations coup by having the issue of Irian Barat dealt with in the final communiqué. The conference supported Indonesia's claims to the Dutch-held Irian Barat and recommended reopening negotiations and using UN assistance in finding a peaceful solution.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ In fact, Dulles happily reported that with minor reservations, the final communiqué "was a document which we ourselves could subscribe to [and he] listed about eight points of [it] which were consistent with our own foreign policy.... Even [the Bandung document's] references to colonialism were in accord with what we feel in our hearts." Barnett (1955) 29, Parker (2006) 164

⁵⁷ McMahon (2006) 80-1. Gardner noted that both Sukarno and Ali were well aware that Washington watched the conference closely and the non-alignment bias might irritate Washington. Roeslan Abdulgani, the secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, found a way to minimize Washington's irritation. Finding that the anniversary of Paul Revere's ride fell on the same day as the opening of the conference, he asked Cumming for information and inserted the poem in Sukarno's speech. Roeslan reported that Cumming came to him that day smiling and his hand outstretched. Unbeknownst to Cumming, the date of the conference was dictated by the need to sandwich the conference between Islamic and Buddhist holidays. Paul F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997) 118-9. In fact, in a cable from Jakarta, Cumming proclaimed that the conference was "more than an 85 percent victory" for the West. Roadnight (2002) 127

⁵⁸ Feith (1962) 393-4

⁵⁹ Barnett (1955) 30, Pauker (1955) 9

While Washington was pondering how to deal with the renewed pressure of the Irian Barat question and the aftermath of the conference, Ali faced a crisis in Indonesia: the problem of the Army returned with a vengeance. Ever since the end of the October 17 Affair, the Ali government under Iwa Kusumasumantri, the Minister of Defense, had been trying to maintain the split within the military by promoting anti-October 17 officers and sidelined the pro-October 17 officers in order to strengthen the cabinet's influence in the military. However, Iwa's high-handed personnel policy, his politicking in the Army, and his flirtation with the idea of arming the Communist veterans alienated even the anti-October 17 group.

To make the situation worse for the Army, their budget was slashed catastrophically. To illustrate this point, in 1951-1952, the Army consumed half a billion rupiah in foreign exchange. In 1954-5, it had not spent more than five million and the purchase of foreign equipment virtually ceased. The budget for the construction of a new building in 1955 was also only a fifth of what it used to be in 1952. In addition, the government's policy of transferring the leaders in the Army, lest they managed to build their own powerbase, annoyed the Peta officers (who comprised the bulk of anti-October 17 officer corps) greatly. It was not surprising that at this point even the staunch anti-October 17 officers started to rethink their position vis-à-vis the Cabinet.⁶⁰

In mid-1954, several officers decided to begin efforts to reunite the Army, with the approval of Major General Bambang Sugeng, the Chief of Staff. By the end of 1954, most of the rift had been healed. Then, on February 17-25, 1955, the military held a large

⁶⁰ Ruth McVey, "The Post-Revolutionary Transformation of the Indonesian Army I" In *Indonesia*, Vol. 11 (April 1971) 152, 153-4, Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 80

conference in Jogjakarta, attended by 270 high and middle ranking officers. They signed the Charter of Unity (*Piagam Jogja*), which was approved almost unanimously and signed by Bambang Sugeng in the presence of Sukarno, Hatta, Ali, Iwa, and other politicians. Buried within the charter was the notion that the military demanded a limit on political influence on the Army by the politicians. The Army was so determined to close its ranks in the face of outsiders that even the anti-October 17 group was willing to go along with the return of the pro-October 17 group to a position of dominance. To further stress the expression of unity, in a highly emotional atmosphere, the officers visited the graves of General Sudirman and Lieutenant General Urip, the commanders during the revolution.⁶¹

For several months, the government was preoccupied by the Asian-African Conference and did not take the Jogjakarta conference seriously. This was soon to change. On May 2, 1955, tired of the fact that Iwa had been ignoring him and had been meddling too much in army affairs – not to mention the fact that he felt himself unable to implement the Charter of Unity – Bambang Sugeng resigned, leaving his deputy, Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, as the acting Chief of Staff.

In reflecting the Charter of Unity, the Army demanded that the appointment of the next Chief of Staff should be based on seniority, effectively choosing Colonel Simbolon, Colonel Nasution, or Colonel Gatot Subroto, all of whom were not acceptable to the cabinet. The cabinet instead gave a list of three different colonels: Zulkifli Lubis, Bambang Utojo, and Sudirman – all of whom were from the anti-October 17 groups and

⁶¹ Feith (1962) 398, Pauker (1962) 209-10, Sundhaussen (1982) 80-1

none of whom met the qualification demanded by the Army – to both Sukarno and Hatta. Iwa suggested appointing Colonel Zulkifli Lubis. The cabinet agreed.

Surprisingly, during the next cabinet meeting, Iwa angrily withdrew his support for Lubis. He declared that his confidence in Lubis was misplaced because the latter had appointed a number of "the PSI officers" (pro-October 17) as his assistants without consulting him. However, both Sukarno and Hatta deadlocked and defer the selection entirely to the cabinet.⁶²

Ali would later find out that Hatta had opposed to the appointment of Colonel Lubis on the grounds that he was still a junior officer and, instead, Hatta nominated Colonel Simbolon. Both Ali and Iwa were then convinced that Lubis' appointed these PSI officers to overcome Hatta's opposition.⁶³ However, it could also be interpreted that Lubis simply recognized the new trend in the Army much better than Ali. Unlike the colonels who met with the President on October 17, 1952, Lubis was not politically inexperienced, as he was the head of the Army intelligence. Moreover, by nominating Colonel Simbolon, Hatta in essence threw his weight to the Army, providing a strong counterbalance against Sukarno's influence.⁶⁴

At this point, the Ali government was planning to reassert control over the Army by provoking it, leading it to a showdown, and then forcing it into submission. Still fresh

⁶² Sundhaussen (1982) 82

⁶³ Sastroamijoyo (1977) 312-3

⁶⁴ As early as 1954, in a conversation between Ambassador Cumming and Hatta, when the former inquired about a rumor of increasing dissatisfaction within the Army on the leftward trend of the government, Hatta stated the necessity that all army officers reconcile their differences and unite, because "settlement of differences within officer corps very greatly enhanced army's ability to take care of Communists if force were needed." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, December 22, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 487-8. It could be implied that another factor that strengthen the newly-found unity within the Army was its fear of the growing strength of the Communists in the government.

from the glory of the Asian-African Conference, Ali, who was convinced that the government could break the military cohesion, not unlike during Wilopo's era, by persuading other officers whose support was still uncertain, believed that his position was unassailable. Moreover, once Sukarno threw in his support, everything would fall in line as usual.⁶⁵

To the cabinet's surprise, all three of their candidates declined their appointment. Lubis, of course had seen the writing on the wall, and Sudirman, the commander of East Java division, was smart enough to see where the wind blew. After some persuasion from the PNI and presumably from Sukarno, Bambang Utojo, who was sympathetic to the PNI, agreed to be the Chief of Staff, even though he was relatively low in seniority. However, there were signs in the air that everything did not move as expected. Even though the Cabinet enlisted help from Sukarno, the latter was told by Lubis that the entire army would boycott the inauguration of Bambang Utojo. At this point, the government was too deeply committed to its course to back down, and decided to go through with the ceremony.⁶⁶

On the morning of June 27, 1955, in a ceremony at the Presidential Palace, Bambang Utojo was installed by the President as the Chief of Staff and was made a major general. The ceremony was conspicuous for the fact that the Army was not there to see it, except for some five or six officers. The entire army had boycotted the ceremony, a boycott carried out on the orders of Lubis. The boycott was so effective that the band of

⁶⁵ Sundhaussen (1982) 83

⁶⁶ According to Ambassador Cumming's reports, Sukarno misjudged the strength of the Army feeling and solidarity about the Jogjakarta Conference. It was also speculated that Sukarno and Iwa might want "to demonstrate strength and to increase their civilian control over the military and possibly hoped to increase the stature of PNI-Ali Cabinet." Memorandum From the Director of Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Young) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), July 1, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 172-3

Jakarta Raya Fire Brigade had to be hastily summoned, since no military band could be found to play the national anthem. The entire performance was ludicrous and, to add insult to injury, the entire diplomatic corps was there to see it.⁶⁷

Fresh from the victory of the Asian-African Conference, the boycott was a huge shock to the government. The government was completely humiliated. When on the same morning, Lubis declared that he refused to surrender his authority to Bambang, he was immediately suspended. Lubis called a press conference, denouncing politicians who worked to split the Army and giving the impression that he was not in favor of a military coup. Rather, the entire affair was caused by unnecessary political intrusion into the Army, which was the "backbone of the national potential."

Sukarno tried his proven formula by attempting to split the Army. This time, however, he failed. Lubis' action was supported by the entire Army. One of the officers that the government managed to buy off at this time was the acting commander of the Sriwijaya Division, Lieutenant Colonel Ibnu Sutowo. However, his position was very weak without much support from his division. This time, Colonel Warouw was strongly behind Lubis, and Sudirman was ambivalent, but decided against fighting the dominant Army position.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ In Feith's excellent summary of the shameful impact of this boycott: "In a society where ceremonial occasions were always handled with meticulous attention to every ritual detail, the Army's highest officer was sworn in to the strains of a fire brigade band!" Ali Sastroamijoyo complained in his memoir that the ceremony was a disgraceful blow to both the government and the President. Moreover, he argued that the opposition to Bambang Utoyo was based on the fact that he was disabled, his right arm having been amputated, without mentioning at all the Army's criteria and discontent about the government's politicking in the Army. Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963) 213-4. Feith (1962) 399, Sastroamijoyo (1977) 313, Sundhaussen (1982) 83.

⁶⁸ Feith (1962) 400-1, Sundhaussen (1982) 83-4. Ibnu Sutowo would later achieve prominence during Suharto's era, being responsible for the collapse of Pertamina, the state's oil company, from massive corruption, waste, and graft unprecedented in the company's history, and thus squandering the entire income from the oil boom of the 1970s.

Moreover, at this time, the cabinet was highly unpopular. As the glory of the Asian-African Conference faded away, the cabinet was back to its unpopular self: rife with corruption, inflation, and most of all, politicking. The Army set itself as an alternative above the entire mess, and as a symbol of unity and professionalism, free of political intrigues, even more so than the President. As Feith noted:

No longer could the Cabinet, with its reliance on the President, appear as the only true custodian of the heritage of the Revolution. Indeed, the challenge of the Army under Lubis was that it represented the nation as a whole and did so in a way more unsullied by partisan politics than President Sukarno himself.⁶⁹

Another important factor in the entire affair was the involvement of Hatta. Unlike during the October 17 Affair, Hatta had made it clear in the beginning that he was supporting Simbolon, thus setting himself on the opposite side of Sukarno. Backed by Hatta, who was the other Founding Father of Indonesia and a symbol of competent professionalism, the newly united Army had a powerful symbol, and of course it provided a strong counter against Sukarno's attempts to break the Army. Therefore, Sukarno's influence was practically neutralized. Moreover, in the aftermath of the June 27 Affair, Hatta stayed aloof from the entire negotiation even though he might have been able to broker a compromise to save the cabinet.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Feith (1962) 401

⁷⁰ In a telegram dated July 24, 1955, Cumming stated that Hatta did not approve of the Ali Cabinet's orders to the Army. Moreover, in a previous telegram, Cumming stated that Hatta's influence in this affair could not be underestimated, as "Iwa's attempt to steal march on force opposing him counterbalanced by Hatta's entrance into negotiations with result that only apparent outcome so far is inability of government make a decision, thus leaving Lubis as acting C/S." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, June 10, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 168, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, July 24, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 176

On June 29, Zainal Baharuddin struck, this time in support of the Army, by tabling a motion of no confidence against the government.⁷¹ On July 12, two minor parties that were part of the cabinet withdrew their ministers. On July 13, after heavy pressure, Ali asked Iwa to resign, and the latter complied. On the same day, the cabinet tried to save face by proposing a compromise in which the cabinet would withdraw its suspension of Lubis, retire Bambang Utoyo, and choose the new Chief of Staff from the Army's list. In return, the Army would merely have to make a formal acknowledgment of Bambang's authority. The Army refused to budge.⁷²

Sensing that all was lost, President Sukarno on July 18 left for a pilgrimage to Mecca after obtaining an assurance from Lubis that the Army would not take any unilateral action.⁷³ On July 20, the NU decided to urge the cabinet to resign and on July 24, Ali returned the Cabinet's mandate to Vice President Hatta.⁷⁴

⁷¹ As noted earlier, Indonesian politics was to some degree a family affair. Baharuddin was a relative of Colonel Zulkifli Lubis.

⁷² Feith (1962) 85, Sastroamijoyo (1977) 314, Sundhaussen (1982) 85. It was interesting to see the differing viewpoints in regards to the Army's rejection to Ali's compromise. While the Army, as noted by Sundhaussen, saw the rejection of the appointment as a matter of principle, Ali believed that his compromise was reasonable since it would avoid "loss of face" for both sides. Feith simply noted that the Army believed that they were in a much better position, so why should they compromise?

⁷³ Sukarno had postponed his departure once to help shore up support for Ali. At this point, he seemed to have given up. Pauker acidly noted that from this point, President Sukarno established a pattern of leaving the country at the height of a political crisis. Pauker (1962) 211. Still, it seemed that Sukarno was worried that the Army might pull a military coup and probably he left only after he was assured that the Army was not interested in overthrowing him. On June 10, 1955, Foreign Officer Adviser General Abu Hanifah from Masjumi, told Cumming of a meeting between Abu Hanifah and Sukarno during Sukarno's birthday on June 6:

Hanifah said that Sukarno behaved like a "cornered man" and asked why Hanifah and his other friends "are deserting him." Reply was that it was President who was deserting his friends and surrounding himself with other advisers.... Hanifah remarked to me that Sukarno had reason to be distraught: family troubles, deteriorating economic and financial situation; tension created by search for new C/S, and general political situation, and so forth. He thought Sukarno probably worried about leaving information [Indonesia] for his pilgrimage and state visits to Egypt, and so forth, but these commitments could not now be avoided." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, June 10, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 167

⁷⁴ Before the NU's announcement, Ali actually still believed that he had a fighting chance in the Parliament. Sastroamijoyo (1977) 314

The longevity of Ali's cabinet was striking, especially considering that the cabinet was comprised of a large number of small parties, without the Masjumi's participation. In order to maintain the stability of the cabinet, Ali depended on several factors. The most important factor, of course, was very critical support from the President. Sukarno was the one who pushed the creation of the cabinet, and during the entire tenure of Ali, he actively supported the Cabinet, even during the June 27 Affair.

The question, however, was how much independence Ali had vis-à-vis Sukarno. While Roem declared that Ali was Sukarno's man, a more appropriate description of the relationship might be a working coalition between Ali and Sidik, the chairman of the PNI, and Sukarno. The Cabinet started from a very fragile and uncertain situation: this cabinet was the first PNI cabinet in which the Masjumi was unrepresented. On the other hand, even though Sukarno was able to break his opponents in the Wilopo era, he still needed to take account of the possible threat from the Masjumi. The feared Islamic state was not simply a rallying cry to quash the Masjumi: it was considered as a real possibility. Therefore, it was in the interest of both Sukarno and the PNI to work together.

As time progressed, however, Sukarno found himself to be completely dependent on the PNI. At this point, the still weak PKI, fearful of a sudden government crackdown, was cooperating closely with the PNI.⁷⁵ The Army was shattered, while the Masjumi with the perceived Islamism in it was frightening to Sukarno and the nationalists. On the

⁷⁵ Many members within the PNI grumbled about the close identification of the PNI with the PKI. Even Ali himself reportedly was deeply concerned over the PNI association with the PKI. Djuanda stated that they could do nothing as "their mouths are tightly closed by party discipline," while inferred that the discipline stemmed from either Sidik or Sukarno himself, worried about the Masjumi. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, January 20, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 131

other hand, regardless of the economic disasters and scandals, Ali through his political machinery was able to increase his political support. His foreign policy was successful and he actually would no longer need Sukarno's support had everything gone his way. In fact, fearing the Masjumi, Sukarno's power was actually drained slowly in this political arrangement as he became more and more dependent on the PNI as an opponent to the Masjumi.⁷⁶ However, the Army, by staging the June 27 Affair, took everyone by surprise and ruined the political arrangements. As noted above, at this point, it was possible that Sukarno was pondering the possibility of a military coup. After this fiasco, Sukarno would never again gamble his position on one single power entity. This explains Ambassador Cumming's cable to the White House in the wake of the election of 1955 in which he claimed that the election's result had reestablished Sukarno's position which had been steadily weakening since 1953.⁷⁷

The second factor, which supported the first factor, was the ability of the cabinet to distribute perks and money. Fearing both the Masjumi and the PSI, Ali's tenure was marked by a mass firing of both the Masjumi and the PSI sympathizers within the bureaucracy, who were replaced with members of PNI under the tacit approval of Sukarno. In the Ministry of Religion, the NU minister dismissed most members of the Masjumi in the department within three months. Of course, the immediate result of that

⁷⁶ In a conversation between Cumming and Pringgodigdo, the latter stated that Sukarno had "progressively isolated himself from nearly all political leaders and factions except PNI and leftist groups associated with PNI" and Sukarno had so closely identified himself with the PNI that it was impossible for him "to visualize his continuation in office without a PNI victory." The fear of the Masjumi was the driving factor: Sukarno was convinced that the Masjumi would push for a presidential election after the Parliamentary election and the Masjumi then would oppose Sukarno's presidency. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, June 11, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 427-8

⁷⁷ In his telegram, Cumming observed, "Parliamentary elections appear to have re-confirmed Sukarno as single most powerful and influential Indonesian personality and have re-established in good part but not completely his position which has been steadily weakening since late 1953." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, December 5, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 210

policy was making membership in the PNI and its allies very attractive. In addition, the Indonesianization scheme also worked in generating needed funds for the PNI and at the same time distributing favors, though it wrecked the economy.⁷⁸

In the long term, this policy sowed the seeds of separatism simply because of the ruined economy. As noted above, by July 1955 the black market exchange rate was Rp. 46.40, the official exchange rate remained fixed at Rp. 11.40, and these were the rate that the government paid to the exporters. As a result, many exporters resorted to smuggling in order to survive. The pressure for smuggling was so strong that even top Army commanders, such as Colonel Warouw, played an active part in the smuggling operation. Part of the reason for the action was necessity: the budget of the Army was slashed drastically. Another part, on the other hand, was the growing resentment of the regions outside Java, which received much of their revenue from exports, about what they saw as a Java-dominated economy.

Third, the cabinet managed to keep the opposition fragmented. Even though the Masjumi was a dominant presence in the Parliament, it was weakened by its estrangement from the NU and the collapse of the Army as a political presence. Of course, as noted above, the cabinet also maintained its policy to split the Army, though it did not realize the full impact of the Army policy until much too late.

⁷⁸ Pringgogidgo stated that Sukarno condoned and even encouraged: the "brutality" with which PNI were removing officials of all grades from office and supplementing them with their own people.... (Pringgogidgo) said that PNI preparations for the election were very thorough and far reaching. He had heard the estimate made by a PNI leader in an unguarded moment that through control of the electoral and administrative machinery they could keep the vote down to 30 percent of the qualified electoral list (which were not yet drawn up) and, if so, could win the elections. He said that perhaps I was aware that the PNI "preparations" include the solicitation under pressure of funds from not only the Chinese element of the Indonesian population but also from foreign firms. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, June 11, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 428

Fourth, in order to solidify its position, the cabinet pursued a very active foreign policy. In Ali's case, luck and opportunities were on his side, and he managed to utilize them. Regardless of the misgiving of other Colombo powers, Ali pulled off a diplomatic triumph, even though in the end it gave the cabinet a false sense of security about its position.

However, Ali was blindsided by two important factors. First was the fact that the Army managed to regroup and thus became another powerbase that threatened and brought down the cabinet. The second important factor, unfortunately under-appreciated in Indonesian studies, was the growing presence of Hatta in Indonesian politics. Even though Hatta was still refraining from becoming directly involved in politics, he had managed to influence political affairs *within the limits of his office*. He only interfered when it was within the authority of his office to interfere, as shown during the June 27 Affair, where he implicitly supported the Army by throwing his weight behind the Army's choice of Chief of Staff.

While this put him at a disadvantaged position compared to Sukarno, who blatantly broke the constraints of his office, the most important thing was that at the end of the day, Hatta became a choice to the oppositions to rally around. It was also shown in his speeches where he presented a viewpoint close to the Masjumi, the PSI, and in direct contrast to the government and the President. His disagreement with Sukarno had grown so much that it attracted a great deal of public attention.⁷⁹ Thus, Ali's cabinet marked the end of cooperation between Sukarno and Hatta and the emergence of Hatta as a power broker in his own right. For Sukarno, the collapse of the Ali cabinet also proved to him

⁷⁹ Feith (1962) 364

that he could not simply depend on one powerbase. He needed to control *all* powerbases in Indonesia.

In the meantime, Aidit was seething at the collapse of the Cabinet. For him, the collapse of Ali's government was a victory of the "holy alliance of Western imperialists and domestic reactionaries." The Army, in particular, was a critical factor in breaking the cabinet. He remarked, "This is a lesson for us... because it teaches us that when they are hard-pressed and fear the development of the people's movement, the reactionaries, without the slightest shame, cast aside the banners of bourgeois democracy."⁸⁰

Meanwhile, Washington realized that regardless of the fact that Ali's foreign policy was far more active than the previous Prime Ministers and that he was responsible for creating the Asian African Conference, Ali's foreign policy was still moderate and the feared anti-United States policies did not materialize.⁸¹ Even the Asian-African Conference itself ended with the whimper of a general communiqué, instead of something bold that would offend the United States. However, Washington remained troubled about what it saw as a growing Communist influence.

Following Dulles' instruction, Cumming had already developed a closer link with the opposition parties, especially with the Masjumi as early as 1954. In a meeting with

⁸⁰ Brackman (1963) 214

⁸¹ On February 5, 1954, Cumming met with Ali, lodging concerns of the Ali government's participation in the "National Peace Congress" that was seen as a PKI-sponsored Congress. Ali then launched: a rather fuzzy defense Indonesian "independent policy" including reference to economic cost to Indonesia of support US embargo Red China, observing that no responsible government could let situation go on without doing something about it.

Cumming, however, noted that Ali's speech was made for the purpose of the record and not necessarily as a hint that Indonesia was about to breach the embargo. He furthermore noted that Ali stated that his government did not approve the anti-American statements at the Congress itself and was pained that Cumming would assume Ali's government was pro-Communist. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, February 5, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 411-12

personnel of the U.S. Embassy, Dr. Abu Hanifah asked for covert American assistance to the Masjumi, citing the example of aid given to De Gasperi in Italy to block the Communists. He assured Washington that the Masjumi would win the election decisively or at least a large plurality, if the election were conducted fairly, as he was concerned about the possibility that the government would rig the ballot (which, as discussed above, was seriously considered by the PNI). The United States put so much faith in the Masjumi that by July 9, 1955, the CIA had given the Masjumi US\$1 million to support its campaign.⁸² The bet had been placed, and Washington started to look to the upcoming election as the best hope for an improvement in relations with Jakarta. The election itself would be conducted under the Masjumi government of Burhanuddin Harahap.

5.2. The Burhanuddin Harahap Cabinet (August 1955-March 1956)

As Sukarno was away on a pilgrimage to Mecca, the duty of selecting the new formateur fell to Vice President Hatta. At this juncture, Hatta held a strong position. The Army, fresh from its victory, had implicitly backed a Hatta cabinet. Hatta himself chose Sukiman, Wilopo, and Asaat as the formateurs and, to nobody's surprise, the formateurs came close to establishing a cabinet in which Hatta would hold the posts of both the Prime Minister and Defense Minister. At this point, the PNI, badly weakened by the scandals during Ali's administration, was willing to drop its objection to have Hatta as Prime Minister.

⁸² Roadnight (2002) 122, 131. Joseph B. Smith, then a deputy branch chief of CIA's Far East Division (FE/5), claimed in his memoir that apparently the funds were distributed without any demand for a detailed accounting on how they were used, and speculated that the Masjumi agents simply "lost a lot of it." He further complained that large sums of the money were spent on films, amplifiers, and tape recorders for mass rallies that the voters found entertaining but not convincing. Joseph B. Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1976) 210-1, 215

Here, Hatta made a blunder, probably typical to his staid personality, by insisting that everything must follow the rule of law, and he pointed out that there was no provision in the Indonesian Constitution that the Vice President of Indonesia was allowed to take over the government if it was impossible to form a cabinet based on party strengths in Parliament. As noted in the previous chapter, according to the Provisional Indonesian Constitution of 1950, a non-Parliamentary cabinet was impossible. Therefore, in order for Hatta to assume the position of Prime Minister, the Parliament had to pass a resolution requesting him to serve in the cabinet by declaring Hatta to be non-active as Vice President.

The PNI, however, refused to play along. Even though Wilopo agreed with Hatta's demands, he was a minority in the PNI. Sidik, the leader of the PNI, insisted that Hatta must be a *citizen* to lead government, in other words, Hatta must resign from his position as Vice President. The Masjumi saw this as an attempt to keep Hatta from returning to the position of Vice President, which was probably true, since the PNI had nothing to gain with a Hatta cabinet that would most likely be a business cabinet, comprised of technocrat members of both the Masjumi and the PSI.⁸³

However, Hatta decided not to pursue this matter further, thus squandering a huge political opportunity, though one could argue that this was the right thing to do. Hatta was simply too much of a stickler and follower of the rules. Based on his track record from the past five years when he resented being on the sidelines but unlike Sukarno never tried to move beyond the limits of his office, this decision should not be surprising.

⁸³ Feith (1962) 416-7, Noer (1960) 327-8

Instead, Hatta appointed Burhanuddin Harahap from the Masjumi as a formateur. The selection of Harahap was particularly striking. He was seen as widely acceptable as he never aroused strong hostilities from other parties. In addition, he was a friend and a relative of Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, which would make him acceptable to the Army. However, he did not have prestige or political capital as great as Hatta's, which was crucial at this point of time.

The Army itself was fairly active during this time, working in the Masjumi's favor by starting to arrest members of the PNI whom it believed were involved in corruption. At this point, the PNI made several concessions, but Harahap, confident that the PNI needed him more, demanded more concessions, which the PNI refused to give. Sukarno had returned on August 4, though he immediately left again for Bogor to prepare his speech for the Indonesian Independence Day celebration.

As both the PNI and the Masjumi refused to budge, Harahap realized that he would face a strong PNI and PKI opposition in the Parliament. Thus, he decided to include almost every party in the Parliament. The NU's support was particularly difficult to get, and it was only through direct pressure from the Army officers that the NU decided to join the cabinet. By the time the cabinet was formed, it comprised 23 posts and thirteen parties, much to the dismay of everyone, including Hatta and the Army.⁸⁴

One thing that the cabinet realized from the beginning was that it was essentially a caretaker government until the anticipated national election would be completed. The cabinet was under pressure to hold a national election no later than September 29. As during Ali's cabinet, the Masjumi had used every single opportunity to hammer down the

⁸⁴ Feith (1962) 417-8, Noer (1960) 328-9, Rose (1987) 180

PNI on the issue of election, and it would seem like hypocrisy should the Cabinet decided to delay the election.

Of course, even if the cabinet was planning to postpone the election, it received no help from Sukarno, who had made his distaste clear to the Cabinet, by announcing that the cabinet did not meet his approval right after his return from overseas.⁸⁵ Thundering on his Independence Day speech on August 17, Sukarno declared that the election should be held "without a day's delay... Let there not be anyone who would betray the elections or try to delay their holding.... Whoever tries to put obstacles in the ways of holding them... is a traitor to the Revolution."⁸⁶ Harahap, however, was not interested in postponing the election, as he was confident of the Masjumi's victory.⁸⁷

Of course, the question was how big the victory would be and Harahap wanted to make sure that the margin of victory would be huge. Thus, during the first two months after the formation of the cabinet, Harahap pursued populist policies that would attract voters such as drastic import restriction, administrative reorganization, and anti-corruption drives that netted several ministers in the former Ali cabinet. On the eve of the elections, the price of gasoline was brought down to half of what it had formerly been.⁸⁸

Already the Harahap Government was making a good impression on Washington. Compared to Ali's government, which was decidedly cool to the United States, this was a

⁸⁵ Rose (1987) 180

⁸⁶ Feith (1962) 421, 424-5

⁸⁷ Brackman (1963) 216

⁸⁸ Herbert Feith, *The Indonesian Elections of 1955* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1957) 12, Feith (1962) 426

breath of fresh air. On August 16, U.S. Ambassador Cumming in a cable happily informed Washington that:

the alterations of the last forty-eight hours in the political climate are little short of breathtaking.... At the state banquet last night, contrary to my past experiences, the entire cabinet made a point of singling me out for warm and friendly attention, leaving the Red Chinese Ambassador noticeably outside the circle. At the Foreign Office reception this morning, the Labor Minister remarked "under the Ali government Indonesia was for sale; now China will have to pay a high price for every concession." ...I was the only Chief of Mission called out by the President for a private conversation which lasted several minutes.⁸⁹

On September 2, the State Department further noted that the new Prime Minister had also signaled his government's desire for closer relations with the United States, even though a change in Indonesia's independent foreign policy was not expected.⁹⁰ However, amidst all the good reports, Dulles was doubtful. He still had huge reservations on the conditions in Indonesia, and he stated his doubt explicitly on August 24 in a conversation in the State Department on the upcoming UN resolution on Irian Barat:

The Secretary said he very strongly opposed Indonesia's getting control of New Guinea. This might not always be the case if a strong and stable government should emerge in Indonesia, but under present conditions for the territory to come under the control of Indonesia was neither in our interests nor in the interests of the inhabitants of New Guinea. He recognized on the other hand, that an important political factor was the emergence of a slightly better government in Indonesia which he would not want to rebuff. The Secretary said that if a resolution failed of adoption in the Assembly, without our being tagged with its defeat, he would not mind at all.

Dulles was apprehensive about the Indonesian political situation and he was waiting for the results of the election before deciding on Washington's course of action. As a result, the United States delegation in the United Nations was instructed to abstain

⁸⁹ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 16, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 181-2

⁹⁰ Roadnight (2002) 130

from voting on any resolutions on Irian Barat.⁹¹ Still, in a telegram dated on September 23, 1955, Dulles was optimistic enough to agree to appropriate some funds to Indonesia, though it could not be too large as it would require Congressional approval.⁹²

In the meantime, the Harahap government tried to score a diplomatic triumph on Irian Barat by pursuing a more conciliatory line with both the Dutch and the Australians, and apparently Sukarno consented to this approach. He agreed to refrain from making anti-Western and anti-Dutch speeches in regards to Irian Barat until December.⁹³ On September 10, a parliamentary correspondent of a Dutch Labor Party-oriented weekly reported that Dr. Abu Hanifah, now an Indonesian diplomatic representative at the UN, declared the government aimed "at bettering importantly Indonesia's relations with the Western World" and "exposing the Netherlands to an offensive of reasonableness."⁹⁴

⁹¹ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, August 24, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 183. To be fair to Dulles' position, the position of the United States was not at all appealing. On one hand the State Department wanted to encourage the new Burhanuddin cabinet, but on the other hand, with the situation remained in flux, any friendly gesture toward the Burhanuddin cabinet would be perceived badly should the PNI returned to power, or even backfire, tarring the Burhanuddin cabinet with the accusation of being too close to the United States. As a result, Washington had to stay neutral. See Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Secretary of State, September 17, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 192-3. In addition, apparently the Burhanuddin Cabinet was also interested in withdrawing the issue of Irian Barat from the General Assembly. On September 2, 1955, Cumming reported that Hanifah confirmed Natsir's earlier statement on August 27 that: the present government is in dilemma and embarrassed by actions taken by Ali Cabinet.... Since Irian included in UNGA agenda by A-A countries Indonesia not in position to withdraw item, Indonesian Government wishes to find formula whereby both governments can "save face". Government suggesting therefore to Dutch that both governments agree that no matter what decision UNGA there will be no hard feelings as result. Indonesian Government however would like to see some friendly gesture from Dutch Government on this matter. Even if it is mere "negotiations on how to negotiate" for solution of problem. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, September 2, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 186

On October 3, 1955, Anak Agung, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, expressed his appreciation on the United States' position on the Irian Barat question, especially in the face of the Australian and Dutch pressure to support their position. Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, October 3, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 197-8

⁹² Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, September 23, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 195-6

⁹³ Anak Agung (1973) 118. The Cabinet elicited Sukarno's agreement on this policy before the election.

⁹⁴ Bone (1962) 134

The new government did what it declared it wanted to do. Within days after taking office, it informed the Dutch government and other Western governments such as the British of its desire to improve the relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia.⁹⁵ In addition, it also restored the diplomatic status of The Hague, which was lowered under Ali's government. In the following months, Dutch firms in Indonesia reported a considerable relaxation in their treatment by Indonesian officials. Moreover, the government released several Dutch prisoners out of the thirty-four that had been arrested by the Ali government under trumped-up charges of involvement in the Darul Islam rebellion.

On September 5, the chairman of the Ondernemersraad (Dutch Enterprise Council in Indonesia) reported that the governor of the Indonesian Central Bank, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, assured him that the new government was keen to improve relations with the Dutch. However, Sjafruddin also intimated that the Dutch needed to give some overtures to strengthen the position of the government and the Masjumi for the election. He stressed that even the willingness of the Dutch to restart the talks would give the government a great deal of prestige. In exchange, the government would possibly move to have Irian Barat removed from the agenda of the next UN meeting.

The Hague seemed to realize that this government was probably the best one they could hope to have in the foreseeable future. On September 19, the Dutch premier, Dr. Willem Drees, declared the improvement of relationship to be of the greatest

⁹⁵ Memorandum of a Conversation Between the Netherlands Charge (Van Voorst) and the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Merchant), Department of State, Washington, September 13, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 188-9

importance.⁹⁶ The Dutch Foreign Minister, Luns, however, remained unimpressed. On September 26, Anak Agung, the Indonesian Minister for Foreign Affairs, met with Minister Luns, and the latter strongly opposed the Indonesian plan to place Irian Barat on the UN Assembly agenda and was unmoved by Anak Agung's argument that to desist would cause the Indonesian government to lose too much political goodwill.⁹⁷

In the meantime, preparations for the election were moving ahead. The PKI ran one of the best campaigns in Indonesia. In six weeks of campaigning, the PKI appealed to the masses with slogans such as "Drive out the Dutch," promises of free land for landless peasants, and identification of itself with local issues, such as an endorsement of cockfighting in Bali. More importantly, the PKI pledged its support to Sukarno and promised that it would support Sukarno for the Presidency. Of course, the PKI was also trying to bring down the Masjumi, declaring the Masjumi to be associated with both the Darul Islam rebellion, and the foreign plantation and mining interests. In addition, it also spread rumors that Masjumi agents were poisoning village wells and then saving the day by providing guards to "protect" the wells. Still, the PKI's campaigning in general was quite moderate, especially as they were anxious not to offend other possible partners such as the NU and the PNI.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Anak Agung (1973) 114

⁹⁷ Penders (2002) 252-3

⁹⁸ Cockfighting was a favorite pastime in Bali, but was banned by the government because the government worried about the poor gambling all their money away, about what the foreigners would think about such waste of time, and more importantly, the government saw cockfighting as "primitive, backward, and unprogressive." See Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" In Clifford Geertz, *the Interpretation of Cultures* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002) 81. The PKI's attempts to identify itself with Sukarno had become ridiculous, an example of which was a made-up story that "Irian" was actually a daughter of Sukarno whom the Dutch had abducted and that only if the people voted the PKI would she be returned. Brackman (1963) 216-7, Feith (1957) 13, 16

The Masjumi itself tried to establish the idea that the PKI was different from other parties, by, for example, pointing out the PKI's complete obedience to Moscow's line, its involvement in the Madiun Affair, and following Zhou En Lai's statement in the Bandung Conference that "We Communists are atheists," the anti-religious nature of Communism. The fiery Isa Anshary denounced Communists as *kafir* (unbelievers) with some in his faction urging the refusal to them of Muslim burial rites. Religious issues were particularly used by both the Masjumi and the NU, and in villages, campaigners from both parties declared that only a vote for their party would allow a man to enter heaven and not to vote for them meant going to hell.

The PNI, on the other hand, tried very hard to identify itself with Sukarno and of course Sukarno did nothing to dispel that perception as Sukarno was worried about the expected victory of the Masjumi.⁹⁹ Both the PNI and the NU also offered themselves as alternatives to both the Masjumi and the PKI. Feith notes that as the campaign drew to an end, both the PNI and the NU used this argument: "If the Masjumi wins there will be

⁹⁹ In fact, Sukarno secretly tried to bolster the PNI at the expense of the Masjumi. As early as May 1, 1954 during the Ali cabinet, Cumming was informed by Pringgodigdo, Chief President Sukarno's Secretariat, about the possibility of Sukarno having a state visit to the United States before the election. When Cumming inquired about the reason for the timing, he received a reply:

"No matter what happened" Masjumi, who were the "most pro-American" of all Indonesian political parties would win the elections; that he saw an advantage to US having PNI, who after the elections would be principal opposition party, gain credit for accomplishing Sukarno's visit to US. He thought this would not adversely influence pro-US attitude of Masjumi and intimate vaguely they might be consulted privately at proper time. Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, May 1, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 425

In early June, Pringgodigdo stated that Sukarno changed his mind, believing that the visit should take place after the election, because "there was very little chance Masjumi supporting him personally under any circumstance." Telegram From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, June 11, 1954, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 427-8. On February 21, 1955, Cumming reiterated his observation that Sukarno was increasingly concerned about the Masjumi's threat to his personal position. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 21, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 136

violence, and if the PKI wins there will be violence too.... If you want to see to it that there is no trouble at election time, vote PNI (or NU)." ¹⁰⁰

The election was held on September 29, 1955, and was closely watched by Washington. However, unlike the earlier positive exuberance displayed by the Masjumi as votes were counted, a sense of gloom started to pervade Washington. Already on October 3, when the results were still being counted, in a conversation with Anak Agung, Dulles raised his concern that the count was close and he mentioned that Natsir declared that Indonesia was in danger of being engulfed by Communism. Anak Agung responded that it was the main reason why Indonesia needed more economic and financial aid and Dulles promised to study the request. ¹⁰¹

By October 8, it was possible to see the overall result of the elections. The final count shattered any confidence left in Washington. The PNI was the winner with 22.3%, thus gaining 57 seats out of the 257 seats in the Parliament. The Masjumi was second with 20.9% (57 seats), third was the NU with 18.4% (45 seats) and finally the PKI was fourth place with 16.4% (39 seats). The PSI was destroyed and no longer relevant, having received only 2.6% of the total vote (5 seats). On October 7, Cummings gloomily reported back to Washington, "There is no question... that the results are somewhat disappointing from our viewpoint and that of our most reliable friends here." ¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Feith (1957) 13-4, 16

¹⁰¹ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, October 3, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 198

¹⁰² McMahan (2006) 82 – note the 12 hour differences between Jakarta and Washington.

The size of the Masjumi's vote was unexpected, and so was the PKI's success. Moreover, the rise of the NU was particularly stunning, as noted above: both the Masjumi and the PSI had completely underestimated the NU.¹⁰³ Unfortunately, both the CIA and the United States Embassy had accepted the Masjumi's assurances that the NU would not have an impact on either Indonesian politics or the Masjumi's vote, leaving both the Embassy and Washington completely off-guard.¹⁰⁴ Cumming reported that the Embassy had failed to develop any links with the NU and thus the Embassy could not exert any influence over it. On November 25, 1955, too late to make any difference, the State Department concluded that the Embassy staffing needed to be increased and more Indonesian language officers provided.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, Cumming suggested to Washington that the election was a proof of Sukarno's importance as the single most powerful and influential Indonesian political personality in Indonesia. Sukarno had become a crucial player once more by appealing to popular sentiment.¹⁰⁶ He attributed the PNI's victory to Sukarno's "thinly veiled support" and suggested that Washington invite Sukarno to the White House. In a NSC meeting on December 22, Dulles predicted a pessimistic outlook for Indonesia, with President Sukarno, the PNI, and the PKI on one side and Vice President Hatta, the

¹⁰³ The NU campaigned without fanfare in the "langgar," prayer houses in rural area and it simply explained the sectarian differences between itself and the Masjumi to the voters in the rural areas, especially in Central and East Java. Still, nobody expected the NU to gain so many votes. Even the NU itself was caught off guard by the size of its victory. In Cumming's reports, "There are reports from several sources that NU somewhat bewildered with its newly discovered strength." Harold F. Gosnell, "Indonesians Go to the Polls: The Parties and Their Stand on Constitutional Issues," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (May 1958) 187, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to Department of State, October 7, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 203

¹⁰⁴ Smith (1976) 215

¹⁰⁵ Roadnight (2002) 131

¹⁰⁶ Apparently, Sukarno himself was pleased by the PNI's surprising gains, which he interpreted as a vindication for his thinly veiled support for the PNI. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to Department of State, October 7, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 204

Masjumi, and the Indonesian army on the other side. He further advised Eisenhower that Sukarno seemed to be the key to the solution of the Indonesian problem, though he admitted that having thrown its lot with the Masjumi, Washington was "in no position to exert pressure on him" in support of U.S. policy. Vice President Richard Nixon, even though he complained that "Sukarno was consumed with conceit," also suggested that White House to invite Sukarno to the United States.¹⁰⁷

Meanwhile, back in Jakarta, events were not going well for the Harahap government, especially as the gravity of both the Masjumi and the PSI's miscalculation started to sink in. The Masjumi was proven to be like the Wizard of Oz, feared yet powerless. The cabinet found itself to be dependent more on the NU, the surprise winner of the election. At the same time, it started to be more cautious. Thus, the cabinet behaved carefully in the appointment of the new Chief of Staff, since Lubis was not formally installed as Acting Chief of Staff.

The Army suggested three names: Simbolon, Lubis, and Gatot Subroto. Of all three, Simbolon was the strongest candidate, but he was not acceptable to the NU, certain Masjumi circles, and Islamic officers, notably in East Java, since he was a Christian. More importantly, being a staunch supporter of the PSI-type policies, he earned the enmity of Sukarno, and at this point, Harahap could not afford to pick a fight with the President. The same consideration also ruled Lubis out, considering he was responsible for publicly humiliating the President in the June 27 Affair. The last candidate, Gatot Subroto, even though he was seen as a capable troop commander, had no staff experience

¹⁰⁷ Memorandum of Discussion at the 271st Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, December 22, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 217-8

and was seen as weak. There were fears that he would be dominated by Lubis, who would remain as the deputy Chief of Staff. Moreover, as a Javanese *abangan* with Buddhist leanings, he had the same problem with Simbolon in finding support. At some point, the name of Nasution was suggested. Being a devout Muslim, he was supported by both the NU and the Masjumi. Moreover, both Natsir and Harahap supported his candidacy and apparently Nasution had enough support from the officer corps. Surprisingly, Sukarno agreed and Nasution was installed as the new Commander in Chief.¹⁰⁸

It was an interesting twist of fate. After his fall As a result of the October 17 Affair, Nasution spent three years out of the Army, writing books on military theories. During his "exile," he came to the conclusion that he had moved too far and too fast during his previous appointment as Chief of Staff. Similar to Aidit, he concluded that he needed Sukarno on his side. By 1955, he had moved closer to Sukarno's position and sometime toward the end of September, he met Sukarno and they apparently reconciled. Nasution needed Sukarno to return to the center stage of the politics, while Sukarno needed Nasution to try to tame the Army from becoming a threat to his power.

On December 1955, the Harahap cabinet tried to make a final push on the issue of Irian Barat. Harahap realized that his position in Indonesia was very precarious and he needed a major diplomatic victory.¹⁰⁹ At the same time, he was also aware that the Dutch

¹⁰⁸ Feith (1962) 440-3, C.L.M Penders. and Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: A Political Biography* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985) 102-3, Sundhaussen (1982) 91-3

¹⁰⁹ On December 20, Cumming reported that both Hatta and Harahap pleaded that the United States government would change its position on Irian Barat even though they understood the reason of the United States' neutrality. Both Hatta and Harahap wished Cumming to emphasize to Washington the "'dangerous effect' upon the future of Indonesia should Indonesian Delegate at Geneva return home without some tangible results." They were also worried that Sukarno might misuse the United States' position on Irian

knew that the Harahap cabinet was very weak yet conciliatory, and thus the Dutch might be persuaded that this cabinet might be the best they could expect in Indonesia for a long time.¹¹⁰

The Dutch, however, were not impressed and in Geneva, during the negotiations, Luns flatly told Roem, one of the Indonesian delegates, that he could not be expected to be drawn into internal Indonesian political matters by making concessions to help advance the political future of the Masjumi and the Harahap cabinet. He also stated that he no longer believed in Indonesia's integrity and its willingness to stick to agreements. On January 7, the negotiation was prorogued to enable consultations to be held with respective governments.¹¹¹ Anak Agung used this opportunity to visit London, trying to recruit British assistance. The British, while sympathetic, refused to mediate for fear of antagonizing the Dutch government.¹¹²

Back in Indonesia, the pressures on the government grew unabated. The leaders of the PNI were apprehensive about the negotiation, lest Harahap gain better concessions from the Dutch. Sukarno also tried to wreck Harahap's position, in contrast to his forbearance during Ali's government. On November 14, Sukarno declared that he found two plots to destroy Indonesia: one aimed at wrecking the country "by sabotaging the bureaucracy and stimulating corruption" and one that would do so "by making the republic sign foreign treaties whose disadvantages would not be known until later." By

Barat for his benefits. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to Department of State, December 20, 1955, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 214-5. The United States however refused to change its position.

¹¹⁰ Bone (1962) 143

¹¹¹ Penders (2002) 255

¹¹² Anak Agung (1973) 142. This British action was seen badly in Indonesia. On November 20, 1958, in a conversation with Sukarno, Howard Jones, the United States Ambassador to Indonesia, noted that "Sukarno hoped that the US Government would not be like the British-that we would feel it necessary to seek Dutch approval in advance for anything we did for Indonesia." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to Department of State, November 20, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 310

implication, the first plot was the Dutch economic imperialism and the latter was the Masjumi's agreement on the MSA. Conveniently, Sukarno left out the fact that he had supported the Masjumi's agreement on the MSA earlier during the Sukiman cabinet.¹¹³

On December 7, Sukarno declared further that "without revolutionary unity even with all diplomacy and discussions in the United Nations, nothing will be achieved." Probably under presidential pressure, the NU declared that it would not join the delegation for the negotiation because the discussion "will not achieve the desired result." On December 13, President Sukarno further announced to a mass rally that the battle for Irian would be won not in The Hague or in New York but in Indonesia. On January 9, 1956, instigated by Sukarno, both the NU and the PSII (a minor party that was part of the Harahap cabinet) demanded the termination of the discussion and the immediate recall of the Indonesian delegations.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the PKI and the PNI accused the Harahap government of selling out to the Dutch.¹¹⁵ With the loss of support of both the NU and the PSII, the cabinet had no possibility to have any agreement with the Dutch ratified.

At this point, the Dutch took an obstinate position. The Hague believed that the Harahap government intended to cause the negotiation to fail and for internal Indonesian political consumption, to heap the blame on Dutch intransigence.¹¹⁶ Luns decided to wreck the negotiations and put the blame on Indonesia's side, and he was able to

¹¹³ Brackman (1963) 220-1

¹¹⁴ Feith (1962) 451-2, 454, Noer (1960) 341-2, Anak Agung (1973) 142, 145

¹¹⁵ Anak Agung (1973) 143

¹¹⁶ Apparently one of the main Dutch contentions in the negotiations was the lack of a firm commitment from the Indonesians to release the Dutch prisoners. Furthermore, the Dutch were also nervous that should any agreement be reached, the new Indonesian Parliament would accept concessions made by the Dutch and would reject concessions made by the Indonesians. Moreover, the Dutch themselves were not prepared to modify their position on Irian Barat due to domestic problems. Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Young) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), February 17, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 230-1

anticipate the moves of Indonesian delegations from intercepted telegrams from Jakarta to Anak Agung, which he acquired through bribing an Indonesian official in Geneva. From these telegrams, Luns found out that the Masjumi was unwilling to allow any more concessions. On February 11, 1956, the negotiations deadlocked and collapsed, with the Dutch blaming political difficulties in Indonesia as the reason for the failure of the conference.¹¹⁷

Back in Indonesia, the Harahap cabinet decided to get as much as it could from the failure of the talks by abrogating the Dutch-Indonesian Union unilaterally as a reaction to Dutch obstinacy. However, the PNI, unwilling to give credit to the Harahap cabinet, stalled in Parliament, especially as the pressure for the government to disband and to let a new government based on the result of the election take place, which led Jusuf Wibisono to tartly remark, "I am amazed that now when they have the opportunity to dissolve the Union, political leaders in Indonesia who have claimed to be revolutionaries become reactionaries and condemn the policy of the Burhanuddin cabinet."¹¹⁸

On February 21, the Prime Minister declared that he would return his mandate after the Central Electoral Committee had announced the names of the newly elected Parliamentarians, which was scheduled for March 1. After a tumultuous debate in which every opposition member left the Parliament, enough remained to maintain the quorum, and on February 28, the abrogation bill was passed.¹¹⁹ Having done his last job, on March 3, Burhanuddin Harahap returned his mandate to the President.

¹¹⁷ Anak Agung (1973) 158, Penders (2002) 256-7.

¹¹⁸ Anak Agung (1973) 165

¹¹⁹ Anak Agung (1973) 161, Feith (1962) 455-6

Sukarno, however, had the last laugh: he refused to sign the bill abrogating the Union. Instead, the act of the abrogation of the Union was signed during the second Ali cabinet with the PNI in power.

The Burhanuddin Harahap government saw the triumph and failure of agency. At the beginning of this period, Hatta had a huge opportunity to actually shape Indonesian politics, but although he was supported by both the Army and the Masjumi, he refused to break the constraints of his office. He thus missed a critical moment to actually make a huge difference in Indonesian politics.

Compared to Burhanuddin Harahap, whose political capital was not as huge as Hatta's (he was leading a very weak cabinet), Hatta might have done much more. Hatta for one had at least equal prestige with Sukarno. Even though Sukarno was much better in commanding the masses, Hatta benefited from the fact that people saw him as a sober problem-solving administrator and as a part of solid leadership that dated back to the revolution. While the PKI heaped abuse on him, other parties were far more reluctant to oppose him.

Burhanuddin Harahap started from a very weak position: having excluded the PNI from his cabinet, he led a very fragmented cabinet based on many small parties, thus incurring displeasure from both Hatta and the Army. In fact, the strength of Harahap's government was based on the expectation of a Masjumi victory in the 1955 election. Even Sukarno, who in the beginning he had stated that he disliked the cabinet, was reluctantly supporting it out of fear that the election would bring a much stronger Masjumi and a much more hostile government into power. However, once the Masjumi

showed itself incapable to live up to the hype, the opposition to the cabinet grew and Sukarno was back to his old self.

This period also saw the reemergence of Sukarno. With Hatta retreating from political life, Sukarno took the offensive. He managed to bring Nasution to his camp, to the disappointment of Nasution's supporters in the Masjumi. Of course it was a mutually beneficial arrangement: Nasution had learned from his mistakes in the October 17 Affair and he could expect Sukarno to rein in the pro-Sukarno commanders in the Army while he proceeded with his reforms. Of course, with Sukarno backing him, he could also effectively prevent the pesky parliament from interfering with his agenda in the military. For Sukarno, Nasution could help him consolidate his hold over the military by bringing the hated pro-PSI officers in line and possibly even bringing them under his influence. At this point, Sukarno's influence had grown considerably and in a year, he would use it effectively to bring down constitutional democracy in Indonesia.

5.3. The Second Cabinet of Ali Sastroamijoyo (March 1956-March 1957)

As the election results showed the PNI to be the winner of the election, the President appointed Ali to form a cabinet. Unlike the first Ali cabinet however, the PNI's position was strengthened considerably vis-à-vis the Masjumi. In fact, there was a growing rapprochement between the PNI and the Masjumi as both of them were apprehensive with what they saw as the growing strength of the PKI. Sarkono Mangunsarkoro, who succeeded Sidik when the latter died due to complications of

diabetes during his campaign, cautioned that a cabinet with PKI participation would endanger Indonesia's independent foreign policy by aligning Indonesia with Moscow.¹²⁰

At this point, with the anti-Masjumi Sidik no longer in control, cooperation with the Masjumi raised very little opposition in the PNI. As a result, the PNI decided to create a coalition based on the PNI, the Masjumi, and the NU while excluding the PKI.¹²¹ The Masjumi was also willing to cooperate with PNI in order to isolate the PKI, even if it "meant Masjumi had to be prepared to sacrifice its interest, including some seats in the Cabinet."¹²²

With the Masjumi and the PNI finally in sync, Ali submitted his cabinet list on April 16 to the President. However, the President angrily refused to accept it. Ali described the situation in his memoir:

Sukarno's reaction to my submission was one of disappointment. He told me angrily: "As *formateur*, you have not been fair to the PKI. Why have you not included such a large party which secured more than six million votes! That is not fair." Calmly I explained that it was not possible to form a coalition cabinet with the KI because Masjumi and the NU rejected it were even opposed to "fellow travellers". When Sukarno retorted that I had not tried hard enough, I lost my patience and answered sharply that if he did not agree with the structure of the new cabinet I had proposed, it was better to state this firmly and take back my mandate and appoint a new *formateur*. I also stated firmly that I would not alter the structure of the Cabinet in the slightest, because I felt bound by my agreement with the parties that had entered into the coalition, and the structure of the Cabinet was now the common property of those parties and could no longer be changed. He could either take it or leave it.

"You always present the question in too sharp of a manner," Sukarno answered in a voice which was no longer angry. "I have not yet said that I reject your

¹²⁰ Brackman (1963) 220

¹²¹ Sastroamijoyo noted that the PNI's rationales in rejecting the PKI were: (a) the Nationalist-Islam coalition (the PNI-the Masjumi-the NU) controlled more than a sufficient majority in the DPR; (b) the Islamic parties certainly did not want to enter into a coalition with the Communists; and (c) if the PKI were included in the cabinet, then it would no doubt develop still further the victory it had gained in the general election. And naturally the PNI did not want this. Sastroamijoyo (1979) 321

¹²² Noer (1960) 356

submission, in which you put such a great deal of effort. I will need to think this over for a week and then will make a decision.¹²³

During that week, apparently Sukarno had a talk with both the Masjumi and the NU leaders such as Sukiman and Idham Khalid and tried to pressure them to include a PKI or at least a Communist sympathizer. He also went for a trip to Surabaya and Malang, centers of PKI strength, where large demonstrations reminded both him and the press of the "20 per cent of Indonesian people" excluded from the cabinet. Ali, however, refused to give ground on the inclusion of the Communists. The Communists had grown too strong and should they be incorporated in the new cabinet, nobody was certain how much their strength would have increased. On March 20, Sukarno gave in, though Ali agreed to include Ir. Djuanda Kartasmita, a nonparty technocrat highly trusted by the President, as a face-saving device.¹²⁴

This episode was particularly significant since it signaled to the President that unlike the previous Ali cabinet, there was some sense of independence based on the political strengths of these three parties and the legitimacy bestowed upon them from the results of the election. As a result, the cabinet was willing to rebuff Sukarno's attempts to control it, and every single major party in the cabinet was united in a common front, making it difficult for Sukarno to impose his agenda. This was probably the turning point of Sukarno's opinion in regards to the Parliamentary democracy. If he could not control it, he might as well destroy it.

¹²³ Sastroamijoyo (1979) 323

¹²⁴ Feith (1962) 468-9, Sastroamijoyo (1979) 324. Surprisingly, Ali did not mention Djuanda's name at all as a face-saving device. In fact, according to his memoir, he had already put Djuanda's name in the list of the members of cabinet that he submitted to Sukarno. He also noted that he knew only too well that Sukarno had no other choice but to agree to a Nationalist-Islamic coalition.

Sukarno, however, did not give up his attempts to include the PKI in the government. On March 26, 1956, Sukarno opened the newly elected Parliament by urging it to work on the basis of "real Indonesian democracy" and not on the basis of "50 per cent plus one are always right." He further proposed a conception of a family-like society, a democracy which was infused with Indonesian values, a *guided democracy* (*Demokrasi Terpimpin*).

There have been questions on what motivate Sukarno to push pushing Ali to include the PKI in the government. The most common answer in the literature is because it is Indonesia's way. It is on Indonesian value to have everyone working together and, most importantly, this fit with Sukarno's own conception of Nasakom, a fusion of nationalism, religion, and communism. However, this argument neglects the fact that Nasakom was actually created much later, in the 1960s.

The answer lies in the political structure of the Constitutional Democracy period. It needs to be emphasized that the election of 1955 was the first one in Indonesian history, and before the election none of the parties could claim any legitimacy since their strength in the Parliament was based on an approximation. As a result, Sukarno's support became important in order to bestow some sort of legitimacy to the parties, through Sukarno's appeal to the masses. In a nutshell, Sukarno was an essential actor in the period.

As the new cabinet was legitimized through the election, this had an adverse effect: support from Sukarno was no longer essential for the survival of the cabinet. Sukarno's power was actually diminished and he needed a new way to integrate himself

to this new political reality. He chose to demand the inclusion of these four political parties in the government in order to make himself important in this new arrangement. This logic was evident in a paper written for *Far Eastern Survey* by Roeslan Abdulgani, the Vice-Chairman and Secretary General of the National Council of Indonesia in 1958, where he argued for the benefit of a political system that included all four parties:

*A gotong-royong (mutual cooperation) cabinet, in which representation would be proportional to representation in Parliament. . . . It should be borne in mind that his idea of a gotong-royong cabinet, if implemented, would have tended to divest the President himself of some de facto power. This, of course, the President well knew. His own position of political strength is, in the present instability, based to some extent on the fact that he, and the Presidency, are stable factors. A gotong-royong cabinet would have been stable, resting on the elected Parliament, and sharing in whatever stability that Parliament maintained. Thus, relatively speaking, the President's de facto power would have been lessened.*¹²⁵

What the analysis did not mention was that in the situation where every single ideology, party, belief, etc, was represented, discords would always be present. Should parties disagree with each other; they would rely on the President to sort it out.

Therefore, the critical point is that the President would be the center of stability. In other words, *the President would be the most important actor in this type of democracy as the President would be indispensable to make the government stable.* In short, Sukarno would dominate the entire Indonesian political structure. If parties are vehicles for citizens to gain powers, they would be unnecessary in this situation, since power would rest solely in the President's hands.

However, the entire concept of *guided democracy* was still vague. Sukarno was not yet clarify or hammering out all the details in the proposal. Besides, he had something else on his mind at that time: his upcoming visit to the United States.

¹²⁵ Roeslan Abdulgani, "Indonesia's National Council: the First Year, *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 27, No. 7 (Jul 1958) 99

As noted above, Washington was very concerned with the result of the election which showed the Masjumi being trounced and the PKI making huge gains in the Parliament. Cumming was called back to Washington in early January 1956 for a consultation. He informed Washington that Sukarno badly wanted an invitation to visit the United States, even though he was not sure of the impact of the invitation due to Sukarno's unpredictability. What was critical for Cumming was the fact that there were reports that there was a high chance that Sukarno would be invited to visit the Soviet Union and Communist China. In order to foster good relations, Washington needed to invite Sukarno to Washington, despite the uncertainty on the impact of the visit. To secure maximum impact, Dulles himself would visit Jakarta to extend the invitation.

On March 12, Dulles arrived in Jakarta for a 24-hour visit in which he congratulated the President on the conduct of the elections. Realizing the extent of Jakarta's fear of the United States, Dulles stressed that the United States had no intention to impose anything on Indonesia, though he also stated that should Indonesians need help, they knew where to get it – in Washington. In return, Sukarno criticized the United States' stance on Asian nationalism, pointing out that the Communist voice was clearer, which was an implicit jab to Washington's neutrality on the issue of Irian Barat while both Moscow and Beijing had openly supported Indonesia.¹²⁶

Still, the Embassy saw Dulles' visit as a success. Even though the Dutch complained about the visit because it showed that Washington approved of all actions of the Indonesian government, including the abrogation of the Round Table Conference, not

¹²⁶ Telegram From the Embassy in Jakarta to the Department of State, March 14, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 240-2

to mention that the Dutch were not given prior notice to the visit,¹²⁷ Dulles did not care.¹²⁸ He was happy with the new Indonesian cabinet that was seen by the American Embassy in Jakarta as broadly based on non- and anti-Communist political parties.¹²⁹ Moreover, he was under the impression that his visit helped to ensure the exclusion of the PKI from the new government. On top of that, he received assurances that even though the Dutch would be deprived of their special economic privileges, American companies would not be affected. Besides, what important was that Sukarno had accepted the invitation to visit the United States.¹³⁰

The visit took place in May and June 1956. While Sukarno had a fine impression of the United States (he even decided to send his son to study in a college in the United States!)¹³¹ and he also had a good time visiting various places in the U.S. such as the Capitol, where he delivered a speech to the Congress and drew more applause than any leader since Churchill, the visit itself did not change anything substantive in the relationship between the United States and Indonesia.

Moreover, Sukarno followed the visit to the United States with a visit to the Soviet Union in August and to the People's Republic of China in October. In the Soviet Union, he signed an agreement in which the Soviet Union would extend \$100 million in credit to Indonesia. Without even bothering to get Ali's approval, he also agreed to sign a Joint Statement which stated that "the Soviet Union and Indonesia have declared that the

¹²⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, March 16, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 243-5

¹²⁸ Notes From the Meeting of the National Security Council, March 22, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 247

¹²⁹ Telegram From the Embassy in Jakarta to the Department of State, May 1, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 260

¹³⁰ Gardner (1997) 124-5, McMahon (2006) 83, Roadnight (2002) 135

¹³¹ Memorandum of Conversation Between Foreign Minister Abdulgani and the Ambassador to Indonesia (Cumming), Salt Lake City, Utah, June 3, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 273, 275

existence of military pacts does not promote the efforts to reduce international tensions which are sorely needed for the attainment of world peace," a direct slap to the United States' policy of creating military pacts to contain Communist advances.¹³² Washington was not amused. In December, the aid to Indonesia was limited to \$15 million in spite of Cumming's appeal for a rise to \$35 million.¹³³ Many years later, Cumming speculated that Sukarno was disappointed over not being treated with greater intimacy in Washington. He also believed that Sukarno might have been overwhelmed by the material advances of the United States and the hopelessness of ever bringing Indonesian standards of living to the level of the United States.¹³⁴

Back in Indonesia, the Ali cabinet was facing a major crisis: the eruption of regionalism. Anti-Javanese feeling had grown unabated from the displeasure of seeing a Javanese-dominated Ali government and Javanese-dominated Parliament, and from the economic mismanagement dating from the first Ali cabinet. With the government setting an artificially high exchange rate in order to make imports cheap, the exporters from the regions outside Java were feeling the pinch, and most of them resorted to smuggling. To make the situation worse, regional military commanders were involved in the smuggling as they faced shortages of material and a lack of funds to improve the troops' living condition. In the Army where the troops' loyalty to their commanders was based on quid-pro-quo, the commanders were hard pressed to meet the troops' demands.

In addition, the appointment of Nasution as Chief of Staff caused military unrest, with Nasution declaring there would be a comprehensive set of transfers of officers when

¹³² Feith (1962) 514-5, McMahan (2006) 83-4

¹³³ Roadnight (2002) 139

¹³⁴ Gardner (1997) 129

he assumed the office in October 1955. By February 1956, the plan for the overall reassignments of territorial commanders was completed. The implementation of this plan, however, faced huge resistance. Regional commanders were loath to move away from their bases of power. They realized correctly that Nasution's plan would undermine their bases of power and strengthen the central government's control over the regions.¹³⁵

Moreover, Nasution's plan would undermine the basis of power for Lubis and his supporters. By the middle of 1956, the Army's unity was nearly shattered, with the Nasution-Gatot Subroto faction on one side and Simbolon-Lubis on the other side. The former was supported by the President and the Javanese-dominated Ali cabinet and the latter was supported by the Masjumi and the PSI. At the same time, among the latter, there was growing disenchantment with the cabinet that they presumed to be corrupt and weak in its efforts to eradicate corruption.

On August 13, Roeslan Abdulgani, the Foreign Minister of Ali's cabinet and a close confidant of Ali, was arrested by the Siliwangi division at the order of Alex Kawilarang on charges of corruption (Kawilarang was a part of the Simbolon-Lubis faction). The cabinet secured his release in a few hours by eliciting Nasution's help.

While Nasution denounced what he termed as a "cowboy act" in arresting Roeslan, it was not that Nasution completely disagreed with this spontaneous act. He was just no longer the idealist officer of October 17, 1952. He had learned his lesson. If he wanted to push through with his reforms, he needed to secure the government's support while at the same time breaking the back of the opposition in the military. However, the cabinet bungled its handling of Roeslan's case. A committee comprised of cabinet and

¹³⁵ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 110

government officials acquitted Roeslan of all charges. Even though the Chief Public Prosecutor later pressed charges after a huge public outcry, the damage was done. The cabinet's prestige was shattered and at the same time, it alienated Nasution from the cabinet. Nasution desperately wanted to fend off the opposition in the Army by running a fair trial that would strip his opponents of their moral high ground.

The immediate fallout from this case was the dismissal of Lubis and the transfer of both Kawilarang and Warouw from their positions. However, these three still had considerable support in the Army, especially in the Siliwangi Division in West Java. From October to November 1956, Lubis tried to stage coups several times using the Siliwangi Division, but he failed due to lack of coordination. Unbeknownst to him, Nasution had planted his agents in the coup group in order to spy on it and at the same time to persuade it that Nasution was on its side and a coup should be postponed until the Army was united and prepared for that move. Lubis became a fugitive.¹³⁶

Meanwhile, the Ali government faced its most serious threat: Sukarno. He wanted to destroy the Parliament. Apparently impressed with the one-party system of both the Soviet Union and the PRC, on October 28, in an address to the delegates from the youth organizations, Sukarno spoke of the "disease of parties" and complained about the mistake of establishing parties. He had a dream of leaders of the parties meeting and agreeing that the time was right for them to "join together to bury all parties." Two days later, he stressed his "dream" and this time, he urged the leaders of the parties to bury the parties. The reaction was mixed. The PNI, the NU and the PKI were unwilling to commit to this idea. The Masjumi, however, was hostile. Natsir declared that "if the parties are

¹³⁶ Sundhaussen (1982) 98-9

buried, democracy will be buried automatically.¹³⁷ He was right. The final assault on Constitutional Democracy had begun.

On December 1, Hatta resigned from the position of Vice President, thus affirming the deep split between himself and Sukarno. While Hatta maintained to others that his resignation was due to political disagreements with Sukarno, he was more condemnatory in his private letter to Sukarno. He had been reluctant to criticize Sukarno for fear of threatening Indonesia's unity. However Sukarno had gone too far in his political crusade to bury the democracy and Hatta could no longer maintain the façade of unity. By remaining as the Vice President under what he saw as the increasingly anti-democratic Sukarno, he risked being seen as condoning the entire drive to authoritarianism.¹³⁸

Hatta's resignation was the last straw for the regions, which saw Hatta as their representative in the partnership between themselves and Java. On December 20, a ceremony was held in Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, where Colonel Ahmad Hussein, regimental commander of West Sumatra, declared the creation of the "Banteng Council," which took over the government of Central Sumatra.¹³⁹ Early in the morning of December 22, Simbolon, the North Sumatra commander, declared that the connections between the central government and North Sumatra had been temporarily severed. On December 24, South Sumatra followed suit.

The cabinet saw that, of all three rebellions, Simbolon's position was the weakest. Manipulating lines of ethnic division in this area, both Nasution and the government were

¹³⁷ Feith (1962) 517-8

¹³⁸ Feith (1962) 524, Rose (1987) 181-2, Sastroamijoyo (1977) 351

¹³⁹ Probably not incidentally, this was where Hatta originated from.

able to break the rebellion and to force Simbolon to leave Medan. Simbolon went to seek refuge in Husein's garrison in Padang.¹⁴⁰ However, the way of the government in solving this problem caused a huge uproar: many people saw the government as resorting to dirty tricks instead of trying to solve the problem, reminiscent of the Dutch's *divide et impera* (divide and conquer) tactic.¹⁴¹

The revolt weakened the Masjumi considerably. It was caught between a rock and a hard place, given that that the revolts occurred in its stronghold. When the Masjumi started its Eighth Congress on December 22, it found out that a few of its members had left for West Sumatra to strengthen the "Banteng Council." Not surprisingly, the Masjumi Congress passed a resolution to the effect that the cabinet could not be maintained anymore and it should resign. On January 9, 1957, the Masjumi pulled all its ministers out of Ali's cabinet, declaring that it could not support Ali's policies that antagonized the regions further. The way the cabinet treated Colonel Simbolon was a "psychological blunder," even though Ali warned the Masjumi that its withdrawal would only strengthen

¹⁴⁰ Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison, *Feet to the Fire: CIA Covert Operations in Indonesia, 1957-1958* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999) 11

¹⁴¹ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 117-8. Ali's hostile attitude to the Simbolon rebellion was probably influenced by his anger toward what he saw as Simbolon's betrayal. Cumming noted:

Ali bitter against Simbolon who had been regarded by the government as man of honor and patriotism regardless of his agreement with central government and political parsonages Djakarta. Ali said that Simbolon had agreed to transfer of Command Territory I but had asked for postponement from December 23 to December 28 so he could carry on through Christmas and government had acceded to this knowing Simbolon to be devout Christian. Arrangements had been agreed for changeover ceremony. On December 19 Ali received intelligence report Simbolon planning not turn over command that apparently something was brewing. Government was about to send investigator to Medan when Central Sumatran affair broke on December 20.

Ali said there is evidence collusion between Hussein and Simbolon although noted difference their approaches and stated objectives. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, December 24, 1956, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 334

the hands of the Communists.¹⁴² It is highly possible that the Masjumi wanted to bring down the government and replace it with a Hatta-led business cabinet. Considering that earlier Hatta had refused the job because it was unconstitutional for him as a Vice President to be Prime Minister, after he resigned, the roadblock was opened.

Aidit was elated. He had speculated that the Java-centric parties, the PNI and the NU, would try to retain their position of power at all costs – including asking for the PKI's support. They did so, although the PNI declared that it did not want to include Communists in the cabinet even though the "support from the Communist Party will certainly be accepted." Aidit, however, had seen the writing on the wall. He was not interested into joining the government especially in the middle of disorder, with which he did not want to be tarred should the government completely fail.¹⁴³

The cabinet unfortunately had the effect of further intensifying anti-Javanese sentiments. Without the Masjumi in it, it was reminiscent of the first Ali cabinet, which was ripe with mismanagement and ruinous economic policy at the expense of the regions. Even though the Ali cabinet would remain in power for the next three months, at this point, its authority was heavily circumscribed. The cabinet was attacked from every side, from regional unrest to Sukarno's agitation for the destruction of constitutional democracy and push for a vaguely worded formulation of "guided democracy" which he

¹⁴² Noer (1960) 375-6, Sastroamijoyo (1977) 349. The Indonesian Protestant party (Parkindo), which received most of its support from disgruntled North Sumatra, North Sulawesi, and Molucca, supported the Masjumi's position and preferred the return of Hatta to the government. It was through direct pressure from Sukarno to Johannes Leimena, its party leader, that the Parkindo did not resign from the cabinet and therefore prevented the collapse of the cabinet. Legge (2003) 320

¹⁴³ Brackman (1963) 232

called his *konsepsi*.¹⁴⁴ In February 1957, the new ambassador of the United States, John M. Allison, arrived in Indonesia. He described his first meeting with Ali:

(Ali) was polite but evidently under a strain. . . . I got the impression he was not completely sure of himself or his position. He was also a fanatically loyal follower of Sukarno and was in some ways even more extreme. Five months earlier Sukarno, who was developing his conception of what he was to call "Guided Democracy," had proposed the abolishment of all political parties. Now Ali was afraid that as an active political party leader, his days as Prime Minister were numbered.¹⁴⁵

The parties themselves were highly demoralized: Sukarno had kept them guessing and they were unsure of the stability of their position. The regional unrest, the unexpected strength of the Communists, the withdrawal of the Masjumi from the cabinet, the Army's interference in the politics, and the possibility of the imposition of martial law started to take their toll.

The parties did not need to wait much longer. On February 21, Sukarno finally explained his concept: the abolition of the Parliamentary system and the creation of a system in which all parties and groups were included. All of the parties were given a week to give their reply. On February 28, the PKI and the PNI accepted, though the latter did so reluctantly. The Masjumi and the Catholic party firmly rejected it, and the NU and the Parkindo rejected it more diplomatically.¹⁴⁶

The PKI was probably the most enthusiastic supporter of the *konsepsi*. Even though Aidit had many misgivings about the entire *konsepsi*, at this point, he realized that the only power that mattered was Sukarno. In any case, the road for the PKI to the government was blocked by the PNI, the NU, and the Masjumi. Sukarno was the only

¹⁴⁴ Feith (1962) 538-9

¹⁴⁵ Allison (1973) 298-9

¹⁴⁶ Sastroamijoyo (1977) 352-3

one who could bring the PKI to the seat of power. Moreover, Sukarno had assured him that he would not dissolve the Parliament and would constitute no threat to the PKI's political organization. In February, Aidit demonstrated the capability of the PKI: he used its efficient and extensive apparatus to paint buildings with PKI slogans extolling guided democracy. Nasution was so outraged with this wanton demonstration that he banned the "brush and bucket" campaign. The PKI complied, but it had shown Sukarno that it could be a potential asset for him through its ability to mobilize masses with short notice.¹⁴⁷

The regions reacted with outrage to the *konsepsi*. On March 2, H.N. Ventje Sumual, the military commander in East Indonesia, declared his temporary secession from the central government under a charter called *Piagam Perjuangan Permesta* (Charter of Inclusive Struggle). He also reportedly claimed that he "preferred to cooperate with American imperialists rather than the Communists." At this point, the cabinet was essentially unable to take any action. The NU was annoyed and apathetic about the cabinet. Ali decided to hand the Permesta problem over to Nasution. Nasution, realizing that cooperation with a weak government was no longer of any use to him, decided to take no action. Instead, he persuaded Sukarno to declare a nationwide State of War and Emergency.¹⁴⁸

In the meantime, Hatta was desperately trying to save democracy, and asked Sukarno to form a Presidential cabinet responsible to the Parliament. He denounced

¹⁴⁷ Brackman (1963) 234-5, Feith (1962) 541. Interestingly, Sukarno himself might have been repulsed by the PKI's show of power. On February 28, 1957, having met Hatta in Manila, Cumming reported that Hatta believed Sukarno had "a distaste for demonstrations and excesses such as Communists and certain youth organizations have staged in past few days." Therefore, it was highly likely that Nasution's prohibition was supported and approved by Sukarno. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 28, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 357

¹⁴⁸ Brackman (1963) 234, Feith (1962) 545, Barbara S. Harvey, *Permesta: Half a Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1977) 47

Sukarno's idea of including the Communists, noting that the PKI would sacrifice Indonesian interests to fulfill their ideals. Moreover, he also asked what Sukarno would do when a party that polled more than three times the votes of the PKI refused to join the cabinet. Hatta warned that the *konsepsi* would sharpen controversies and move the nation from national peace. The Masjumi, declaring that the way out of the difficulties was not to change the government, but to find the right men, endorsed Hatta.¹⁴⁹ Even the NU came out in support of restoring Hatta to the government. The PNI wavered, while the PKI branded Hatta as the *auctor intellectualis* of the separatist movement, bent on thwarting Sukarno's *konsepsi*. Nasution was hoping that with Hatta returned to the position of Prime Minister, the rebellions could be quelled without bloodshed. The ball was in the President's hand.¹⁵⁰

Four months before this event, on November 5, 1956, Cumming jocularly asked Foreign Minister Roeslan Abdulgani whether Indonesia would write a constitution or operate by presidential decree. Cumming reported to Washington that "Abdulgani admitted Sukarno may have the example of Mao Tse-tung in the forefront of his mind but that the eleven years of effort Indonesian leaders have made to educate their people in parliamentary democracy cannot be extinguished that easily."¹⁵¹

Abdulgani was wrong. Sukarno would not accept any form of government unless he possessed absolute power. He refused to include Hatta in his new government as Hatta, with his stubbornness, his independent streak, and his own legitimacy as the other

¹⁴⁹ Noer (1970) 386

¹⁵⁰ Brackman (1963) 234, Feith (1962) 547, Sastroamoyo (1977) 354, Sundhaussen (1982) 104-5

¹⁵¹ Gardner (1997) 130

father of Indonesian Independence, was too much of a threat to his position.¹⁵² At 10 AM on March 14, Ali returned his mandate to the President. At 10:30 AM, the President proclaimed a nationwide State of War and Siege. Thus ended the era of Constitutional Democracy.

The last year of Constitutional Democracy marked a complete consolidation of Sukarno's power. It was a surprising twist: even though the election was supposed to bring stability to politics and to strengthen democracy, the entire system was to be overthrown in just a year. In his analysis, Feith argues that the election itself had sharpened tensions in many sections of society and given great prominence to ideological conflict. As a result the election had destroyed the consensus on the purposes and ideological character of the state.¹⁵³

However, Feith ignores the fact that even after the election all three major parties managed to create a coalition. Of course, this raises another question, which is how a single President could break a Parliamentary system, even though in the beginning the government had managed to pull rank and block the Presidential demand to include the PKI. The reason might seem outlandish, but probably it was the truth: simply because he was Sukarno.

For the seven years of Constitutional Democracy, the President, who had already assumed all trappings and symbolism of power, managed to expand his power further at the expense of the Parliament. Having been able to break the opposition to his rule for the

¹⁵² Apparently Sukarno avoided seeing anyone who recommended including Hatta in the cabinet and he was continuing to be adamant against inclusion of Hatta. Telegram From Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 14, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 368

¹⁵³ Feith (1962)

past several years, the President became the only source of stability in Indonesian politics. He became the central axis of power. He had split the Army before, and the new army under Nasution was to some degree loyal to him. Moreover, many members of both the PNI and the NU realized that Sukarno to some degree was the one responsible for their gains in the elections. The PKI under Aidit was loyal to Sukarno because he was the only one who could help it survive.

When Sukarno advocated his idea of Guided Democracy, he caused huge rifts within every single party that had benefited from his policies. The Constitutional Democracy collapsed simply because the political parties had depended on him as their source of legitimacy. The Masjumi, on the other hand, remained independent, even though it was badly weakened.

5.4. Conclusion: Was the Collapse of the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia Inevitable?

While the scope of this work is on Indonesian foreign policy, based on what has been discussed in this chapter, one cannot help but ask the inevitable and also the ultimate question for this period: was the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia doomed to fail, and was the rise of President Sukarno as the ultimate power in Indonesia inevitable.

Harry Benda, Herbert Feith, and Daniel Lev, three of the most important scholars on Indonesia in this period all agree on one point: that the Constitutional Democracy was doomed. However, they disagree on what cause the collapse of the Constitutional Democracy.

Harry Benda pondered whether the question of why the Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia was doomed is a wrong one. Instead, he argued that this type of government itself was an anomaly, something that was imposed by the Western-trained technocrats on the Indonesians who did not have the culture of democracy. In other words, the question was whether one asks for too much in expecting the Constitutional Democracy to survive in Indonesia because the belief and culture of Indonesia were not compatible with such a form of government.¹⁵⁴

Herbert Feith argued that the entire period was marked by the struggle between "administrators" led by the Masjumi-PSI faction against the "solidarity maker" faction dominated in the beginning by the PNI, and later, after the 1955 election, the PKI and Sukarno. The former were the Western (mostly Dutch) educated technocrats, or in Feith's definition, "leaders with the administrative, technical, legal and foreign-language skills required to run the distinctive modern apparatus of modern state." The latter were "leaders skilled as mediators between groups at different levels of modernity and political effectiveness, as mass organizers, and as manipulators of integrative symbols."¹⁵⁵ The entire period was marked by a struggle for power between the two sides and ended with the rise of solidarity-makers supported by President Sukarno. The administrators lost the political struggle because they were pushing policies that were seen as too radical in a society still rife with corruption and feudalism. The administrators demanded strict economic policies coupled with the institution of a professional bureaucracy, while the

¹⁵⁴ Harry Benda, "Democracy in Indonesia" In Anderson, Benedict and Audrey Kahin, *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, 1982)

¹⁵⁵ Feith (1962) 113

rest of the elite wanted perks to pay their political supporters. Feith noted that when the administrators lost their support from the Army, the entire house of cards collapsed.

Finally, Daniel Lev stated that the answer was simple: it was the military that destroyed the democracy in Indonesia. Why? Because the Army could, and it had compelling interests in a quite different political system. The Army was a political organization that found itself better able to run the country than the civilians. Thus, the Army wrecked the democracy in 1957-8.¹⁵⁶

From the discussion in this chapter, however, it is clear that the collapse of the constitutional democracy in Indonesia *was not inevitable*. In fact, it collapsed simply because Sukarno wanted to see it collapse in 1958. However, the ability of Sukarno to destroy it was thanks to a culmination of a chain of effects that exacerbated the political atmosphere in Indonesia.

The seed of its destruction had been sown right in the beginning of the Constitutional Democracy, as far back in 1950. First, there was a great deal of uncertainty in Indonesian politics during this period. The share of representation in the Parliament was based on the estimated share of power. This rough estimation created the perception of the Masjumi, which claimed to represent the Muslim population of Indonesia, that it was significantly underrepresented in the Parliament.

In turn, this belief caused distrust between the Masjumi and other political actors, notably Sukarno, who started to distrust the Masjumi after his spat with Natsir, and the nationalist PNI which feared that the Masjumi might use its supposedly huge electoral

¹⁵⁶ Daniel Lev, "On the Fall of the Parliamentary System" In David Bouchier and John Legge, *Democracy in Indonesia: 1950s and 1990s*.(Clayton: Monash University, 1994) 39-40

support to jam the idea of Islamic state down the nationalists' throats. Not surprisingly, the nationalists tried to delay the election in order to expand their powerbase and to seek allies. Some of the most willing allies were the Communists. However, this rapprochement in turn worsened the relationship between the staunchly anti-PKI Masjumi and Sukarno, and the PNI. To further complicate the relationship, the partisan conduct of the first Ali cabinet, where the entire bureaucracy was purged of people belonging to the opposing political parties, further hardened the partisanship.

The second factor was the role of the Army itself, which has been discussed in the previous chapter. Thanks to the bungled effort of the first Ali government to control the Army, the Army ended up united and angry about what it saw as political corruption and mismanagement of the "fruits of the revolution." The huge budget cut affecting the Army, and the incessant meddling of Defense Minister Iwa Kusumasumantri with Army internal affairs united the Army that had been divided from the October 17 Affair in 1952. As a result, the Army became politicized: it started to involve itself in politics in order to defend its turf from the interference of "irresponsible" politicians.

The election that was supposed to provide relief from political uncertainty did nothing to alleviate the problem. In fact, the parties faced a new threat in the form of the PKI, which unexpectedly managed to shed its baggage from the Renville Rebellion of 1948 and emerge as one of the biggest four parties in Indonesian politics. The fear of the Communists' rapid growth forced the Masjumi, the PNI, and the NU to make a coalition. As their power share was now confirmed by the election of 1955, the new government was believed to be a legitimate one.

However, this alienated Sukarno. Sukarno did not enjoy governing the country, running it on a day-to-day basis, but he enjoyed the taste of power, and the ability to be the power broker in Indonesian politics. Moreover, he effectively used the threats represented by the Masjumi and the Communists to his advantage. When all three major parties that emerged after the election of 1955 decided to do things their own way and to threaten Sukarno's position as powerbroker, he retaliated by advocating the idea of *konsepsi*.

Therefore, there are three ironies in this chapter. The first irony is that the 1955 election that was supposed to bring stability to the country in the end led to its destruction as the election ended up with no clear winner. All expectations were proved to be wrong. The Communists, whose power and ability were underestimated by everyone, proved to be one of the four winners in the election. In contrast, the Masjumi was unmasked as the Wizard of Oz, with far fewer votes than it was expected to get. While the PNI came in first in the election, it relied on Sukarno implicit support for its share of vote. As a result, the new coalition government was very weak and only united by its fear of the Communists.

The second irony was the mistake the United States made by putting all its eggs in the basket of the Masjumi and the PSI. Obsessed with the PKI, Washington watched in dismay what it saw as the growing tendency of Indonesia to move toward the Communist camp. Washington did not realize that the leftward movement of the Ali cabinet was caused by the fear of the Masjumi, rather than the Communists' infiltration on the Indonesian leadership. Of course, both the Masjumi and the PSI did nothing to alleviate Washington's fear.

As Washington was certain that the Westernized technocrats of both the Masjumi and the PSI would be able to win the election and to keep Indonesia from the Communists, the U.S. built excellent relationships with both the Masjumi and the PSI, while neglecting the PNI and the NU. With the election results showing that the Masjumi was trounced and the PSI was practically irrelevant, Washington no longer had much leverage on other political parties. The United States had very little information about what was really going on in Jakarta, and worse it no longer had much leverage on other political parties. It could do nothing to prevent the collapse of the Constitutional Democracy. Washington's misgivings over what it saw as a leftward-leaning Sukarno regime would influence its policy on Indonesia, culminating in its covert support of the PRRI/Permesta rebellion, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Finally, facing the Communists' threat, and bestowed with legitimacy through the election, the parties ganged up together, only to meet Sukarno's resistance, which leads to the third and greatest irony. Sukarno was kicked to the top of the government to theoretically be a figurehead without much formal power, but the position liberated him so much that he could use his position to gain as much political capital as possible and through his machinations, he became a powerbroker.

He skillfully used his source of power, which was the adoration of the public of him in his role and as the "Father of the Republic of Indonesia," as a source of legitimacy in order to make himself an indispensable source of authority in Indonesian politics. Moreover, free of the constraints of the formal office that bound every single Prime Minister, he used his office as a soapbox, thundering against everything that he believed

was going wrong during the entire constitutional period: the loss of the *spirit of the revolution*¹⁵⁷ and:

Internal strife grew. We faced disaster, endless conflicts, hair-raising confusion. Indonesians previously pulling together now pulled apart. They were sectioned into religious and geographical boxes, just what I'd sweated all my life to get them out of. Each tried outdoing the other. Constant arguments without results, mutual undermining, vying for position, slander, abuse, lethal criticism were the fruits. Every voice demanded to be heard... Frustrated energies were channeled into creating crisis to topple whatever regime was in power. Almost every six months a cabinet fell and we'd have a brand-new government with new bosses and new resignations.¹⁵⁸

Without material constraints aside from the Constitutional ones, Sukarno was able to wrap himself in every symbol of power and manipulate all of them, enabling him to extend his influence further and to demolish the pillars of the Constitutional Democracy as soon as the parties decided to assert themselves.

Of course, there were many other factors that enabled Sukarno at this juncture to exert his influence, such as regional unrests and the uncertainty over the intentions of the military. However, it cannot be denied that without Sukarno's ultimate decision to keep Hatta out of the government, his attack on the government for disobeying his wishes, and his imposition of martial law, the Constitutional Democracy might have survived. Therefore, this chapter is about the triumph and tragedy of leadership.

¹⁵⁷ Legge (2003) 275

¹⁵⁸ Adams (1965) 265. Much later, the authoritarian government of Suharto would use the same argument in describing this period.

CHAPTER 6

VIVERE PERICOLOSO¹:

THE FRAGILE BALANCE

(1957-1965)

[Indonesian infiltrators] were simply eaten by the natives [of Irian Barat], but not on Friday when they only eat fishermen.

J.M.A.H. Luns, the Dutch Foreign Minister,
joking to the US officials on Indonesia's
attempts to infiltrate Irian Barat²

Revolution is continuity.

Dr. Subandrio³

Indonesia must overcome self-consciousness and inferiority. She needs confidence. That I must give her before I'm taken away. Today Sukarno alone is the cohesive factor in Indonesia. After I'm gone the only cement to hold the islands together will be their national pride.

Sukarno⁴

¹ An Italian phrase, meaning "Living Dangerously." It was the title of Sukarno's speech on August 17, 1964.

² C.L.M Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia 1945-1962* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 335

³ Lance Castles, "Notes on the Islamic School at Gontor" In *Indonesia*, Vol. 1 (April 1966) 33

⁴ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 293

6.1. Prelude to the PRRI/Permesta Rebellion

With the announcement of the State of War and Emergency on March 15, 1957, Sukarno appointed Suwirto, the new chairman of the PNI, to form a new cabinet from which the Masjumi would be excluded. Suwirto failed, due to the refusal of the NU to join a cabinet without the Masjumi. On April 2, Suwirto returned his mandate, and two days later, Sukarno, under heavy protest from the Masjumi, declared himself "Citizen Sukarno" in order to form a business cabinet. The cabinet was led by Djuanda Kartawidjaja, a respected technocrat with a close relationship to Sukarno.⁵ In this cabinet, almost every major party was represented, including two ministers from the Masjumi, though the Masjumi decided to expel one and the other one resigned on his own initiative. Again, however, the PKI was excluded, though there were several well-known leftists in this cabinet.⁶

Even though the PKI was not included in this cabinet, it did not raise much fuss, as it received tacit support from Sukarno throughout the regional election of 1957. In addition, as the only major party unsullied with the corruption and economic mess of Parliamentary democracy, it was seen as a vehicle for change by Indonesians sick of the status quo. Moreover, Its prestige benefited greatly from the visit of Marshal Kliment Y.

⁵ The editor of *Times of Indonesia* described Djuanda as someone who "can never stand up to President Sukarno but he is an honest, capable man who commands respects." This cabinet would also be marked by the emergence of Dr. Subandrio as the new Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs. He would later gain more influence, and by 1965, as the First Deputy Prime Minister, he was rumored to be the successor of Sukarno. In this report, Subandrio was seen as another Sukarno man who "pretends to believe that the West is out to balkanize Indonesia: Indonesia's foreign policy as carried out by him under the President's control, will probably see a shift to the left." See John M. Allison, *Ambassador from the Prairie or Allison Wonderland* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973) 299-300

⁶ Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism: A History* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963) 236, Herbert Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962) 579, Deliar Noer, *Masjumi: Its Organization, Ideology and Political Role in Indonesia* (M.A. thesis, Cornell University Press, 1960) 391-4, Justus M. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1965) 91

Voroshilov, the Soviet chief of state whom Sukarno had invited to visit Indonesia during his tour in Moscow.⁷ The PKI's growing strength was evident in municipal, district and provincial elections in Java, held from June through August, 1957, where it garnered a total of seven million votes, a significant increase in votes at the expense of the PNI, which lost around 1.6 million votes from its 1955 total.⁸

The victory of the PKI, however, worsened the political conditions as military leaders who had led the unrest outside Java became more and more alarmed. In September 1957, in an effort to prevent a split between the Central Government and the regionalists, Djuanda initiated a National Conference to iron out the differences between the regionalists and the central authority. The regionalists demanded a restoration of the Sukarno-Hatta duumvirate, the replacement of the Army high command (which meant the sacking of Nasution), the decentralization of the national administration, the establishment of a senate, a reorganization of the state bureaucracy, and finally the banning of Communism. Not surprisingly, the conference ended without any substantive

⁷ Brackman (1963) 238, Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: the Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debauch in Indonesia* (New York: The New Press, 1995) 82

⁸ Brackman argues that the increase in votes was highly influenced by Voroshilov's visit as Sukarno toured Java with him and shared the same platform. He further claimed that Sukarno essentially transferred his party "allegiance" from the PNI to the PKI, having been enraged by the PNI's open defiance during the Second Ali cabinet in refusing his requests to include several people loyal to him in the cabinet. Thus, Sukarno decided "to teach the PNI a tactical lesson." Brackman (1963) 238. John Foster Dulles held similar opinion. Replying to Eisenhower's inquiry about Indonesian elections, Dulles stated that "Sukarno's desertion of the Nationalist Party was due to political ambition and political immaturity." Memorandum of Discussion at the 333d Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, August 1, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 401. Van der Kroef noted that the switch in popularity with votes was probably due to the calculation of some of the PNI members that in order to stabilize their own position, they need to hitch "their wagon to the rising red star." Van der Kroef (1965) 315. Allison in his memoir agreed about the importance of Voroshilov's visit for the electoral victory of Communists as he noted that when people saw Sukarno traveling the country together with Voroshilov, coupled with the abundance of the Indonesian flag and the Hammer and Sickle of Russia in conjunction with this visit, they would naturally put "their cross opposite the Hammer and Sickle on the ballot." Allison (1973) 304-5. Still, Isa Anshary, the firebrand leader of the extremist wing of the Masjumi probably got it right when he bluntly said that the success of the PKI was simply because the PKI had worked harder than other parties to win votes. See Daniel Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1966) 96

results. Even though Sukarno was wary about the growing power of the PKI,⁹ he still would not agree to either ban Communism or allow Hatta to return to power. Hatta himself had decided "to let Sukarno try to run things his way" and went abroad for an extended trip. Nasution, backed by Sukarno, was unwilling to give up his control over the Army high command, even though he wanted to prevent the regionalists from causing an open breach with the Army.¹⁰

While the Communists' power was growing, Nasution also tried to prop up his position, especially in light of his unpopularity among the dissidents in the regions. He was helped by the declaration of martial law Sukarno made with his prodding on March 14, 1957, which enabled the Army's power to grow considerably without any civilian supervision. The Army became more deeply involved with Indonesian politics at the expense of the Parliament as noted by Lev: "The Army was trying to gain admission to the center of the political arena, while the parties were trying to save themselves from being removed from exactly that spot."¹¹

One of the ways to increase the Army's influence in politics was to launch a popular anti-corruption drive. While the anti-corruption drive put Nasution at odds with almost every party except the PKI, it was necessary in order to take the initiative from the Sumatran dissenters who had been pushing for a similar event in their anti-government

⁹ On April 27, Subandrio, himself a close associate of Sukarno, remarked to Allison that he did not want Indonesia to fall into "Communist way" Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 27, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 376. Hatta further stated to Allison that "Sukarno's flirtation with PKI is ... explained by his desire to keep the masses on his side not for Communist purposes." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 30, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 434

¹⁰ Barbara S. Harvey, *Permesta: Half a Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1977) 77-8, 80, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 73, Lev (1966) 32, Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 106

¹¹ Lev (1966) 60

declarations.¹² In addition, Nasution also tried unsuccessfully to absorb various youth organizations with party ties such as Pemuda Demokrat (Democratic Youth – the PNI), the GPII (Indonesian Islamic Youth Group - the Masjumi), the Ansor (the NU), and Pemuda Rakjat (People's Youth – the PKI) in order to weaken the parties' ability to physically attack their political opponents.¹³

Moreover, Nasution tried to weaken the dissidents' power by splitting them. Sumual's area of command of East Indonesia was split into four military regions and Sumual was intended for transferred to an unspecified position. Nasution also appointed Andi Pangerang, a Permesta leader from South Sulawesi, as military governor of South and Southeast Sulawesi, leading Andi Pangerang to distance himself from the Permesta movement.¹⁴

While the central government and the regionalists were involved in delicate negotiations (and political games), the situation took a turn for the worse due to two incidents. The first was the failure of the United Nations General Assembly in 1957 to address the question of Irian Barat and the second was the attempted murder of Sukarno.

In 1957, the issue of Irian Barat was continually emphasized by Sukarno. In the midst of regional discontent, Irian was a common cause for every single political entity in

¹² Sundhaussen (1982) 131-2

¹³ Lev (1966) 65. All of them were paramilitary groups similar to the laskars of the revolutionary era.

¹⁴ It should be noted that one of the chief grievances of South Sulawesi/Makassar was the fact that most of the officials in Sulawesi was from the Northern Sulawesi/Minahasa area, which was also where Sumual came from. Thus, by appointing Andi Pangerang as military government, Nasution was able to split Makassar from Permesta. However, the split also intensified the tension between separatists and the government. Many officers were upset about from the effects of the reorganization of Sumual's area of command as the reorganization often led to the end of their military careers. As a result, those officers tended to be more determined to "fight for the ideals of the Permesta Charter." On the other hand, those officers who benefited from the reorganization such as officers in South Sulawesi tended to value "national unity too highly to use force against the central government" since their position was stable. Harvey (1977) 56-8, 66.

Indonesia, including Hatta and Natsir. It was the accepted belief that Indonesia had a legitimate claim over the territory.

Still, Hatta saw the entire question of Irian Barat with disdain. In an interview with Louis Fischer, probably expressing his frustration over Sukarno's use of the issue of Irian Barat to derail cabinets and to push for his political interests, he raised his voice, saying, "I have known Sukarno for decades. He won't change. He will always start mass demonstrations for West Irian."¹⁵ While he did want Indonesia to regain Irian Barat, he always considered the issue to be a distraction from economic problems, which he believed to be more important for Indonesia.¹⁶ Furthermore, he was well aware of how useful the issue was for the Communists, as he would later write in 1958:

To permit West Irian to continue indefinitely as a bone of contention between Indonesia and the Netherlands is to afford Communism an opportunity to spread in Indonesia. The claim to West Irian is a national claim backed by every Indonesian party without exception; but the most demanding voice, apart from that of President Soekarno himself, is that of the Communist Party of Indonesia.¹⁷

Hatta's view was echoed by Natsir. Natsir acidly described the issue of Irian Barat in 1957 as a situation created by Sukarno:

in which the communists stand to gain politically from any conceivable development. If the Dutch give way over West Irian, the communists will win great prestige for having demonstrated the efficacy of their strong-arm tactics in diplomacy. If the Dutch stand firm, the communists will continue to increase their power by exploiting the economic mess caused by the confiscation of the Dutch assets here.¹⁸

It was true that the issue of Irian Barat was very effective in helping Sukarno to divert attention from domestic problems and to consolidate his position, and he stressed

¹⁵ Louis Fischer, *The Story of Indonesia* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959) 288

¹⁶ Brackman (1963) 143

¹⁷ Muhammad Hatta, "Indonesia Between the Power Blocs" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 36:3 (April 1958) 486-7

¹⁸ James Mossman, *Rebels in Paradise* (London: Cape, 1961) 39

the Irian Barat problem enormously during the latter half of 1957. In September, he declared that "we shall restore our unity.... There may be differences of opinion among us, but with regard to the struggle to regain Irian Barat we are one." On November 8, he declared that Indonesia would resort to "methods that will startle the world" should Indonesia fail to acquire Irian Barat.¹⁹

Still, Sukarno did not have a monopoly on the Irian Barat issue. In fact, it is an open question whether Sukarno's insistence on pushing the issue of Irian Barat was solely based on an opportunistic calculation, hoping to rally everyone around the flag, or whether he foresaw a much larger threat looming over the horizon: the Communists. Even though Sukarno might have tacitly contributed to the Communists' victory in the 1957 elections, he might not have liked how much the Communists exploited the issue of Irian Barat. This was reflected in a conversation between Subandrio and Dulles on November 18, 1957, where facing Dulles' criticisms on the harshness of Sukarno's speeches on Irian Barat, Subandrio "agrees that Sukarno's speeches are strong and forceful but that the Indonesian Government must take the initiative from the PKI."²⁰ In order to keep the Communists down, Sukarno had to wave the nationalism flag.

On November 29, 1957, the Twelfth United Nations General Assembly of 1957 failed to pass Indonesia's resolution on Irian Barat. The resolution was approved forty-one to twenty-nine, with eleven abstentions, thus short of the two-thirds majority required. Before Sukarno was able to react, however, on the same day, he survived an

¹⁹ Brackman (1963) 241-2

²⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington, November 18, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 506

assassination attempt by a group of anti-Communist terrorists with connection to Colonel Zulkifli Lubis in what was later to be known as the Cikini Affair.²¹

The repercussions from both the failure of the resolution and the assassination attempt were swift and severe. The Djuanda Government declared a twenty-four hour general strike against Dutch firms, a ban on Dutch-language publications, and the cancellation of the landing rights of KLM, a Dutch airline, in Indonesia. Within days, however, events spiraled beyond Djuanda's control as the SOBSI, the PKI-backed labor union, seized control over Dutch estates, banks, and trading companies, even as Djuanda appealed for an end to the seizures. On December 15, the Army interfered by arresting several leaders of SOBSI. Aidit decided not to press his luck, and restrained the labor union.²² In turn, the Army proceeded to appoint "military caretakers" of the seized Dutch enterprises and appointed surplus officers as managers of the firms.²³

²¹ While the General Assembly voted on November 29 and the assassination attempt took place on November 30, the twelve-hour difference between Jakarta and New York meant that these two incidents happened on the same day, probably separated by only several hours.

²² Brackman (1963) 243-4

²³ Lev pointed out that these officers were not the best of the corps: the majority of them were either ready for their pension with nothing else to do, or were useless. Lev (1966) 69. Interestingly, the effect of nationalization was not very beneficial for Indonesians, and the Dutch were not as hurt as the Indonesians thought they were. On April 24, 1958, Luns claimed to Dulles that:

The Dutch had gradually accommodated themselves to the fact that their economic holdings and interests were lost. Dutch possessions such as plantations and warehouses had already begun to deteriorate substantially and under Indonesian management or lack thereof they could be expected to deteriorate further. The impact on the Indonesian economy was severe since economic relations with the Netherlands accounted for approximately 50% of the Indonesian national income (these relations amount to only 3% of the Dutch national income). Memorandum of Conversation, April 24, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 123

Luns' assertion was later supported by Penders. According to Penders, even though the takeover was painful and shocking to the Dutch investors, the overall damage to the Netherlands' economy was actually minimal. From 1949 to 1955, Dutch national income had almost doubled from f.13.6 billion to f.24.6 billion due to intra-European trade and a new industrialization policy. By 1957, Indonesia only accounted for 2.9% of the Netherlands national income, compared to 7.4% in 1938 and 6.3% in 1948. Moreover, even though in 1966, the Netherlands government claimed f.4.6 billion in compensation for Dutch business in Indonesia, Penders argued that the real loss lay closer to a sum between f.500 to f.750 million since a number of large concerns had been writing off their total Indonesian investment down to f.1 since 1950 due to concerns to the political stability of Indonesia. However, on the Indonesian side of the

At the same time, the Communists, possibly with encouragement from Sukarno, conducted a campaign of harassment against Mohammad Natsir, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, Mohammad Roem, and Burhanuddin Harahap, accusing them of involvement with the Cikini Affair. These four decided to leave for Sumatra for the safety of their families, and met Colonel Husein in Padang, Sumatra.²⁴ To Natsir's surprise, when he finally arrived in Padang, he found that the PRRI government was well supplied by the United States.

Washington had grown alarmed as Sukarno drove to consolidate his power and to include the Communists in the government. As early as the fall of 1956 (probably around November) as Sukarno started to challenge constitutional democracy, Frank Wisner, the Deputy Director for Plans (DDP) of the CIA had instructed the Far East Division chief to hold "Sukarno's feet to the fire."²⁵ By early 1957 when Allison left his post as the U.S. ambassador in Japan to become the U.S. ambassador in Indonesia, Dulles gave him several instructions, "Don't let Sukarno get tied up with the Communists. Don't let him use force against the Dutch. Don't encourage his extremism." Most importantly, Dulles

equation, the nationalization badly hurt the economy. In 1953 and 1954, the Dutch firms paid f.1,233 million to Indonesian treasury, accounting for 65% of the total taxation revenue. After nationalization, Indonesian exports fell from US\$955.1 million in 1957 to US\$696.4 million in 1963 due to corruption, neglect, and mismanagement. For a complete discussion, see C.L.M Penders, *The West Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 265, 269-71

²⁴ Sukarno's involvement in the campaign of harassment against the leaders of the Masjumi was evident during a conversation among Natsir, Mohammad Roem, and the attorney general, where both Natsir and Roem complained about the campaign of harassment against them. The attorney general indicated that only President Sukarno could restrain those mounting the campaign. Kahin and Kahin (1995) 118. They did not, however, arrive in Sumatra empty-handed. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, then the director of the Indonesian central bank, arrived with suitcases full of banknotes looted from the vaults of the central bank. Mossman (1961) 72, 137

²⁵ Joseph B. Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1976) 205

noted, "Above all, do what you can to make sure that Sumatra [the oil producing island] doesn't fall to the Communists."²⁶

While Allison was establishing himself in Jakarta in April 1957, the CIA was contacted by dissidents in Sumatra and Sulawesi asking for assistance. Having established a bank account in Singapore, the rebel colonels requested funds to supply their troops, or any other possible assistance.²⁷ From this point on, the CIA relied so heavily on the rebel colonels for their information on Indonesia that, to Allison's dismay, he found his reports on the Indonesian situation went unheeded by Washington.

The differences between Allison's reports and those of the CIA were stark: while both of them agreed that Sukarno an important player in Indonesia's politics, for Allison, Sukarno's radicalism and tilt toward Communism could be explained by his preoccupation with Irian Barat. Moreover, the possibility of Indonesia falling into the Communist camp was not inevitable. Therefore, the United States could pull Indonesia back from the brink by helping Indonesia on the issue of Irian Barat, or in Sukarno's own

²⁶ Allison (1973) 301. Allison himself saw his appointment to Indonesia as a demotion in comparison to his previous position in Tokyo, Japan. Henry L. Heymann, one of his political officers, recalled, "When he first arrived, Allison could be seen walking his dog in a withdrawn and seemingly depressed mood, as if he were in a cocoon." Paul F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997) 136

²⁷ As noted in the previous chapter, the United States had been involved in Indonesian politics covertly as early as 1955 when they funded the election campaign of the Masjumi. In addition, *Abadi*, Masjumi's newspaper, was subsidized by the CIA until the Masjumi suffered its loss in the election. Apparently, after that loss, the CIA had no longer had much influence in Indonesia until they was contacted by the colonels. The date of the first contact is unclear. Joseph B. Smith in his memoir stated that Colonel Simbolon initiated their contacts in early April 1957, a month after Sukarno declared martial law. However, Wayne G. Jackson, working on a CIA-approved biography of Allen Welsh Dulles, stated that CIA agents formally asked for guidance from the State Department in early March 1957. This biography was declassified on April 26, 1994. See Wayne G. Jackson, *Allen Welsh Dulles as Director of Central Intelligence 26 February 1953-29 November 1961, Volume III: Covert Activities* (Historical Review Program of the Central Intelligence Agency, July 1973) 108-9, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 103, Smith (1976) 220, 225-7

words, "In one speech I could turn Indonesia over to warm friendliness toward the US if I could state that US support Indonesia's claim to West Irian."²⁸

The CIA, however, based on its communications with the dissident colonels, believed that Sukarno was beyond redemption. As Colonel Djambek, one of the leaders in the PRRI movement, admitted, the dissidents needed to stress the anti-Communist element:

So as to interest the Americans.... Naturally our appeal must be made to fit our audience. For the Western powers we stress the very real danger of communism. For the Sumatrans we recall the ancient threat of Javanese colonialism. For the Javanese we will talk about parliamentary democracy and Sukarno's corruption of free institutions. By this means we will win the combined support of otherwise divergent elements.²⁹

The CIA bit everything, hook, line, and sinker. As Joseph Smith, a key CIA operative in Southeast Asia, ruefully wrote in his memoir, "The colonels kept providing us with intelligence that supported our worst fears concerning the direction that Sukarno was taking the Indonesian state." In turn, the CIA agents in Indonesia sent alarming reports to Washington which made it appear that the situation had deteriorated so greatly that the CIA was required to step in to correct it.³⁰

²⁸ Allison (1973) 303-4, Robert J. McMahon, "The Eisenhower Administration and Indonesia, 1953-1960" In Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns, *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (Latham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006) 87. For Sukarno's argument to have the United States to switch its position on Irian Barat to bolster its influence in Indonesia, see Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 11, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 373, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, November 15, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 501-2. On Allison's opinion that Sukarno was not "past redemption" and his argument that the United States could not maintain its neutral position on Irian Barat see Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 12, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 410-11, Telegram From the Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State, September 8, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 440, Message From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), November 27, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 517

²⁹ Mossman (961) 65

³⁰ Smith (1976) 229, 232

In Washington, facing dire reports from his agents in the region, Allen Welsh Dulles, the Director of the CIA, alerted the National Security Council that Sukarno seemed to be casting his lot with the Communists. On March 5, 1957, Allen Dulles in analyzing the regional discontents in Indonesia, argued that while Sukarno might limit the involvement of the Communists in the government and might accommodate the regionalists' demands:

a compromise solution is not likely to satisfy for long the pressures for a greater degree of regional autonomy, the complaints of the Army, or Sukarno's impatience with the Parliamentary processes and party politics. These circumstances, taken in conjunction with Sukarno's willingness to accept the communists support, will continue to offer excellent opportunities for the Communists to improve their position and have the potential of leading to major civil disturbances, an attempted coup d'état or political fragmentation of the Indonesian Republic.³¹

On May 17, he further described the situation as "moving close to a point of no return."³² This was a classic case of the tail wagging the dog. The colonels, who were in dire need of aid, were supplying the CIA agents with exaggerated information about the hopelessness of the situation. The CIA agents, in turn, fed their superiors alarming reports in order to increase the importance of their role to Washington, thus forcing Washington to believe that the situation was critical and a Communists takeover was imminent.

Bombarded with alarming reports of the Indonesian situation, at this point, John Foster Dulles had a very dire view of Indonesia's situation regardless of his intense loathing of Sukarno.³³ Stunned by the huge gain of the PKI in 1957 regional election, by

³¹ Report by the Intelligence Advisory Committee, March 5, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 362-4

³² Memorandum of discussion by Gleason, May 17, Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, NSC Records, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 380

³³ The CIA was well aware that John Foster Dulles would not take it amiss if Sukarno's regime was overturned. Mosley, Leonard, *Dulles: A Biography of Eleanor, Allen, and John Foster Dulles and Their Family Network* (New York: the Dial Press, 1978) 436-7. Ali Sastroamijoyo claimed that Dulles' background as a devout Christian and his puritan worldview have been widely cited as the main reason for

fall 1957 John Foster Dulles started to push for an interventionist policy toward Indonesia.

The fear culminated in a meeting of National Security Council on August 1, 1957. Allen Dulles argued that Java was almost lost to the Communists. Admiral Redford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff stressed that "the establishment of a Communist government would be militarily harmful" and the psychological effects of Java becoming Communist would be worse than the military effects. Eisenhower concluded, "The best course would be to hold all Indonesia in the Free World. The next best course would be to hold Sumatra if Java goes communist."³⁴

The meeting ended up with the creation of the Ad Hoc Interdepartmental Committee on Indonesia, comprised of representatives from the CIA, the Departments of State and Defense, the International Cooperation Administration, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Security Council, and the Operations Coordinating Board. The committee was to be chaired by Hugh Cumming, former ambassador to Indonesia. The committee recommended that the U.S. "employ all feasible covert means" to strengthen the rebellious colonels outside Java, especially on Sumatra and Sulawesi, while maintaining economic aid to Jakarta and support non-Communists within the military forces on Java, given that Sukarno had become more and more reliant on Communists support, and Communists gain in Java was unchecked. On September 23, Eisenhower

his inflexibility toward Indonesia, coupled with his Manichean view of the world and his intense dislike of the womanizing habit of Sukarno. Sastroamijoyo (1979) 236-7. Allison, however, attributed John Foster Dulles' inflexible view on Indonesia to the fact that Allen Dulles was his younger brother and both of them were close. Thus John Foster would accept Allen's reports and advice without question. Allison (1973) 307
³⁴ Memorandum of Discussion at the 333rd Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, August 1, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 400-1

finally approved the recommendations. Code-nd Haik, the covert actions aimed at undermining or even toppling Sukarno's regime.³⁵

The Eisenhower Administration, having been convinced of the severity of the situation, not surprisingly ignored Allison's recommendations to discuss the solution of the Irian Barat problem with Sukarno in order to take the steam out of the PKI's propaganda. Allison, receiving the first draft of the Ad Hoc Committee report on September 10, complained that the Ad Hoc Committee "has proceed[ed] on certain assumptions which I believe are questionable and has failed to consider certain possibilities of action which in my opinion would be most helpful."³⁶ Furthermore, to Allison's chagrin, his reports on the Indonesian situation were seen as less relevant than those from the CIA.³⁷ Worse, he believed that Washington had completely misunderstood the relationship between the region and the central government, as Washington was completely fixated on the perception of the Communists' growing

³⁵ The selection of Cumming as the chair of the committee was interesting, considering the fact that the recommendations from the committee were very hostile to Sukarno. According to Richard Stuart, his deputy in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Cumming felt very slighted when Sukarno shunted him to the background after his trip to Washington, considering how much efforts Cumming spent in bringing this trip to fruition. Of course, it could also be speculated that the fact that Sukarno followed the trip with visitations to the Soviet Union and China embarrassed Cumming in Washington. Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison, *Feet to the Fire: CIA Covert Operations in Indonesia, 1957-1958* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1999) 16-17, 177n31, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 106, McMahan (2006) 87-89, Roadnight (2005) 147

³⁶ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, September 13, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 442

³⁷ On June 1, 1957, in response to the telegram from the State Department to the Embassy in Jakarta dated on May 29, 1957, requesting that Allison provide additional reporting and analysis of political developments probably due to the CIA's alarmist view, Allison fired back:

Embassy has endeavored to keep Department currently informed of all significant events and developments while at same time by dispatch and periodic cables providing analysis and interpretation. Indonesian problem of creating and maintaining political stability is long-term one during working out of which many contradictory actions will take place. If we attempt to report every movement on political stage as it takes place there will not only be no time for anything else but there is real danger of giving false and unduly alarmist picture... which could well cause Washington agencies to take premature action which would adversely affect our interests. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, June 1, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 391

takeover of Indonesia.³⁸ Finally, the ambassador was so upset that on September 25, he requested to be allowed to resign as Ambassador and to retire from the Foreign Service since there was "the tendency in Washington to accept CIA reports in preference to those from the Embassy."³⁹

³⁸ Allison's frustration was evident in the flurries of telegrams between Jakarta and Washington in August 1957. On August 2, the State Department informed Allison that Washington did not believe Djuanda to be able to "stem the tide of what appears from here to be a snowballing Communist trend, or to prevent the ascendancy of the National Council over the Cabinet." On August 6, Allison replied that there was no information available to confirm that the National Council idea "originated with PKI Politbureau." On August 8, the State Department stated that they believed that Allison underestimated the severity of the situation as "Indonesian position has worsened seriously in past year" and "we must be prepared to take measures to reverse present prospective growth of Communist forces" by supporting the anti-Communist forces. This led to Allison's complaint in a telegram on August 12 that Washington misread the situation in Indonesia and "problem is much broader and more complex than only doing what we can to step up anti Communist strength and activity." He further added that "many of leading figures in Indonesian puzzle, including to some extent Sukarno himself, do not have clear idea of their ultimate goal or how they expect to reach it, other than the overall goal of maintaining their independence." He further stressed that Washington's fear of the Communists was unfounded as "many of so called Commies surrounding Sukarno are old or new Murba men who hate PKI and that through them Sukarno is working for his long range plans." The State Department replied that Allison's advice had been tried before and failed, and Washington was alarmed with "continued growth of Communist strength on Java to the point that ultimately they may have the capability to take power through legal or quasi-legal means. Finally, a frustrated Allison telegraphed his annoyance on Washington's inability to understand the complexity of Indonesian politics on August 26, 1957:

I have great difficulty in understanding Department's position.... To me it appears to be based upon misunderstanding of Indonesian situation and to reflect a completely defeatist attitude.

Problem of dissident regional leaders and central government is not simply one of Communism. It is far more complicated and goes much deeper. While the regional leaders are certainly anti-Communist, their original reason for breaking with central government was dissatisfaction with attention given by central government economic needs of regions. This was also complicated by psychological distrust caused by superiority complex of the Javanese toward the peoples of the outer areas. To some extent the anti-Communism of the regions is based upon the feeling that Javanese and Communism can be equated.

See Message From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison), August 2, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 402-3, Message From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), August 6, 1957, 404-5, Message From the Department of State to the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison), August 8, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 406, Message From the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), August 12, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 409-11, Message From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison), August 16, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 411-2, Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 26, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 425

³⁹ Allison (1973) 314-5

In spite of Allison's pleas, John Foster Dulles was not impressed with the idea of giving Irian Barat to Indonesia. As early as August 21, Dulles mused that the United States might reconsider its neutrality on Irian Barat in the United Nations considering "the pro-Communist trend of Sukarno, the fact that their own government is now extra-constitutional, and the unrest in their own country."⁴⁰ On September 9, in reply to Allison's pleas to have the United States back Sukarno on Irian Barat, Dulles curtly replied, "I am reluctant to see movements toward Communists become a paying proposition so far as US is concerned."⁴¹ On November 6, Dulles declared that he did not want to take any step that "would seem to be rewarding Sukarno while he was flirting with the Communists."⁴² In a meeting with Subandrio on November 18, he further stressed to the latter that "Indonesia was not going to get New Guinea by going Communists and that such a development is one thing that will make it certain that Indonesia will not get West New Guinea," though Subandrio persuaded him enough that Dulles agreed not to vote no on the United Nations General Assembly resolution on Irian Barat.⁴³

However, the United States' neutrality on the United Nations General Assembly resolution on Irian Barat meant that the resolution was unable to pass, and this was seen in Indonesia as a rejection from the Eisenhower's administration of Indonesia's position.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Memorandum From the Secretary of State to the Deputy Assistant Secretaries of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Jones) and International Organization Affairs (Walmsley), August 21, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 418

⁴¹ Telegram from Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State, September 8, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 440-1, Telegram From the Department of State to the Consulate General at Hong Kong, September 9, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 441

⁴² Editorial Notes of Secretary of State's staff meeting, November 6, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 490

⁴³ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, November 18, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 507

⁴⁴ Allison reported that when he told Sukarno about the United States' position on the resolution, the latter sorrowfully replied, "That means America has definitely renounced leadership of anti-imperialist and anti-colonial forces." Sukarno's parting words was cryptic, as he stated, "only America can really help – don't

The Communists takeover of Dutch enterprises in Indonesia and the resulting chaos and harassment of the leaders of the Masjumi in turn, convinced John Foster Dulles that Sukarno was a lost cause. On December 7, he instructed Assistant Secretary of State Robertson to cable Allison:

The considered and firm U.S.... view is that we *have* reached the point of no return with Sukarno. If he should show signs of turning against Communists, this would probably be only because effective political action by his anti-Communist opponents forced him to do so in order to remain in office. He must at very least be relegated to less dominant position in political scene. Our best opportunities lie with the Masjumi leaders, the right-wing elements of Indo Nat Party, the opposition groups, and the anti-Communist elements in the military and minor parties.

Our immediate objective is the formation of a government in Indonesia supported by the major political parties and the opposition group, which would be sufficiently strong to halt the present [sic] towards Communist domination and eventually reverse it. Our active support should be engaged in this behavior.⁴⁵

Allison was put in a very unhappy situation. He had tried to rebuild ties with Sukarno in order to push Indonesia onto a more moderate path. He also tried to persuade Eisenhower to accept Sukarno's invitation to visit Indonesia, only to suffer a rebuff from Washington.⁴⁶ Moreover, he was furious over the CIA agents' contacts with the dissidents, whom he found to be too risky. He also took issue with the CIA's reports, which he found contradictory to his analysis, and he demanded that the agents inform him of their activities. However, the CIA agents simply lied to him.

The dislike between the ambassador and the CIA agents was mutual. Finally, fed up with the "meddlesome ambassador," the CIA agents decided to push for Allison's

throw away the ball to the Russians." Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, November 25, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 513-4

⁴⁵ Message From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to the Ambassador in Indonesia (Allison), December 7, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 534

⁴⁶ Allison recalled that Sukarno's jaw dropped when he read Eisenhower's letter. Sukarno simply could not believe that anyone would turn down HIS invitation! Allison (1973) 312

removal. On January 4, 1958, the State Department informed Allison that he was to be transferred to Czechoslovakia.⁴⁷

With neither Allison's permission nor knowledge, the CIA agents in Indonesia had started to supply the rebel dissidents with cash and armaments, beginning in Fall 1957. The first shipment was completed on October 3 or 4, 1957, when Dean Almy, a CIA agent in Medan, gave Colonel Simbolon US\$50,000 worth of rupiah in North Sumatra.⁴⁸ On November 23, 1957, Allen Dulles further withdrew US\$ 843,000 from the CIA reserve for the Indonesian project.⁴⁹ The Permesta dissidents in North Sulawesi started to receive light weapons, anti-aircraft machine guns, and even military instructors from the U.S. Marine Corps.⁵⁰

By early 1958, the CIA had been given permission by the Eisenhower Administration to go full speed ahead in helping the dissidents. On February 28, in a meeting between Allan Dulles and his deputies:

The Director stated that as a result of a full discussion on Indonesia at the NSC meeting on 27 February it was clear to him that this agency has complete backing to go all out in furnishing assistance to the Indonesian dissidents.

The Director said he in turn had made it clear to the members of the Council that in his opinion we had gone about as far as possible short of surfacing US aid to

⁴⁷ Allison (1973) 338, Smith (1976) 229-30. Sukarno would later remark that "Allison was removed because he attempted to understand Indonesia." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 24, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 48. Allison's departure robbed the United States of any possible influence with "moderate Indonesian leaders" and Howard Jones, his replacement, arrived on March 10, several days before the government's assault on PRRI, and thus for all interests and purposes, was not useful. Roadnight (2002) 156-7

⁴⁸ At this point, the official exchange rate was pegged at Rp. 35 to US\$1. The black market rate, however, ranged from Rp. 1,500 to Rp. 3,000 to US\$1. Keyes Beech, *Not Without the Americans: A Personal History* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971) 262

⁴⁹ Jackson (1973) 109

⁵⁰ Gardner (1997) 146-7. However, in an interview with Barbara Harvey in 1972, Vince Sumual, the leader of the Permesta rebellion in North Sulawesi, claimed that he was only offered unlimited American support after February 1958 and the first arms were procured in Manila and Taipei and brought to Manado on February 23, 1958, a day after the government started bombing the city. He was supported in a separate interview with Pantouw, his associate who also dealt with foreign contacts. Harvey (1977) 91

the dissident group in Indonesia. He added that upon completion of this comment further discussion was held and it was his understanding that even this eventually should not deter us in our efforts.

The Director stated, therefore, it was his desire that this aid be given number one priority⁵¹

Keyes Beech, an American journalist, reported that an American freighter loaded with construction equipment and arms destined for the U.S. military advisory group in Thailand made a port call in Padang, West Sumatra. Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Hussein simply unloaded and kept the arms for "safekeeping." When Beech inquired to his CIA friend in Bangkok about this shipment, the latter said blandly that "this isn't the first time that sort of thing has happened in Sumatra." By early 1958, the air drops were so numerous at night that people complained, "You can't go outdoors at night for fear of getting hit on the head with a bazooka."⁵²

6.2. The PRRI/Permesta: "A Very Strange War"

On January 6, 1958, Sukarno left Indonesia for an international tour aimed at restoring his health and securing international support for Irian Barat. Without Sukarno's presence, the rebels believed that they could pressure the Djuanda government to resign and be replaced by a Hatta government. On January 9-10, a meeting held in Sungai Dareh was attended by military leaders of the PRRI (Husein, Sumual, Barlian, Dahlan Djambe, and Zulkifli Lubis) and prominent leaders of the Masjumi including Professor Sumitro

⁵¹ Jackson (1973) 84-5

⁵² Beech (1971) 270. It would later be revealed that the PRRI had received 10,000 small arms in addition to bazookas, artillery and planes. The planes were received by the Permesta government in Sulawesi, in addition to 3,000 small arms. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 30, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 126

Djojohadikusumo, a leader of the PSI who left Jakarta several months before in order to escape from a trumped-up charge of corruption.

The meeting was marked by disagreements among the colonels and the civilians. Colonel Barlian, the commander of South Sumatra, refused to commit himself to the establishment of a counter-government since his position in South Sumatra was very weak due to its close proximity to Java and the uncertain loyalty of his troops. The Masjumi politicians wanted to move slowly and to avoid civil war even though they were not opposed to the formation of a counter-government. Other military commanders, however, wanted to take action before Sukarno returned. They were made bold by the fact that the United States was implicitly backing the dissidents, and, as will be discussed later, there were real expectations that the United States might interfere.⁵³ With the United States' intervention, the government would have no other choice but to negotiate for ceasefire.

Moreover, some of the military leaders, such as Simbolon, Sumual, Lubis, and Husein had very little to lose. As noted in the last chapter, Simbolon had lost his command and he was desperate for quick action lest he lose the loyalty of his remaining soldiers. He even admitted to Dean Almy his difficulties in feeding and paying his troops without American assistance, which he referred as "rice money." The condition of the rest of the colonels was also not encouraging. Lubis was implicated with the Cikini Affair

⁵³ In an interview with William Stevenson, a Canadian journalist who was covering the rebellion, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, who became the Prime Minister of PRRI, stated that the rebellion was proclaimed on the basis of the "United States promises." William Stevenson, *Birds' Nests in their Beards* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964) 145

while Husein had no prospect of improvement in his career, even though he retained his command.⁵⁴

Furthermore, there was a sense that the government would not be willing to risk everything to fight the rebels. Part of the calculation was based on economics. On June 20, 1957, the Djuanda Government imposed a covert devaluation which drastically increased prices, which in turn would necessitate increase in the salaries of the bloated bureaucracy that Hatta had declared already cost the state Rp. 8 billion annually. Coupled with the chaotic effects of the nationalization of Dutch properties, inflation spiraled out of control. From August 16, 1957 to January 30, 1958, the price of rice doubled.⁵⁵ With a collapsing economy, revenues from the outer islands were critical to the government, and thus the dissidents gambled that they could strangle the central government into submission.⁵⁶ Therefore, it was not surprising that Sjafruddin believed the possibility of the dissidents blowing up Sumatra's rich oil fields would be enough to bring Sukarno to terms.⁵⁷

The dissidents also believed that the Indonesian armed forces were unprepared for combat. Nasution had had difficulty in trying to acquire military hardware, due to the unofficial military embargo of the United States. Fearing that the arms would be used to invade Irian Barat and (more importantly) would end up in a Communist-based Sukarno regime, which would then allow these arms to be used to attack the dissidents, Dulles had

⁵⁴ Gardner (1997) 146, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 135-6, 138

⁵⁵ Justus M. van der Kroef, "Disunited Indonesia" In *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 27, No. 4. (April 1958) 50-1

⁵⁶ Sundhaussen (1982) 108

⁵⁷ Beech (1971) 271

blocked Indonesian requests for military supplies, even though the CIA, and the State and Defense Departments believed that a token shipment of arms would be acceptable.⁵⁸

Facing this blockade, Nasution decided to look to Eastern Europe. The dissidents calculated that by the end of February, the government would have received a token arms supply from Italy and some Eastern bloc countries, which would improve the central government's military strength vis-à-vis the dissidents. However, the dissidents believed that it would be another four to five months before Nasution would receive the bulk of his orders of weapons,⁵⁹ and by that time, the rebels' position would be entrenched and well supplied with the American arms, forcing the government to negotiate.⁶⁰

In addition, the dissidents were well aware that there was also dissent on the course of action the government should take in Jakarta and West Java. The Siliwangi Division in West Java remained uncommitted, unwilling to support the government or the dissidents' position, considering that their former yet capable and widely popular commander, Colonel Alex Kawilarang, was sympathetic to the Permesta – not to mention

⁵⁸ Roadnight (2002) 148. In response to Subandrio's complaints, on February 19, 1958, Dulles instructed the United States Embassy in Indonesia to tell Subandrio that "agreement for sales of military equipment... are both technically complex and politically sensitive and cannot be concluded rapidly." The embassy was also instructed to tell Subandrio Washington's fear that the supply of arms "might jeopardize rather than enhance chances for peaceful resolution current internal difficulties and might encourage younger less responsible elements resort to violence." Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 39-40. On February 20, 1958, in a conversation between Baron S.G.M. van Voorst tot Voorst, the Netherland's Minister, and Mr. Robertson, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, Robertson stated that "we have been dragging our feet on the Indonesian request and that we have no intention of supplying the government with any arms which might be used to eliminate the moderate and anti-Communist elements in Indonesia." Memorandum of Conversation, February 20, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 41

⁵⁹ In a NSC meeting on March 20, 1958, Allen Dulles stated that Jakarta expected Prague to deliver IL-28 light bombers and MIG-15 and -17 aircrafts by early April. Memorandum of Discussion by Gleason, March 21, 1968, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 81

⁶⁰ On March 15, 1958, in a conversation with Howard Jones, the new American ambassador for Indonesia, Subandrio complained that the rebels were equipped at the ratio of three weapons to one man, whereas the government forces had only one weapon for every three men. Howard Palfrey Jones, *Indonesia: the Possible Dream* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971) 117, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 108, 128-9

the fact that they were tied down fighting the Darul Islam rebellion. At one point after the outbreak of rebellion, there were threats that the Siliwangi Division would march to Jakarta in a "show of force" to force the government to negotiate with the rebels.⁶¹ Therefore, the dissidents gambled that with the Siliwangi Division uncommitted, Nasution would have to keep his flank guarded. As a result, even if he wanted to quell the rebellion, he could not use as many troops as he wanted.⁶²

Finally, the dissidents highly underestimated Sukarno's willingness to go to war. This belief dated from the revolutionary war of 1945-1949, when during the Second Dutch Police Action on December 1948, Sukarno and the entire government surrendered, instead of leaving the capital of Jogjakarta to go to the jungles for a guerrilla war. Simbolon summed this up in an interview with Mossman. When the latter asked him why he believed Sukarno would not invade Sumatra, Simbolon simply said, "He hasn't got the guts."⁶³

On February 10, prodded by Simbolon, Lubis, and Djambek, and in face of the Masjumi leaders' objections,⁶⁴ Husein proclaimed an ultimatum to the central

⁶¹ Even after the outbreak of the rebellion, the Siliwangi Division refused to send troops to fight the PRRI. Although the Siliwangi was finally willing to contribute *one* of its thirty-three infantry battalions, the corps "felt like betraying their own people." On the other hand, the division also refused to join the rebellion. Sundhaussen (1982) 109

⁶² In a NSC meeting on February 27, 1958, Allan Dulles estimated that "perhaps half of the Army forces deployed on Java would prove loyal to Sukarno. But even so, they were not very enthusiastic about an attack on Sumatra." Memorandum of Discussion at NSC Meeting, February, 27, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 49

⁶³ Mossman (1961) 67

⁶⁴ Years later, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, talking with the U.S. ambassador Howard Jones, claimed: [The ultimatum] was Colonel Hussein's decision. I opposed it. I pleaded with Hussein to wait at least two weeks. But he was adamant. 'I'm going ahead,' he told us. 'With you or without you.' Both Natsir and I were against its issuance. But there was nothing we could do. It was too late to withdraw. However, you will note that I did not sign the ultimatum. Hussein signed it. Jones (1971) 76

government. Having declared that both Sukarno and the Communists were leading Indonesia toward disaster, he demanded that the Djuanda government to resign in five days, to be replaced by a cabinet led by Hatta and the Sultan of Jogjakarta.⁶⁵ The ultimatum was notable for the fact that Husein stopped short of threatening the declaration of a counter-government, which was understandable considering that even many members of the PRRI itself were reluctant to push for an open break from and military confrontations with the central government.

The Djuanda government, however, rejected the ultimatum and Nasution on February 12 dishonorably discharged Husein, Lubis, Djambek, and Simbolon. The dissidents were caught by surprise, but they had crossed the Rubicon and there was no other choice. On February 15, Husein proclaimed the formation of the Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI – the Revolutionary Government of the

However, in the middle of the rebellion, in an interview with Mossman as the Prime Minister of PRRI, he was hawkish enough to declare:

There can be no compromise with Sukarno any more. He is a wicked, godless man. He must be eliminated, swept away. It is our sacred duty to Indonesia. That wicked man must be thrown away, cast down. It is our mission. Our country cannot know peace and prosperity until he is finished with.... (The government's army) can do nothing to harm us. God is on our side. Mossman (1961) 138

Interestingly, in a NSC meeting held on February 27, 1958, Allan Dulles gave his opinion that "the dissidents had moved rather too fast and made their decision and delivered their ultimatum without carefully counting their military assets." In spite of that, Dulles remained confident that the rebels would win because "the Sumatran soldiers were the best fighters in Indonesian armed forces." Memorandum of Discussion at NSC Meeting, February, 27, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 49

⁶⁵ Apparently Hatta was well aware of the impending establishment of the counter government. He had sent several urgent messages to Husein, warning him that rebellion would destroy his region. In an interview with Marvin Rose on February 6, 1983, Natsir stressed that Hatta did want to return to power. However, Hatta prefer to wait for Sukarno to self-destruct rather regain power through illicit action. Mavin Rose, *Indonesia Free: A Political Biography of Mohammad Hatta* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1987) 194. Still, as noted above, time was running short for the rebels. Moreover, the rebels believed that Hatta would in the end join them once they established the counter-government, thus their need to act fast and put Hatta's name in the ultimatum as an acceptable alternative to the Djuanda Government in order to force Hatta's hand. As Simbolon stated, "If we waited for Hatta to act against Sukarno, we would wait a hundred years, but if we take the initiative ourselves, Hatta will follow." Mossman (1961) 65

Republic of Indonesia) until a cabinet headed by Hatta and the Sultan was formed.⁶⁶ This declaration was followed by the Permesta's declaration of support on February 17, under a similar condition. Even the leader of Permesta, Somba, was also reluctant to declare an open break with the central government. In other words, as Barbara S. Harvey noted, the entire affair should aptly be described as little more than half a rebellion instead of a full-blown civil war.⁶⁷

To further illuminate the fact that the rebellion was a half-hearted one, in a blow to the dissenters' position, Colonel Barlian, the commander of South Sumatra, refused to follow suit and instead declared his neutrality.⁶⁸ The dissidents lost a third of their army in one stroke and their flanks were practically wide open. The same thing happened in both South Sulawesi and Kalimantan: the expected declarations of support were not forthcoming. While there were grievances in the region against the dominance of the Javanese, fear of the Communists, and worries about the increasing authoritarianism of Sukarno, all of these regions remained reluctant to make an open break against the Republic of Indonesia. This, however, did not stop Dulles from giving his implicit support to the dissidents publicly on February 11, 1958, when he declared that he would like to see:

A government which is constitutional and which reflects the real interest and desires of the people of Indonesia.... As you know, there is a kind of a "guided democracy" trend there now which is an evolution and which may not quite

⁶⁶ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 138-40

⁶⁷ Harvey (1977) 94-5, 153

⁶⁸ This neutrality did not help him. In the end, Nasution relieved him of his command when the PRRI was broken. Moreover, the Palembang airport was taken over by the Indonesian Air Force and used as a refueling base for the central government's air force. Thus, the defection also opened the flank of the rebel's position. On the other hand, Barlian still allowed the rebels to use the port city Palembang for their smuggling activities and he also helped supply the rebels with petroleum from Caltex refineries at Palembang. Mossman (1961) 115-6, 131-2

conform with the provisional constitution and apparently does not entirely satisfy large segments of population.

We doubt very much that the people of Indonesia will ever want a Communist-type or a Communist-dominated government.⁶⁹

Jakarta was outraged. Nasution declared the ultimatum to be excessive and demanded that the officers declare openly for or against the government.⁷⁰ In the meantime, Sukarno had not made up his mind about what to do. He returned to Indonesia on February 15 and he met with Hatta, who preferred to settle this problem peacefully. On February 19, Hatta proposed that the rebels would withdraw their ultimatum in exchange for Sukarno forming a presidential cabinet with Hatta as Prime Minister. He left Sukarno believing that Sukarno would agree. Still, Sukarno had the last word.

On February 21, Sukarno declared his support for the government's uncompromising stance toward the rebels.⁷¹ Sukarno's stance was supported by the hawks, which included Javanese elements in both military and civilian circles such as the PKI, the PNI, the Diponegoro Division (Central Java) and Brawijaya Division (East Java), and the Air Force led by Sundanese Air Vice-Marshal Suryadarma, who was known to have close relations to the PKI. On the same day of his declaration, Sukarno ordered the Air Force to start bombing the cities of Padang, Bukittinggi, and Manado, the headquarters of the PRRI/Permesta.⁷²

⁶⁹ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 141-2

⁷⁰ C.L.M Penders. and Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: A Political Biography* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985) 124

⁷¹ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 143

⁷² Fischer (1959) 231 On February 21, 1958, the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta cabled Washington that Subandrio had informed the embassy that "President Sukarno had decided to attack the military problem first and to use every effective means to destroy the rebel military opposition." Interestingly, the cable also stated that "Dr. Hatta had agreed with the President... and had declined to enter the government until the military portion had been solved." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 21, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 43. Harvey further argued that the order was given by both

In Menado, the effects of the February 21-22 bombing were to solidify support for the Permesta and further strengthened the bonds to the PRRI. The fence-sitters, such as the highly respected and capable Colonel Kawilarang, who at that time was a military attaché in Washington, decided to join the Permesta, blaming the regional crisis on Jakarta's mismanagement.⁷³

On the other hand, Hatta was furious. On March 3, Hatta again met Sukarno, and Sukarno "agreed in broad principle to a compromise." They were scheduled to meet once more on March 7. This time, however, Sukarno postponed the meetings and the compromise proposals were leaked to very hostile newspapers, which denounced the compromise proposal and declared Hatta a traitor. Fed up with Sukarno, on March 9 Hatta declared that there was no further need to talk.⁷⁴

Sukarno and Nasution. Nasution believed that the government needed to act quickly lest the rebels would establish a strong position, giving them credibility as an alternative government. Moreover, it was apparent that the main purpose of the military action was to "[show] rebels, fence-sitters and world that Central Government has power move at will in Central Sumatra." Harvey (1977) 99, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 21, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 68

⁷³ In interviews separately conducted with Kawilarang and Nasution, both of them confirmed the ongoing communications between each other, and Nasution acknowledged receiving telegrams warning against taking military actions against the rebels. Kawilarang's final cable after the bombings was "very sharp." Harvey (1977) 101-3.

⁷⁴ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 143-4. On March 14, 1958, Jones cabled Washington on the timeline of Sukarno-Hatta's meetings:

1. At March 3 meeting Sukarno appeared accept Hatta view that military campaign against Sumatra would be indecisive and Sukarno tentatively agreed to replace Djuanda cabinet with government headed by Sukarno-Hatta and to send A.K. Gani as emissary to Padang to propose status quo ante February 16
2. Further Sukarno-Hatta meeting arranged for March 6 then postponed until March 7. Sukarno sent Hatta letter March 7, further postponing meeting until he completed consultations other political leaders. By March 7 it clear to Hatta that Central Government planned proceed with military attack on Sumatra.
3. March 10 Hatta sent strongly worded letter Sukarno expressing disappointment their mutual discussions had been fruitless and belief attack on Sumatra would fail. Hatta reportedly now tend view Sukarno's motives in their mutual negotiations as insincere. However, he reportedly is prepared resume these negotiations with aim taking responsibility for government himself if military solution abandoned.

Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 14, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 69

While the expectations for the rebellion were high in Washington, to Dulles' vexation, the rebellion did not go well in Sumatra. The central government invaded and managed to take over Pekanbaru on March 12 and seize the Caltex oil installations in order to deny the United States the pretext of "protecting American lives and properties" to interfere in the rebellions as planned.⁷⁵ However, the success was not due to the government's ability to surprise the rebels. The Indonesian ability to keep everything secret was notoriously bad.⁷⁶ The rebels simply did not fight.⁷⁷ They never thought that

Later, in a conversation between Ambassador Jones and Hatta, Hatta stated that the talk failed due to their disagreements on personalities for the next government. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 21, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 84

⁷⁵ General Djatikusumo, Nasution's deputy, recalled in an interview in 1971 that "regardless of which party threatened the oil fields... the (US) marines remained prepared to disembark in Sumatra to secure the oilfields if they should be threatened by fighting." Zulfikli Lubis confirmed this expectation, as he recalled, "It was figured that a scorched-earth policy in the oil fields by Husein's troops would bring in the 7th Fleet. From our standpoint it didn't really matter on whose side it would appear to be; but by intervening with its [the Seventh Fleet's] forces it could stop the fighting and this would oblige the parties to have peace talks." E.S. Pohan, Lubis' close associate who was the PRRI's chief resident representative in Singapore, added "As far as those in charge of the 7th Fleet themselves were concerned, given their attitude towards Jakarta, they would say [to us] 'go ahead and blast the oilfields.'" Kahin and Kahin (1995) 151. In fact, Allan Dulles remarked that if Indonesians decided to bomb these oil installations, "We have a good basis for yelling and screaming and also get a better reception." Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 52. It is tempting to speculate that both Sukarno and Nasution were able to guess Washington's intention based on a small innocent talk during a dinner hosted by the Yugoslav Ambassador. In that dinner, Subandrio asked Sterling J. Cottrell, a consul in the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, whether a report was true that the U.S. Marines in Philippines were ready at moment's notice to be dropped by aircraft to oil installations at Sumatra to protect American property. Cottrell jokingly affirmed it, stating, "Because U.S. Marines for over 150 years have prided themselves on readiness go anywhere do anything at moment's notice." Both of them laughed, but within several days, Indonesia informed the Embassy about the impending bombing on the installations, leading to warnings from Cottrell about such action. Having guessed the United States' intentions, Subandrio informed Cottrell on March 7 that the military had called off the bombing raid, however he asked Cottrell to tell the United States not to make any public reference to the decision. See Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 28, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 50-1, Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 51-2, Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, March 6, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 53, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 7, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 55-6, Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 57

⁷⁶ Stevenson wrote that Dr. Sumitro boasted of having spies in Nasution's headquarter and even among the Communist party. However, Nasution had also sown the rebel ranks liberally with his agents and informers. Stevenson (1964) 28, 95. Even without the spies, information about the war plans was easy to get in Jakarta. Louis Fischer gave a very illuminating description of how the rebels could have received information about the impending assault even without assistances of spies:

the government would risk destroying the economy by going to fight, and thus they were totally unprepared for a war.

At the beginning of the rebellion, John Foster Dulles wanted the administration "to take some very substantial risk in this situation" and Eisenhower himself noted that the United States "would have to go in if a Communist take-over really threatened."⁷⁸ However, Under Secretary of State Christian A. Herter warned that nothing less than a threat to the lives of American citizens could legally justify the use of force.⁷⁹ Therefore, the loss of Pekanbaru without any shot being fired was a huge blow to the possibility of any open American intervention. It also started to cool John Foster Dulles' view on the dissidents.

Five British and American journalists were seated at a table in Jakarta's Capitol restaurant discussing the situation. "Nasution is going to drop several hundred paratroopers on the Pekanbaru airfield (in Central Sumatra). They will secure the airfield; more men will be dropped; other troops will arrive via the Straits of Malacca and move up the rivers toward Pekanbaru. From there it is a hundred fifty miles, northeast across the mountains, to Padang. That's the plan," the American explained, and his colleagues brought out scrap paper to draw circles and arrows like professional strategists.

"How do you know? I queried.

"It's around town," he replied.

A Dutch businessman, in tropical white, approached the journalists' table. "What's the news?" one of them asked.

"The Army is about to take Pekanbaru with paratroopers," he said. "They will move from there across the mountains to Bukittinggi and Padang."

"How do you know?" I queried.

"An army major told me," the Dutchman volunteered. An army officer told a Dutchman? I was skeptical. But in a few days that is just the way Pekanbaru was taken.

Arslan Humbarachi, a Turkish journalist, had won consent from the military to accompany the expedition which would make an amphibious landing near Padang. Before his departure he wrote two articles in the English-language *Indonesian Observer*, announcing the approaching move, its military objectives, and what forces and ships would participate. Fischer (1959) 232-3

⁷⁷ Mossman described a surreal picture of the capture of Pekanbaru. Several dilapidated Dakotas were used by the government forces to land several hundred paratroopers on the airfield. When the paratroopers reached the ground, they found the airfield littered with parachutes to which were attached metal canisters of all shapes and sizes. The canisters contained large quantities of brand new military equipment all designed and manufactured in the United States. The rebels, however, were nowhere in sight. Djambek later admitted to Beech that when the government's paratroops landed on Pekanbaru airfield, the rebels were busy picking up arms dropped by the U.S. aircraft. "You can imagine how they felt. It was most embarrassing," said Djambek. One American correspondent later acidly remarked, "We dropped them everything but guts." Beech (1971) 270-1, Mossman (1961) 109-110

⁷⁸ Memorandum of Discussion at NSC Meeting, February, 27, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 49

⁷⁹ Memorandum of Discussion at NSC Meeting, March 13, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 65

On April 15, 1958, in response to the rebels' requests for more arms, Dulles acknowledged that it would be unlikely for the dissidents to win without overt outside support. He was apprehensive about the rebels' willingness to fight and in a conversation with Eisenhower, Dulles stated:

I suggested [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] a communication to the leadership of the patriots on a highly confidential basis that our feeling is if they put up a stubborn resistance to the imminent attack by the Central Government threatened on the West Coast off Padang, the United States would be disposed to consider some form of recognition which might permit of overt support from the U.S. or Asian countries which might join in that recognition. On the other hand, if they did not show a real will to fight and dedication to their cause, they could not expect such support.⁸⁰

Dulles was to face further disappointments. At 4:30 AM on April 17, 1958, the government shelled Padang and two hours later conducted an amphibious landing north of Padang, led by Colonel Ahmad Yani. The only resistance they met was from five apprehensive foreign correspondents who were there to see what was going on and "a force of high school students who offered no resistance and surrendered to army troops."⁸¹ Surveying the wreckage of the PRRI, on April 24 Allen Dulles complained:

⁸⁰ Memorandum of Conversation with President Eisenhower, April 15, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 27, 110 According to Kahin and Kahin, the classified line was: "the CIA might convey communication to rebel leadership of 'patriots' on highly confidential basis our feeling..." This information came from Howard Jones' notes. Kahin and Kahin (1995) 162-3, 285 n. 85

⁸¹ The landing itself was not at all impressive. Daan Jahja, interviewed in 1971, bluntly stated, "Actually Yani's troops were sitting ducks and could easily have been picked off by a small number of troops. They came ashore on rafts made of oil drums and had to get out in waist deep water." Mossman, one of the five journalists who witnessed the invasion, described the scene, "Slowly, helplessly, General Nasution's paratroops descended upon the valley. Most of them could have been killed before they even reached the ground, yet the rebels never fired a shot." The five journalists were later met by Colonel Yani who let them go to the rebels' headquarters at Bukittinggi with a parting remark, "When you get back to Bukittinggi, please give my regards to my old friend Colonel Simbolon." PRRI leadership was stunned. Meeting Djambek several hours later, Mossman found Djambek looking upset and agitated. He could not believe the government army landed without any resistance. Sjafruddin "looked as if he might have been crying." Natsir, on the other hand, was unable to believe the lack of resistance of the rebel forces, though he later went to the jungle. In light of this incident, it was surprising that on May 18, 1958, Sjafruddin wrote to E. Pohan, "The voluntary forces, such as the student army, the university student corps, and the new and young troops in general were not so influenced by the feelings of panic and despair [as were many of Husein's regular troops.]" One could not help but wonder if this was a sign of desperation and wishful

There seemed to be no willingness to fight on the party of the dissident forces on the island, and the dissident leaders had been unable to provide their soldiers with any idea of why they were fighting. It was a very strange war, because each side was penetrated by the other, and each knew in detail the forthcoming moves of the other. Our people there had had a very frustrating time.⁸²

Fearing a Communist-dominated Indonesia, the Joint Chiefs of Staff advocated the employment of overt military force on behalf of the rebels.⁸³ Eisenhower was not at all opposed. The military support, however, would come too late. The rebellion had moved from cities to jungles and the war had turned into guerilla warfare even before May 4, when the rebel's capital at Bukittinggi was lost.

Nasution hoped that with the collapse of the PRRI, the Permesta would be more willing to negotiate. However, he was wrong. Like a gambler who wants to recoup his losses in a single throw of the dice, as the news of the collapse of the PRRI reached Washington, the Eisenhower administration gave the CIA a free hand in the Permesta-held Northern Sulawesi. On April 15, Allen Dulles raised the possibility of using American personnel not employed by the United States (a.k.a. mercenaries) in support of the rebellion.⁸⁴

Lieutenant Colonel Andi Jusuf, an aristocrat from South Sulawesi, was ordered by Nasution to travel to Manado to persuade Colonel Sumual and Colonel Warouw to end the fighting:

While in Manado Jusuf saw four F-51s and four B-26 bombers at the airfield. Pilots were American and Chinese and very young. Jusuf stated "If these are adventurers they are the youngest group of adventurers I have ever seen. They

thinking typical to those who follow a lost cause. Beech (1971) 275, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 165, 287. Mossman (1961) 153-4, 159, 163, 165

⁸² Matthew Jones, "'Maximum Disavowable Aid': Britain, the United States, and the Indonesian Rebellion, 1957-58" *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 114, No. 459. (November 1999) 1201

⁸³ McMahon (2006) 93

⁸⁴ Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Dulles and Director of Central Intelligence Dulles, April 15, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 108

looked like a group of young kids, like I saw when I visited West Point". Colonel Sumual... told Jusuf that the rebels only had to ask and they would get any piece of equipment they wanted. Since they now had an airfield that can handle jets (presumed to be Morotai) they expect to have jets flying for them real soon. Jusuf said "The rebels were not worried about Govt air attacks because the field is now protected by US 90 mm AA guns. I saw them with my own eyes". Some Chinese colonels [from Taiwan] are training the 90mm gun crews.

Jusuf left Manado believing that the Americans were running the show. Petit

Muharto Kartodirdjo, the chief of staff of the Permesta air force, found that he was not the one calling the shots for the air force. In 1995, he recalled:

From none of my contacts with the CIA did I receive any form of official recognition of my position as commander. Even when I had to sign the receipt for two bombers and three F-51's, there was no designation of my position. The CIA mess in Mapanget, Manado's airfield, was set up without any prior consultation with me or my deputy, Hadi. I was not consulted on who or how many people were to be housed in the mess.... We were never part of the action, except in being a mere observer once in a while. We felt we were just figureheads.⁸⁵

Unlike in Sumatra where, lacking air force, the PRRI leaders declared that it had been disgusting and dishonorable of Nasution to resort to air power as no decent Indonesian would have done such a thing,⁸⁶ the Permesta utilized a small yet effective air force (AUREV – Angkatan Udara Revolusioner/Revolutionary Air Force) without hesitation. Starting in mid-April, the rebels conducted bombing raids all over Central and Eastern Indonesia. They also sank the Indonesian Frigate *Hang Tuah* and many

⁸⁵ Gardner (1997) 154

⁸⁶ Mossman (1961) 111. Interestingly, the leaders of PRRI actually had asked Washington for airplanes and in a NSC meeting on March 20, 1958, Allen Dulles mentioned to Eisenhower that the dissidents were in great need of aircraft. Eisenhower, however, "found it difficult to grasp what use aircraft would be in jungle fighting." When Dulles replied that it could be used against roads, Eisenhower replied that "he would have imagined that the kind of roads to be found in the fighting area could readily be repaired after they had been bombed." Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 81. On April 14, when Allan Dulles raised this problem again and warned that an amphibious attack by Nasution against Padang was imminent, Eisenhower replied that what the dissidents mostly needed was a submarine or two as "one considerable disaster to the Djakarta forces might change the whole direction of the struggle." Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 100-1

transports. By mid-May, the AUREV controlled the skies over East Indonesia and Sumual started to plan an invasion of Jakarta.⁸⁷

However, the plan could not be implemented because there was a growing split in Washington. After the collapse of the PRRI, some people in the Eisenhower administration began to push for rapprochement with Nasution, whom they did not think of as a true Communist. On April 6, Ambassador Howard Jones, who had a working relationship with the leadership of Washington (unlike Allison, who was mostly a career diplomat), informed Washington that the four main power factors in Indonesia were

⁸⁷ The Indonesian Air Force (AURI) was comprised of 230 planes and about 350 qualified pilots. The bombers consisted of American B-25 and Mitchell planes, the fighter force of F-51s and P-51 Mustangs. The AURI also had about a dozen PBV Catalinas, Douglas C-47 (transports) and eight Grumman Albatross amphibian planes. The great majority of them were over ten year old, vintage from the Second World War and leftovers from the Dutch force during the revolutionary war. Justus M. van der Kroef, "Disunited Indonesia II" In *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 27, No. 5. (May 1958) 75.

According to former air force Chief-of-Staff Saleh Basarah, AURI took over thirty six Douglas C-47 Dakotas, twenty two B-25 Mitchells, twenty two P-51 Mustangs, eighteen Auster A.O.P.9, forty AT-6 Harvards, five PBV-5 Catalinas, twenty six Vultee BT-13 Valiants and four Lockheed L-12. "The Formation of the Indonesian Air Force: A Successful Mission Impossible" *Angkasa* No. 8 (May 1999). *Scramble*, a Dutch aviation magazine, stated that AURI had forty two B-25s, twenty six P-51s, thirty four C-47s, twenty six AT-16s, sixty three L-4Js, twenty two Austers, and on February 20, 1956, it also bought eight Vampire T-55s. See *Scramble's* site at: <http://www.scramble.nl/id.htm>. Lacking spare parts due to the American embargo, most of these planes were inoperable. Nasution recalled that should the rebels decide to bomb Jakarta, they would only face three Vampire jet trainers and one P-51 Mustang.

The total number of the rebels' air force was unclear. It was estimated that the rebels had eight to nine B-25 and B-26 with American, Filipino, and Taiwanese Chinese pilots based in the Philippines and in Minahasa. Permesta was also expecting to receive several four engine B-29 that could bomb Jakarta by May. Harvey (1977) 107, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 171-3

Conboy, however, noted that the PRRI had bought 2 C-45 transports from Taiwan, which were delivered to Manado, and rigged into a bomber. Permesta also managed to buy one B-26 from a private collector through its Taiwan connection. The CIA supplied two P-51s and three B-26s. One of the B-26 crashed during a test. In addition, the CIA was ready to supply twelve more B-26s. The problem however was the lack of experienced pilots, as Permesta heavily depended on mercenaries. As a result, Permesta could only use these two C-45 transports using Taiwanese pilots, two P-51s using Philippines pilots, and two B-26 with American pilots. Conboy and Morrison (1999) 85, 87, 130, 132. In a conversation with Jones, Djuanda showed documents captured from Sumatra that indicated that Permesta had three bombers and two Mustangs. He also stated that he managed to verify that the cost of Permesta's air raid was U.S. \$ 75,000 per raid, showing that Permesta was backed by a foreign state, although Djuanda also stated that he was not accusing the U.S. However he was convinced (correctly) that the Taiwanese Government was involved with Permesta. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 30, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 126

Sukarno, the PKI, the Army, and the insurgents. The Army was "emerging as [the] most reliable machinery available for anti-Communist action at present." On April 15, he emphasized the importance of the Army for the future, and that the clash between the Army and the Communists was inevitable. Therefore it would be wise for the administration to extend aid to the Indonesian armed forces in order to gain influence in Indonesia.⁸⁸

In the meantime, Nasution approached the United States, trying to undermine Washington's support to the dissidents by assuring Washington that he was not a Communist. On April 18, Nasution secretly conveyed to Washington a request for the offer of arms to the Indonesian army before the arrival of the MIGs, the provision of twenty billets for Indonesian army officers at the Fort Leavenworth School, and an extensive visit from a group of U.S. military personnel of Indonesian military establishments, ensuring that the Indonesian army was not Communist. He also warned that the influence of the Communists was growing under the status quo.⁸⁹ As a result, Maxwell D. Taylor, the hawkish Joint Chiefs of Staff, made a turnabout and approved Jones' recommendation, arguing that Nasution might emerge as an anti-Communist force in Java.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 15, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 111-3

⁸⁹ Surprisingly, Nasution also claimed that Sukarno was in the Communists' pocket and he also resented Sukarno's interference in the Army's affairs. Letter From the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke) to the Under Secretary of State (Herter), April 18, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 118-9. Nasution's offer, however, should be seen in the context of Permesta's ability to inflict damage on Indonesian forces. As the war went downhill in the Sulawesi Theater, Nasution might have wanted to cut it short, lest it went badly for him, as Nasution's career depended on his successes in the battlefield.

⁹⁰ Memorandum From Joint Chief of Staff to Secretary of Defense McElroy, April 18, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 120

John Foster Dulles, however, was emboldened by the success of the Permesta. Selwyn Lloyd, the British Foreign Secretary who maintained a close relationship with Washington during the entire PRRI/Permesta rebellion, recalled that in a NATO Council dinner with Dulles on May 6, 1958, they:

Agreed that the present situation was unpredictable. It looked as if a push from one side or another might be conclusive. The fact that the central Government had said it might take until August to subdue Celebes [Sulawesi] showed the uncertainty of the situation. Therefore we must not abandon our hopes for a more stable and moderate Indonesia in spite of the failure of the dissidents on Sumatra.⁹¹

Dulles' glimmer of hope faded rather quickly. On May 10, in a surprise attack, the Indonesian air force destroyed two AUREV's C-45s.⁹² In the meantime, Admiral Felix Stump, commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific, had started pressuring the administration to change its policy. He also cautioned the administration that Djuanda had warned Jones of a possible break in relations between the U.S. and Indonesia due to the U.S. intervention on behalf of the rebels.⁹³ Jones also managed to persuade Admiral Laurence H. Frost, the Chief of U.S. Naval Intelligence that prolonging the civil war would only benefit the Communists and would prohibit Nasution from taking any action to bring down the PKI.⁹⁴ Furthermore, to Washington's embarrassment, Djuanda had already made use of the U.S. weaponry captured in Pekanbaru by exhibiting them to journalists to show that a "foreign force" had backed the rebellion. To further stress the danger that the

⁹¹ Jones (1999) 1204-5

⁹² Conboy and Morrison (1999) 127

⁹³ Telegram From the Commander in Chief, Pacific (Stump) to the Chief of Naval Operations (Burke), May 7, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 145

⁹⁴ Froth remarked to Jones that he was convinced "Nasution is reason we are still in ball game." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, May 10, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 159

rebellion brought to the possibility of growing Soviet influence in Indonesia, the long-awaited shipment of MIG-17 jets from Czechoslovakia had arrived on May 6.⁹⁵

At this point, Dulles was still hesitating, unsure of how to react to with the situation in Indonesia. While he had started to agree with Jones' opinions, he did not want to make a complete break with the rebels "on the basis only of promises [from Nasution] which might never be fulfilled."⁹⁶ This, however, changed when Indonesian antiaircraft in Ambon brought down a rebel B-26 bomber commanded by Allen L. Pope on Sunday morning, May 18, 1958. Pope carried U.S. military identification papers, a copy of recently dated orders from a U.S. army base, and a current Post Exchange card for Clark Air Force Base. To make the situation worse, the Indonesian government announced that the B-26 had sunk one Indonesian naval vessel, and destroyed a church, and the central market, resulting in heavy civilian casualties.⁹⁷

In spite of claims that Pope was a "soldier of fortune," Washington did realize that the arrest of Pope was an irrefutable proof of the United States' involvement in the rebellion. Dulles concluded that a retreat was in order. On May 20, he publicly declared that the civil war "should be dealt with as an Indonesian matter by the Indonesians without intrusion from without."⁹⁸ On the same day, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs Walter Robertson told the Australian ambassador Howard Beale that the solution

⁹⁵ Jones (1971) 130-1, 147, 151, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 176-7

⁹⁶ Jones (1999) 1206

⁹⁷ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 179-80. In his memoir, Howard Jones noted that there were reports of casualties in the vicinity of 700. However, an American visiting the area reported that he found no evidence of a church having been bombed, only a sunken Indonesian destroyer found at the dock. Jones (1971) 141. Gardner noted that eyewitnesses interviewed in 1994 and 1995 claimed that the bombings only sunk an Indonesian vessel at the dock and damaged a telecommunications building and a petroleum dump. No bombs fell near Ambon's two churches. Gardner (1997) 157

⁹⁸ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, May 20, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 190n3

to the Communist problem in Indonesia "would have been found through development of assets in Java." On May 22, Dulles confirmed to the Australian Ambassador that the United States was withdrawing from Indonesia, noting that "the dissidents had failed and the undesirability of taking overt action was so great that we did not want to proceed further along those lines at this time."⁹⁹ Colonel Warouw, asking for more help, was flatly told that the United States must disengage before adding "a lot of fine things about courage and so forth." A very unhappy Petit Muarto Kartodirdjo reflected:

We did need the assistance... but being given no part of the action was not in line with my idea of settling an internal family conflict.... To put it in simple words, if I had a quarrel with my own brother, I would not hire a thug to give my brother a beating. I myself would be the one to deliver the punishment, even with the risk of ending up on the receiving side myself.

A few days after Pope's misfortune, the entire group left, without any formalities, no good-byes, no handshakes, no explanations.¹⁰⁰

This was the turning point for this "strange war," for within weeks, the Permesta's resistance was broken, and Menado fell on June 26. Even though the rebellion continued in jungles, without the support from the United States it was no longer the major threat it used to be. By late 1959, the rebellion itself was badly split due to the insistence of the civilian leaders of the PRRI on linking the rebellion with the Darul Islam and the establishment of separate Indonesian federal state of Republik Persatuan Indonesia (Indonesian United Republic). The specter of Islamic domination was suddenly brought

⁹⁹ Memorandum of Conversation, May 22, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 192

¹⁰⁰ Gardner (1997) 159, Kahin and Kahin (1995) 182-3, Smith (1976) 247. Cecil Cartwright, one of the CIA's officers, later stated that they were also hurting but they internalized their feelings. Another officer, Thomas Fosmire, stated "For me, it was a very emotional moment.... We were all very, very upset." Conboy and Morrison (1999) 146-7

again into the forefront. Simbolon for one stated, "We feared the right extremists (DI faction) as much as the left (Communist)."¹⁰¹

The other issue in the divisions within the rebellion was nationalism. Most of the rebels were not interested in making a complete split with the central government. As Kawilarang argued, "many of our comrades have died defending this Red and White flag; we have as much right to it as does Sukarno. It is our possession; we will not abandon it or the Pancasila."¹⁰² To make the situation worse, lacking outside support, discipline broke down and some of the rebels turned into banditry. In 1971, Kawilarang bitterly recalled:

By 1960 the forces of the rebels were very badly disunited. They had incorporated many robber gangs and these groups asserted much independence. The country was ruined by the fighting. Almost every battalion was on its own, many of them fighting each other. When a battalion commander moved from one place to another he would need an escort of at least 60 men to protect him, Sumual generally had a whole company.¹⁰³

Kawilarang's disgust toward the breakdown of discipline was not a unique case. He reflected the views of professional soldiers within both the PRRI and the Permesta who had grown disgusted with the way that the situation degenerated. The watershed moment was on October 15, 1960, when Colonel Warouw was killed by a rogue officer who belonged to one of the bandit gangs. By that time, the common view was "If we have begun to kill each other, it is time to end it."¹⁰⁴

Therefore, when Nasution on March 3, 1961 renewed appeals for the rebels to return to the government, his words fell on receptive ears. Stricken with malaria,

¹⁰¹ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 202, Mossman (1961) 229-30

¹⁰² Harvey (1977) 128

¹⁰³ Kahin and Kahin (1995) 213

¹⁰⁴ Harvey (1977) 133

Kawilarang authorized the agreement for all the Permesta forces to surrender, and he later personally surrendered with 36,000 troops. With the surrender of Kawilarang, the rest of the colonels saw the writing on the wall.¹⁰⁵ By the end of July, Hussein, Simbolon, and Nainggolan had surrendered with 4,000 followers. On August 18, Zulkifli Lubis surrendered, followed a week later by Sjafruddin Prawiranegara and Burhanuddin Harahap with the rebellion's remaining liquid assets of twenty-nine kilograms of gold bullion. Djambek was ambushed and killed by the Communists on his way to surrender, though there were legends that he was still alive since he had declared that he would never give up. Natsir surrendered on September 25. The last colonel, Sumual, finally surrendered to the government on October 15, 1961. Meanwhile, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo remained in exile in Singapore until the fall of Sukarno, when the new Indonesian government under Suharto invited him to return. The "strange war" was over.

6.3. The Aftermath: the "Middle Way" and the Presidential Decree of July 5, 1959

The collapse of the rebellion would also be the last gasp in Hatta's political career. From this point, he would no longer be relevant to Indonesian politics. His trump card, aside from being the other symbol of revolution, was his appeal to the people outside Java and the fact that both the Masjumi and the PSI were considerably close to him. The rebellion discredited both the Masjumi and the PSI, and both of them would soon be banned.

¹⁰⁵ Feith and Lev noted that at the time of surrender, Kawilarang's troops remained a force to be reckoned with militarily. They were still capable of launching a major attack on Manado as late as 1960. As a result, Nasution was willing to offer very generous terms for Kawilarang's surrender. Most of the troops were restored to their position in the Army after a period of training and indoctrination and they retained the rights to bear their arms. Herbert Feith and Daniel Lev, "The End of the Indonesian Rebellion" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Spring 1963) 43-4

What damaged Hatta the most was his inactivity before and during the rebellion, which alienated many people. Hatta was always patient, never trying to take power outside the proper channels. Even by December 1957, two months before the outbreak of the rebellion, Natsir himself had bluntly stated that Hatta had missed his opportunity and "he will be on the shelf for a long time, perhaps for the rest of his life."¹⁰⁶ The rebellion thus put him in a tight spot: on one hand he could not agree with the rebellion because it was not the proper way to air grievances in a modern state. On the other hand, he could not condemn it because the rebels were his supporters, despite his dislike for fighting. Thus, the only thing he could do was to do nothing aside from demanding all sides to return to the constitution.¹⁰⁷ The collapse of the rebellion destroyed whatever was left of his political base and any remaining possibility of him returning to the government.¹⁰⁸

The failure of the rebellion had a heavy impact on the Indonesian military. As the regional commanders were no longer major players in Indonesian politics, Nasution's grip on the armed forces became absolute.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the seizure of Dutch enterprises gave him an enormous economic leverage: Nasution had insisted that the nationalized companies remained a source of jobs for older army personnel, and on August 30, 1958, he further issued an order placing a large number of officers attached to the central

¹⁰⁶ Mossman (1961) 40

¹⁰⁷ Fischer (1959) 286

¹⁰⁸ In illustrating how Hatta's political fate was closely intertwined to the fate of the rebellion, on March 14, 1958, Jones observed that Nasution's victory in eliminating the rebels would cause Sukarno to "consider his position strong enough to make unnecessary any further concession to moderates." On April 6, as the Permesta side of the rebellion remained a threat, Jones further remarked that "Hatta may ultimately prove to be key to settlement with outer islands but as result role he has chosen to play, he can exert very little leverage at present." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 21, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 68, Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 6, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 92

¹⁰⁹ Sundhaussen (1982) 111

martial law administration on the management boards of the former Dutch firms.¹¹⁰

Furthermore, following Howard Jones' recommendation, Dulles authorized very significant military aid to Indonesia, which solved the Army's armament problems in the short term.¹¹¹

The collapse of the rebellion on the other hand was another blow to the constitutional democracy – not that the leaders of the PRRI/Permesta themselves were defenders of democracy. Having defeated the regional insurgents and bolstered by the nationwide State of War and Siege, the Army gained a great deal of power that allowed it to interfere with Indonesian politics. Essentially, the Army became a strong power base in Indonesia. There was growing fear that the Army would stage a coup among politicians of all parties in Jakarta.¹¹²

Probably it was at this point that Sukarno decided to reorganize the PNI. Concerned with the growing power of the Army¹¹³ and uneasy with the rising power of

¹¹⁰ Lev (1966) 68

¹¹¹ On October 1, 1958, Dulles authorized a token US\$7 million package of military support to Indonesia, though the military equipment was sold at a reduced price. However, Nasution then went to the Soviet bloc and managed to purchase around US\$330 million in equipment from 1958 to August 1959. In order to offset the Soviet bloc's war materiel, the United States augmented its package to US\$15 million on January 9, 1959. However, the purchases were made on highly concessionary terms and in Indonesian currency. That "US\$15 million" was able to purchase materials enough to equip 20 infantry battalions including trucks and radio equipment, "small ships" for the navy, equipment for a company of marines, including a 60-mm mortar section, and pilot training for the airforce. The next purchase of US\$27.9 million between 1959-60 was in essence a gift as the government was only required to repay it in rupiah. Moreover, there were "excess stocks" in those purchases, such as twenty F-51 "surplus aircraft and 50,000 lbs. spare parts" that only cost Indonesian government US\$22,055 – a huge bargain. Later, the Army was also offered fifteen "surplus" B-25 aircrafts. Kahin and Kahin (1995) 206-7, Minutes of ANZUS Council Meeting, October 1, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 284, Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson) to Secretary of State Dulles, January 9, 1959, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 316-7

¹¹² As early as April 1958, before the Permesta was quelled, the Embassy had warned Washington about this possibility. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 6, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 93-4

¹¹³ Sukarno's wariness toward the growing power of Nasution grew greater with the surrender of Kawilarang. In Rosihan Anwar's diary dated on June 9, 1961, he noted Sukarno's unhappiness with the fact that Kawilarang surrendered to Nasution instead to Sukarno as the Commander-in-Chief, for it denied

the PKI,¹¹⁴ he had watched the PNI with dismay, as the party was not as organized as the PKI.¹¹⁵ Worse, it had moved away from him under the leadership of Suwirjo.¹¹⁶ The PNI had become too independent yet was incapable of matching the PKI in term of organizational professionalism.

Sukarno the opportunity to show himself as "a central figure in ending the regional discontents." H. Rosihan Anwar, *Sukarno, Tentara, PKI: Segitiga Kekuasaan sebelum Prahara Politik 1961-1965* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2006) 38

¹¹⁴ Willard A. Hanna, *Bung Karno's Indonesia Part III: The Politics of Mystification* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1959) 8. On March 10, 1958, in a conversation between Subandrio and Howard Jones, Subandrio remarked about Sukarno:

"He is no Communist. He is first, last and always Indonesian Nationalist." But he indicated Sukarno's reaction to being called Communist was one of indignation at the name calling and he said this plays into Communist hands. They are shrewd enough to exploit this and other US actions in such way as to drive Sukarno emotionally away from west. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 10, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 61

Subandrio's observation on Sukarno's view on the PKI was shared by Hatta. On March 21, 1958, in a conversation with Howard Jones, Hatta remarked that he and Sukarno had:

A fundamental disagreement on how to cope with Communist problem. Sukarno was deeply worried about PKI's growing strength and believed that Communist gains made entirely on basis promises which they not required fulfill. Sukarno therefore thinks Communists should be brought into government and be forced accept responsibility for their promises. Their failure would weaken them by showing them up. Hatta said he entirely disagreed with Sukarno's view and repeatedly pointed out to him that PKI not conventional political party and would use position in government to burrow into army and bureaucracy. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 21, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 84

It is to be noted that the previous chapter argued that in 1956, Sukarno wanted the PKI in the government in order to integrate himself further in the government. This time, however, as Sukarno's hold on the cabinet was secure, he might be worried with the success of the PKI in the 1957 election. As Jones remarked in his telegram on April 6, 1958, "Most Indonesians agree Sukarno capable of turning against Communists if necessary to preserve his own position." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 6, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 93. On May 3, 1958, Subandrio further told Jones that Sukarno agreed that PKI could "exist but must grow no stronger" and his Konsepsi was unsound due to his inclusion of the PKI. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, May 3, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 134

¹¹⁵ As early as August 12, 1957, Allison informed the State Department:

Sukarno believes non Commie parties have lost their revolutionary ardor and hence the support of the masses and that in order to keep this support for himself he must appear to be friendly to PKI which now has this support. Later PKI leaders will be forced out and Sukarno will alone lead masses and the nation. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 12, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 410. See also Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, July 21, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 247

¹¹⁶ J. Eliseo Rocamora, "The Partai Nasional Indonesia 1963-1965," *Indonesia*, Vol. 10. (October 1970) 168

Still, the PNI had its virtues. Under Sidik, the previous leader of the PNI, it was close to Sukarno and the late Sidik still had a considerable number of followers in the PNI. Moreover, even though the PNI was stung by its massive loss during the 1957 elections, it remained the largest party in Indonesia. However, it might have been temporary. Many analysts believed that the PKI would increase its gains, probably making it the largest party in the next election, which was scheduled for 1959.¹¹⁷ The PNI leadership was aware and uneasy in observing the growth of the PKI at its expense. As early as August 21, 1957, Subandrio stated that the PNI leadership had decided to repudiate its election campaign agreement with the PKI.¹¹⁸ By May 27, 1958, when the Permesta seemed to be losing, the PNI had started to launch a vigorous anti-Communist campaign.

Furthermore, with the collapse of the Masjumi, which had implicated itself by the fact that many of its leaders joined the PRRI rebellion in Sumatra, the PNI believed that it would gain significantly in the case of a cabinet reshuffle. It was well aware that both Djuanda and Nasution had given the United States assurances that they would deal with the "Communist problem." Since the Masjumi was out of the picture, the PKI was unable

¹¹⁷ In a conversation with Subandrio on April 30, 1958, Jones noted:

He said Dr. Djuanda, himself, Nasution and, a bit late perhaps, PNI leadership here equally anti-Communist. Present government recognized that coming year was most critical in Indonesia's history and that during this year growth of communism in Indonesia must be halted. Last thing that Indonesians wanted was for their country to go Communist. He himself had serious question whether PKI increase could be stopped by democratic means. He agreed with US analysis to this extent-if PKI won even so much as 30 or 35 percent of votes at next election which he thought was probable unless something were done to counteract it, Indonesia would go Communist. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 30, 1958, *FRUS*, Vol. 17, 128

On September 22, 1958, Prime Minister Djuanda declared that the election would be postponed for one year due to the pressure from the Army to check the growth of the Communists. Apparently, Sukarno also agreed with this decision. Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 283

¹¹⁸ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 21, 1957, *FRUS*, 1955-1957, Vol. 22, 417

to get in the government, and the NU remained a party of *kiais* in danger of losing its influence, the PNI expected to reap the benefit.¹¹⁹

However, Sukarno was wary about the direction that the PNI took. He also believed that he needed to tame the PNI before he strengthened it. As a result, the PNI did not gain much during the cabinet reshuffling, which was announced on June 25, 1958. In fact, the NU's position actually improved, thanks to the closeness of its leader, Wahab Chasbullah, to Sukarno.¹²⁰ Even though the PKI remained out of the government, the PKI's fear that the new cabinet would tilt heavily against Communists did not become reality. The new cabinet did not differ much from the previous one, giving the PKI little to complain about. Moreover, even though Sukarno had misgivings about the PKI, he still needed it at this juncture. Otherwise, the Army might have grown unchecked as there was no feasible organization that could counterbalance it aside from the PKI.

Upset about the result of the reshuffling and the direction that Suwirjo took, on the other hand, discontent simmered within the PNI. Suwirjo's pursuit of a PNI independent from Sukarno was heavily criticized, since Suwirjo's policies did not give the party as much benefit as expected. The fatal blow was dealt when Sukarno decided to force the PNI back to his fold by supporting those who were upset with Suwirjo's policies. The result was Partindo, a splinter of the PNI.¹²¹ Implicitly backed by Sukarno,

¹¹⁹ Brackman (1963) 253, Lev (1966) 151-2

¹²⁰ Greg Fealy, "Wahab Chasbullah, Traditionalism and the Political Development of Nahdlatul Ulama," In Greg Barton and Greg Fealy, *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1996) 35

¹²¹ Similar to PNI, Partindo used to be Sukarno's party during the Dutch era. It came into being when Sukarno's old PNI was dissolved.

Partindo's purpose was to create a tool to threaten the PNI into returning to Sukarno's fold and supporting his programs.¹²²

The PNI did move back to Sukarno in the end, but unfortunately, to Sukarno's chagrin, the PNI ended up as an emasculated party, completely dependent on him and unable to be an alternative power base against either the Army or the PKI. By 1960, Suwirjo was deposed and Ali Sastroamijoyo, its new leader, declared "the PNI should not have a Communist-phobia."¹²³

With the PNI drastically weakened, the Masjumi discredited, and the NU only having a limited appeal in Central and East Java, had there been an election as scheduled in 1959, the clear victor would have been the PKI. However, the PKI was worried about the growing strength of the military and Aidit himself realized that the victory of the PKI on the ballot could easily be overthrown by a coup from the Army.¹²⁴

This fact was not lost on the Army. There was no love lost between the Army and the parties in Parliament. Aside from the fear of Communists, as noted in the previous chapter, there was an intense dislike within the Army for the parties, especially for what the Army saw as the politicians' meddling in the military affairs. The military might be tempted to simply stage a coup that would get rid of the political parties, including the hated Communists. However, a coup would mean that they needed to also get rid of Sukarno, who through the October 17, 1952 event had made it clear that he would not agree to an army coup.

¹²² Lev (1966) 157-63

¹²³ Rocamora (1970) 166

¹²⁴ In a report to the PKI central committee on April 1, 1957, Aidit believed that the Army was on the verge of adopting a position hostile to Communist interests and the Army might even want to change the political system into military dictatorship. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 6, 1958, *FRUS*, 1958-1960, Vol. 17, 93

Even if Nasution and the rest of the high command decided to push for the coup, an attempt for a coup was not popular even within the Army. The Javanese officers who led the Diponegoro Division and Brawijaya Division were loyal to Sukarno,¹²⁵ and aside from the Siliwangi, Nasution relied on those divisions in quelling both the Darul Islam and the PRRI/Permesta rebellion. A coup would split the Army and rather than having a successful coup, it would lead to a civil war.

More important was the Army's growing involvement in the economic and political lives of Indonesians, thanks to the declaration of martial law by Sukarno on March 1957. While it helped to prop up Nasution's position, it also had the adverse effect of sullyng the Army's image with commercialism, corruption, profiteering, and coercion.¹²⁶ At the end of the day, there was no difference between the Army and the politicians it was supposed to combat. Tainted by corruption, the Army was no longer the saint it was supposed to have been during the seven years of Parliamentary rule.¹²⁷

The final obstacle for the Army for launching a coup was the one simple fact that the Army simply did not have the means for a coup. In 1959, even as the PRRI/Permesta rebellion was neither as strong nor as well supported as in 1958, it remained a drain in the military's resources.¹²⁸ Coupled with the ongoing Darul Islam rebellion in Aceh, West Java, and South Sulawesi, the Army's resources were stretched thin and it would be

¹²⁵ Daniel Lev, "The Political Role of the Army in Indonesia" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Winter 1963-4) 359

¹²⁶ Lev (1966) 191

¹²⁷ While the Army had launched an anti-corruption drive that netted several politicians, to its embarrassment, it also netted several army commanders, such as Colonel Pieters, the Army commander of Molucca. Several other officers close to Nasution also relieved from their duties for conducting smuggling operations from Jakarta's harbor. Sundhaussen (1982) 132

¹²⁸ In 1958, the central government had to devote around 48% of its budget and 45% of its foreign exchange to the military campaigns. Moreover, the fighting at the export-producing regions resulted in the loss of at least 10 to 20% of the government's export revenue. Willard A. Hanna, *Bung Karno's Indonesia Part VII: The Rebel Cause* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1959) 2

incomprehensible to risk a civil war in Central and Eastern Java where the Communists had seven million people voting for it in 1957 and where Aidit boasted that there were 1.5 million members of the PKI in 1959!¹²⁹

Short of a coup and aside from using the unpopular martial law, the only way for the Army to get involved in politics was to have the constitution changed, allowing the Army to be represented in the government. As the attacks on martial law intensified, there was a growing interest within the Army in changing the constitution. By late 1958, Nasution declared that the Indonesian army could not follow either the course of Latin American armies with their heavy involvement in politics or the passive stance of the Western European armies. Instead, the Army would need to pursue a "middle way," in which the Army could not be involved in politics (guaranteeing no attempted coup), but it must also participate in the government and help determine the government's policies. He also hinted at the possibility of a coup should the "middle way" not be accepted.¹³⁰

Both sides suddenly found that they needed Sukarno to achieve their goals: the Army to legitimize its political power and the Communists for survival. Sukarno was also an attractive option: even though he was widely popular among the masses, he did not have any strong independent political base. Thus he could not threaten either the military or the Communist power base. As Willard A. Hanna observed one year later:

The weak de facto Sukarno dictatorship, which virtually all thinking Indonesians deplore, either because it exist or because of its ineffectualness, means less the concentration of power in the hands of Bung Karno than the denial of it to anyone else.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism Under Sukarno: Ideology and Politics, 1959-1965* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974) 68

¹³⁰ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 133-4

¹³¹ Willard A. Hanna, "One Year of USDEK: Mid-1959 to Mid-1960," *American Universities Field Staff Reports Service*, Vol. 8, No. 17 (November 28, 1960) 4

Sukarno did not want to be completely reliant on any of them. However, without any strong and vigorous political apparatus, he had no other choice. He needed to maintain the Communists as a way to counterbalance the military, while in turn he needed to keep the Communists on a tight rein.¹³²

The result of these political calculations was the Presidential Decree of July 5, 1959, in which the President declared that the Constitution of 1950 that set the framework of constitutional democracy was obsolete and was replaced by the Constitution of 1945. The Constitution of 1945 was not appealing by itself. It put a lot of power in the President's hands. However, the constitution had a historical nostalgia, reminding Indonesians of the ideals of the revolution and the days before the country was

¹³² The PKI's dependence on Sukarno for its survival and Sukarno's uneasiness toward the PKI were evident during a crisis started by the PKI's criticism of the economic policies of the Sukarno-Djuanda cabinet on November 19, 1959, followed by another criticism on January 12, 1960 of the government's inability to bring prices down. The military was also criticized for getting 37.8% of the 1960 state budget, compared to the 13.1% that was spent on supplying people with food and clothing. On February 10, the Politburo again issued a sharply critical evaluation of the government, followed by a May 1 criticism by SOBSI. The PKI's criticism culminated with its July 8 "evaluation" statement, severely criticizing one year of Sukarno-Djuanda government. It was widely believed that the PKI's criticisms were an attempt to gain a cabinet seat in the government. However, the strategy backfired. As noted above, Sukarno himself was uneasy with the growing power of the PKI. It would not have been surprising should Sukarno decide to authorize Nasution to do whatever he wanted to the PKI. Nasution reacted. In a speech on July 16, he put the PKI in the same category as the PRRI and Darul Islam. On July 19, the Djakarta Military Command summoned leaders of the PKI for questioning. Interestingly Aidit declared that he had on July 19 received an instruction from the President to appear before the Djakarta War Administrator. Even though Aidit's statement was intended to show the military that he only obeyed based on the President's instructions, implicitly he knew that Sukarno was letting Nasution have a free hand in order to teach the PKI a lesson. By this point, however, other parties started to jump onto the bandwagon of condemning the Communists and by this time, Sukarno probably thought it was enough. On August 17, 1960, he decided to order the Masjumi and the PSI to disband. The anti-Communist drive had a sudden halt. Aidit, however, learnt his lesson and during August, the PKI announced that it was also readying various changes in its constitution in order to bring it in line with recent presidential decrees. Even though the Army wanted to push for the destruction of the PKI, Nasution decided to obey Sukarno since he believed that a showdown between the Army and Sukarno would be won by Sukarno. Apparently the trauma of October 17, 1952 still haunted him. Between September 5 and 13, 1960, Aidit impressed on Sukarno that the PKI was the best mass organization in Indonesia and Sukarno could ill afford to lose the PKI since the collapse of the PKI would mean ruin to Sukarno. Brackman (1963) 282, Sundhaussen (1982) 149-50, van der Kroef (1965) 227-230, 232, 234, 238

split by rebellion and discord. More importantly, it established Sukarno as a permanent arbiter between two sides: the Communists and the Army. The Army could not destroy the Communists without Sukarno's approval while the Communists would be dependent on Sukarno for their survival. In turn, Sukarno could not break any of their political bases because he had no significant ones of his own¹³³ and he derived his power from his charisma and his position as an arbiter in Indonesian politics. Thus, it would be in the interests of all three actors to maintain the status quo.

The Army received a share of representation and influence in the government through its delegates in the "functional group" in the new Parliament. The Army received 35 seats out of the envisaged total of 260 seats (13.5%).¹³⁴ While the Communists had no alternative with the specter of the Army's clampdown hovering behind them, the decree gave them breathing space, allowing them to fight another day.¹³⁵ The rest of the political parties objected to the Decree, but, in light of the prospect of either a PKI victory in the election or the Army's dictatorship, they had no other choice. While Sukarno's authoritarian rule would curb the power of the parties, it also preserved their share of representation in the Parliament, enabling them to keep whatever was left of their power. In short, it was the best outcome that the political parties in Jakarta could expect to get.

If this scenario sounds familiar, it was similar to the implicit agreement during the period of 1950-1955: fearing the Masjumi's victory, the parties kept pushing for the

¹³³ As noted throughout this work, while Sukarno did have supporters and support from many people in Java, he could also count on the loyalty of Diponegoro and Brawijaya divisions of Central and East Java. His command over them, however, was not organized in a formal way unlike the command structure of the Army or the organizational scheme of the PKI. He held sway over them due to his charisma and patronages. Lacking organization, Sukarno's ability to wield his supporters into a real threat against either the Army or the Communists was minimal.

¹³⁴ Sundhaussen (1982) 135

¹³⁵ Brackman (1963) 258

postponement of the election in order to maintain their positions. This time, the postponement was permanent. There would never be an election until the fall of Sukarno and, as Lev noted, lacking an election, the Guided Democracy would sever the leadership of the parties from their rank and file members.¹³⁶ Sukarno became the source of legitimacy and the parties found themselves relying more and more on him.

Sukarno might be the one who pulled down the pillars of constitutional democracy. However, it took a village's *mufakat* to bury it.¹³⁷ Thus began the era of the Guided Democracy.

6.4. The First "Confrontation": Irian Barat Revisited and the Fall of Nasution

With Sukarno at the helm, the issue of Irian Barat had come home to roost. Having agitated on the issue of Irian Barat for the past nine years, Sukarno had to do something – not to mention the fact that he needed this issue to take the economic heat off his back. In July 1959, Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr. Subandrio announced that Indonesia would no longer turn to the United Nations. Instead, it would undertake "a contest of power" with the Netherlands and the Dutch would be presented with a "confrontation" in all fields.¹³⁸

With the winding down of the PRRI/Permesta rebellion and the massive influx of both American and Soviet weapons to Indonesia, the Australians suddenly found themselves in a dilemma. Both Australia and the Netherlands had always rejected any movement to transfer Irian Barat to Indonesia. However, by 1959, in light of massive

¹³⁶ Lev (1966) 287-8

¹³⁷ Mufakat is an Indonesian term meaning a consensus among everyone.

¹³⁸ Justus M. van der Kroef, "Nasution, Sukarno and the West New Guinea Dispute" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (Aug 1961a) 20

Indonesian rearmaments, the Menzies government of Australia had a second thought. With only 3,500 men in Australia, 800 in Malaya, and eighty Sabres, the Australian military believed that it would not be able to do much against the newly equipped Indonesian military. It was not surprising, therefore, that as early as February 14, 1959, Menzies told the Dutch Ambassador Lovink that Australia had informed Subandrio that it "no longer opposed a change in the sovereignty of West New Guinea provided this was achieved by negotiations."¹³⁹ The Dutch loudly objected. However, Australia would not do anything without any support from the Americans.¹⁴⁰

This time, the Americans were not willing to commit themselves. Even though in October 1958 Dulles assured Luns that the United States would support the Dutch "to the limit of [the Administration's] legal authority" and on November 1958 he further warned Subandrio that the United States would oppose any forcible alteration to the status quo,¹⁴¹ by 1959, the United States had second thoughts. Washington decided that it would be a bad idea to offend either the Army or the Indonesian government due to growing strength of the PKI. Cochran's policy effectively was abandoned after the failure of the PRRI/Permesta rebellion.

Therefore, when the Netherlands, hoping to improve the defense of Irian Barat, delivered a "shopping list" of twelve long-distance patrol planes, nine troop transport helicopters, two landing craft, and various other military items to the United States on June 1959, the American government procrastinated.¹⁴² As Luns kept asking for the delivery in light of the Indonesian arms buildup, his pleas fell upon deaf ears and he

¹³⁹ Penders (2002) 323, 3255

¹⁴⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, April 10, 1961, 11:05 a.m.-noon., *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 348

¹⁴¹ Roadnight (2002) 172

¹⁴² Penders (2002) 300

eventually left Washington empty-handed. John Foster Dulles, the only person who would probably have given support to the Dutch, had died on May 29, 1959 from cancer.¹⁴³

In the middle of 1960, Sukarno broke off diplomatic relations with the Netherlands, ratcheting up the tension greatly. The Dutch, trying to get American support, suffered another blow when Luns met Eisenhower in October 1960 to try to reaffirm the United States' support for the Dutch position in light of Sukarno's visit to Washington. In reply, Eisenhower flatly noted that he had the impression that Irian Barat was more an expense than an asset and asked about the literacy of the local population. The conversation ended abruptly with Eisenhower's criticisms of the lack of Dutch effort in providing education to its former colony.¹⁴⁴ Luns, however, was not that disappointed. The United States also rebuffed Nasution's attempts to ask for more weapons as the United States grew concerned that these weapons would be used against the Dutch in Irian Barat.

At this point, the Dutch realized that its hold in Irian Barat was no longer tenable and it started trying to get Irian Barat monkey off its back, particularly given that it was a financial drain on the Dutch treasury.¹⁴⁵ By September 5, 1960, the new Prime Minister

¹⁴³ Mosley (1978) 448

¹⁴⁴ Sukarno's visit to Washington almost ended in disaster. Sukarno later complained in his autobiography that during this second visit, Eisenhower snubbed him, forcing him to wait for an hour in the anteroom. Ambassador Howard Jones, however, stated that the reason for the wait was because Aidit was in Sukarno's entourage and Eisenhower's aide hesitated at bringing Aidit in, leading to a *ten minute wait* (not one hour as claimed by Sukarno). Still, the meeting ended beneficially for Sukarno, as Eisenhower asked about Indonesian economic development and Sukarno blamed Indonesian problems on the low educational base left by the Dutch, leading to Eisenhower's banter with Luns on this issue. Adams (1965) 295, Gardner (1997) 166, Jones (1971) 183-4

¹⁴⁵ The cost of Irian Barat to the Dutch treasury had grown significantly over time. The Dutch government's contribution rose from f.15.5 million in 1950 to f.71.9 million in 1958 and to an estimated of f.94.5 million for 1961. By 1964, it was expected the contribution would reach f.124.5 million. This was not including the armament budget in 1961, which would be increased drastically due to the increasing belligerence of the

de Quay openly pondered the possibility of getting the Netherlands off the hook without surrendering Irian Barat to Indonesia by internationalizing the question of Irian Barat – a remark that he immediately disavowed, facing harsh criticism from the conservatives.¹⁴⁶ However, putting Irian Barat into a UN trusteeship and emphasizing the right of self-determination of the Papuans was starting to be seen as an attractive and honorable way out of this quandary, especially when tension rose to new heights in 1961.¹⁴⁷

Nonetheless, the Indonesians were outraged by what they saw as another Dutch perfidy and an attempt to set up a puppet state – in Sukarno's words: "a dagger aimed at Indonesia's heart." Aidit had a field day. He urged Sukarno to accelerate the campaign to recover Irian Barat and suggested that he could bring unlimited Soviet assistance to Indonesia. Moreover, Aidit knew that the Army's attention would be distracted by this issue, giving the PKI a free hand. If the country went for a total war with the Dutch, there would be mobilization, providing the PKI the pretext to arm its one million strong Pemuda Rakjat (People's Youth – the Communist paramilitary group). Of course, should the Army fail, it would be completely discredited and leave the PKI as the only source of power.¹⁴⁸

From the Army's perspective, the issue of Irian Barat was also an attractive issue to exploit. However, Nasution was cautious. He did not think that the Army was strong enough to push for a total war against the Dutch, whom he believed to have advantages in

Indonesians. On April 19, 1961, Luns admitted to President Kennedy that maintaining its rule in Irian Barat cost the Dutch US\$35 million annually. See Justus M. van der Kroef, "Nationalism and Politics in West New Guinea," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 34, No. 1. (Spring 1961b) 49, Memorandum of Conversation, April 10, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 348

¹⁴⁶ Justus M. van der Kroef, "West New Guinea in the Crucible" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (December 1960) 538

¹⁴⁷ Penders (2002) 330

¹⁴⁸ Brackman (1963) 283

both air force and navy. Even with the rapid arms buildup, he believed that it would take Indonesia another three years, or at least until 1963 before Indonesia could mount a military assault on Irian Barat.¹⁴⁹

The critical factor was his uncertainty about the attitude of the United States, an ally of the Netherlands, together with other interested powers such as Great Britain, Australia, and the Philippines. He had reason to be cautious: having been rebuffed in his requests for more arms, Nasution believed that the United States was still sitting on the fence. As a result, he went to the Soviet Union and concluded a US\$400 million agreement in January 1961.¹⁵⁰ This rebuff, however, showed Nasution about the wariness of Washington about the development in Irian Barat. He needed to reassure the Western powers. Thus, on April 1961, while touring Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines, Nasution repeatedly stated that Indonesia would not resort to military means in claiming Irian Barat. Domestically however, Nasution attempted to assure Indonesia's neighbors causing uproar among a number of officers who called Nasution lacking patriotism.¹⁵¹ It became the first chink in Nasution's armor.

The second chink in Nasution's armor was the unexpected success of the Irian Barat campaign, which came about because the United States under Kennedy refused to commit its military to support the Dutch. Prodded by Howard Jones to pay more attention to Sukarno's interests in Irian Barat, Kennedy invited Sukarno to Washington to establish

¹⁴⁹ On April 10, 1961, in a conversation with President Kennedy, Luns admitted that the Dutch had 3 destroyers, 8 patrol boats, 10 landing craft, 1 squadron of jet planes, 1 squadron of conventional planes, some helicopters, 1 battalion of infantry, 1 battalion of marines, a 400-man anti-aircraft artillery unit, and 200 troops in the West New Guinea constabulary. Luns believed that Indonesia could mount an invading force of some 2 to 3,000. Memorandum of Conversation, April 10, 1961, 11:05 a.m.-noon., *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 348

¹⁵⁰ van der Kroef (1961a) 21-2

¹⁵¹ Sundhaussen (1982) 155

personal relations in April 1961.¹⁵² Within the State Department itself, the Far Eastern Bureau that was demoralized following McCarthy's purge had reemerged, making the State Department no longer beholden to Europe-oriented policies, and significantly weakening sympathies toward the Dutch. By late April, the Dutch embassy in Washington was warned by its sources in the State Department that there were changes in the United States on Irian Barat.¹⁵³

In spite of Luns prodding Kennedy about the need to stand firm against Sukarno, Kennedy received Sukarno cordially and Sukarno later in his autobiography fondly remembered Kennedy as someone who understood him.¹⁵⁴ By May 1961, Luns, reading the writing on the wall, decided to propose a plan to transfer sovereignty to the

¹⁵² In Jones' telegram on January 25, 1961, he stressed:

There much we can do to inject warmth of personal relationship into intercourse between US Government, Sukarno. This involves participation of US President. Sukarno is, after all, a warm, magnetic, responsive human being. A personal relationship between two Presidents, once established, without question will lead to greater US impact on Sukarno's thinking and attitudes and could exert considerable influence on course of events in Indonesia. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, January 25, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 306

¹⁵³ Changes in how Washington saw the Irian Barat problem had started even before Sukarno's visit to Washington on April 24, 1961. As early as April 3, 1961, Secretary of State Dean Rusk had pondered whether the Dutch were able to defend Irian Barat and he predicted that by late 1961, the balance of power would have shifted in favor of Indonesia. He concluded that the Netherlands should withdraw from Irian Barat and he saw no alternative aside from a UN trusteeship. On April 5, Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff stated bluntly that the trusteeship seemed to be a cover operation for eventually giving Irian Barat to Indonesia. Even though Luns had visited the United States on April 11, at which time Rusk reassured Luns that the U.S. policy on the use of force had changed, on April 19, Komer argued that the U.S. strategic interests require that the U.S. move to Indonesia's side. Gardner (1997) 173-4, Roger Hilsman, *To Move A Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967) 372, 377, Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Kennedy, April 3, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 338, Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow), April 5, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 340, Memorandum of Conversation, April 11, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 361, 363, Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow), April 19, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 367

¹⁵⁴ Adams (1965) 296. The feeling, however, might not have been mutual. On December 1, 1961, McGeorge Bundy, the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, wrote in his memorandum to President Kennedy when he tried to persuade Kennedy to reconsider Washington's neutrality on Irian Barat, "Sukarno, I know, is not your own favorite statesman...." Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Kennedy, December 1, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 463

indigenous people in Irian Barat. After a period of trusteeship under the United Nations, Irian Barat would then proceed toward political self-determination. The plan was approved by the Dutch Parliament grudgingly. Facing a growing Indonesian military funded by the Soviet Union,¹⁵⁵ without receiving any military support from the Americans, the Dutch would be hard-pressed to defend Irian Barat. Even this plan had a hitch. In a cabinet session on July 21, 1961, Luns indicated that he was not even confident of American support for the plan. Washington had moved toward a position of supporting the Indonesian takeover of Irian Barat.¹⁵⁶

Encouraged by both Kennedy's reception and the growing resentment within the Netherlands itself on what the Dutch saw as their government's increasing belligerency on this matter,¹⁵⁷ Sukarno turned up the heat. During the Independence Day celebration on August 17, 1961, he declared:

We are not going to waste any more words with the Dutch now! West Irian must soon be returned to the territory under the authority of the Republic. At present our policy vis-à-vis the Dutch is a policy of confrontation in every field – in the political, the economic, yes, even in the military field!¹⁵⁸

The Dutch finally decided to get rid of this headache by bringing the entire problem to the United Nations. In September 1961, Luns presented his plan to the

¹⁵⁵ By September 11, 1961, the Kennedy administration believed that Indonesia had received US\$800 million worth of Soviet arms. Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to President Kennedy, September 11, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 426. At this point, the Indonesians spent half of their budget on military (US\$1.2 billion) and Nasution's visit to Moscow netted Indonesia several MIG-21 fighters armed with air-to-air missiles and TU-16 medium bombers carrying air-to-surface missiles. The navy received six submarines, six destroyers, and one Sverdlov-class cruiser. There were also 400 Soviet military instructors in the Indonesian military. Guy J. Pauker, "The Soviet Challenge in Indonesia" *Foreign Affairs* 40:4 (July 1962) 615-5

¹⁵⁶ Penders (2002) 336-7

¹⁵⁷ In response to the Netherlands' government decision to build up its defenses in Irian Barat, on July 13, 1961, the youth of Rotterdam demonstrated against the dispatch of fresh Dutch troops to the island, followed by a call for peaceful settlement by twenty-two Dutch professors of the Catholic University of Nijmegen on August 3. Ganis Harsono, *Recollection of an Indonesian Diplomat in the Sukarno Era* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977) 232

¹⁵⁸ Sundhaussen (1982) 155

General Assembly. Subandrio declared Luns' entire plan was a neo-colonialist plot to keep Indonesia divided and partitioned. The United States pushed both sides to engage in secret bilateral talks. The talks failed miserably: in a leak to the newspapers, Indonesians complained that Luns had dominated the meeting by laying down impossible demands while Indonesians were unable to say anything. Luns further declared that Indonesia meant to the Netherlands even less than Outer Mongolia, as Indonesia had broken diplomatic relations with the Dutch in 1960.¹⁵⁹

By October 13, 1961, there were grumbling in Washington that the Dutch were trying to put the United States in a difficult position, forcing the United States to choose between siding with the Dutch by accepting the "self determination principle" stated in Luns' plan and appearing to oppose the self-determination principle by rejecting the plan.¹⁶⁰ In the meantime, Washington also realized that the United States' ambiguous position on Irian Barat simply could not be maintained as the situation in Indonesia worsened. At this point, Indonesia had no uncommitted foreign exchange and Subandrio himself admitted that "the economic situation is so desperate that a military attack on WNG is impossible." However, Washington believed that even though Sukarno himself was also very worried about Indonesia's economic and political situation, he might "throw all rationality to the winds and mount an all-out military attack which would be designed to unite all elements in Indonesia behind him," and the resulting economic collapse would "create a situation most favorable to the Communists."¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Penders (2002) 338

¹⁶⁰ Memorandum From the President's Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Rostow) to President Kennedy, October 13, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 441

¹⁶¹ Memorandum From Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), November 6, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 450-1

Fearing the Communist's takeover in Indonesia, Washington ultimately decided to intervene in the Irian Barat dispute. In November 1961, Kennedy appointed W. Averell Harriman as Under-Secretary for East Asia. The latter made it clear to van Roijen, the Dutch ambassador in Washington, that in the case of Indonesian attack the Dutch would be on their own.¹⁶²

On December 9, Kennedy sent Sukarno a letter, stating his willingness to be an honest broker between the Dutch and the Indonesians to settle the problem of Irian Barat while asking Sukarno to refrain from using military force. Three days later, Sukarno replied that he needed to "canalize the pressure" of the boiling anger of Indonesians and "there is no alternative left to us but the use of force." The Indonesian Army did not offer any opposition. Nasution had already given up trying to restrain the entire euphoria, stating to Ambassador Jones earlier in May that he did not want another rebellion on his hands. By November 15, Nasution dropped a hint of the possibility of operations in Irian Barat. On December 19, Sukarno announced the People's Triple Command (*Tri Komando Rakyat – TRIKORA*), which was in effect a call for mobilization and military assault on Irian Barat.

The Netherlands however was unhappy with the lack of the United States support and with what it perceived as Kennedy's tilt toward Indonesia's position. An unhappy van Roijen cabled The Hague that Kennedy was bent on getting rid of the Irian problem and was pushing for a three-party negotiations. Furthermore, while the Americans would be willing to support the Dutch should the Indonesians remain obdurate, it was not to the

¹⁶² Harsono (1977) 234, Penders (2002) 348, 341

point of helping the Dutch militarily in case of Indonesian attacks.¹⁶³ On December 22, both the United States and the British agreed to let the Dutch know that they could not count on American or British military support.¹⁶⁴ The Dutch was left alone.

The situation was pushed to the boiling point on January 15, 1962, when the Dutch managed to sink one Indonesian Motor Torpedo Boat that was on a mission to infiltrate Irian Barat. In order to defuse the situation, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, a brother of the President, was sent to both Jakarta and The Hague in mid-February 1962. He minced no words. In Jakarta, he had a shouting match with Sukarno and in The Hague, he managed to offend the entire cabinet with his wisecracks, especially when he declared that Indonesia was more powerful than the Dutch. Kennedy so disgusted the Dutch Interior Minister, Edzo Toxopeus with this "loutish performance" that the latter left the table. However, his browbeating worked: Sukarno was so stunned that he became less belligerent and agreed to negotiate without preconditions with the Dutch. Three weeks later, he released Allen Pope, whose bomber was shot down in Ambon, as a sign of goodwill.¹⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the Dutch Prime Minister de Quay confided in his diary:

The visit of Robert Kennedy caused many of us to fully change our expectations. We were now convinced that ... our plans could not be realized. Kennedy put the question: 'Will the Netherlands fight if we will not join in?' We answered quite clearly: No, we will not commit such a stupidity, because we obviously are too far

¹⁶³ Gardner (1997) 175, Harsono (1977) 236-7, Mortimer (1974) 189, Penders (2002) 341-2

¹⁶⁴ Memorandum From Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Social Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), January 4, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, 503n3

¹⁶⁵ In his autobiography, Sukarno declared that he released Pope because he could not stand women's tears, as Pope's wife, mother, and sister had visited Sukarno and asked for Pope's pardon "tearfully." Adams (1965) 271. In reality, Sukarno had tried to use the release of Allen Pope as a quid pro quo in return for the United States' pressure on the Dutch, leading to the shouting match between Sukarno and Robert Kennedy. Sukarno, however, in the end decided to release Pope without telling Robert Kennedy "because he did not wish to appear to be responding to pressure." Gardner (1997) 176, Hilsman (1967) 380, Jones (1971) 206. See also Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 14, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 527 and Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 20, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 533-5

away and would be overwhelmed by superior numbers. It would be irresponsible to shed blood and fight on our own for the cause. This would be out of the question of course.¹⁶⁶

In March 1962, both the Dutch and the Indonesians agreed to secret talks at Middleburg, Virginia, mediated by Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker. After deadlocks and delays caused by Luns' stalling tactics (clinging to the hope of either the Indonesian economy's immediate collapse or Sukarno's impending death from kidney failure)¹⁶⁷ and Sukarno's military posturing, on August 15, 1962, the agreement was signed. The Dutch left Irian Barat and Indonesia took over after a brief rule by the United Nations. The first confrontation between Indonesia and the Netherlands was over.

Even though the return of Irian Barat to Indonesia came about primarily thanks to the unwillingness of the United States to back the Dutch militarily, and the growing military strength of Indonesia, in Indonesia it was seen as a huge triumph for Sukarno. He was able to deliver his promise of getting Irian Barat back to Indonesia, something that successive Indonesian governments from Hatta to Ali Sastroamijoyo failed to do. In spite of Nasution's reluctance, Sukarno had pushed forward and managed to pull out a diplomatic triumph. Sukarno's power and popularity were at their zenith and he began to tackle problems at home. He decided to break Nasution's power.

In June 1962, in the middle of negotiations, but with Indonesian victory on the negotiating table close, Sukarno replaced General Nasution as Chief of Staff of the Army

¹⁶⁶ Penders (2002) 353-4

¹⁶⁷ Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), May 12, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 590

with Major General Ahmad Yani.¹⁶⁸ In turn, Nasution was appointed as Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. In addition, the Chiefs of Staff of all four services were elevated to commanders of their respective services, and made responsible directly to Sukarno, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. To add more headaches for Nasution, Sukarno also encouraged an inter-service rivalry, especially between the Army and the air force under the vain Air Vice-Marshal Omar Dhani.

Moreover, Sukarno also created KOTI (Komando Operasi Tertinggi - Supreme Operational Command), which essentially commanded all operational control over the military.¹⁶⁹ In one stroke of the pen, Nasution became an administrative head of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces staff, which in theory was a promotion, but in reality had no power at all as the operational control over the military rested with KOTI, which not surprisingly was headed by Sukarno with Yani as his Chief of Staff.¹⁷⁰ Nasution could do nothing in retaliation. Sukarno at this point was unassailable. He brought Indonesia to the brink, and he returned with victory. The contrast to the ever-cautious Nasution was evident and the military power suffered as a result.

Aside from Sukarno, the surprise winner of this entire episode was the PKI. Having advocated the use of force to liberate Irian Barat, and supported Sukarno all the way to the end, its position was enhanced. Cloaked in the mantle of patriotism and nationalism, the PKI gained enormous prestige, weakening the Army's ability to harass

¹⁶⁸ Yani's appointment was significant for the fact that he was not the most senior major general when he was appointed as the commander of the Army, which in essence was a violation of the Jogjakarta Charter that stressed the importance of seniority in the Army hierarchy. As a result, Yani needed to rely on Sukarno's backing in order to maintain his command, putting him in at loggerheads with Nasution. Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 159-60

¹⁶⁹ J.D. Legge, *Sukarno: A Political Biography* (Singapore: Archipelago Press, 2003) 367

¹⁷⁰ Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, *Twenty Years Indonesian Foreign Policy* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973) 310, Sundhaussen (1982) 163-4

it.¹⁷¹ Its freedom of action had grown, particularly after Sukarno lifted the state of martial law on May 1, 1963. Moreover, Sukarno rewarded the PKI with two cabinet posts during the cabinet reshuffle after the death of First Minister Djuanda. Its membership also skyrocketed. By September 4, 1963, Aidit boasted that the PKI had over 2.5 million members, 3.2 million out of 4 million organized workers had joined the PKI-affiliated SOBSI and in one year the membership of the PKI-affiliated BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia – Indonesian Peasant Front) had risen from 4.6 million to 6.3 million.¹⁷²

Sukarno also gained something else from this episode: he learned the Cold War game of manipulating both the USSR and the United States. On one hand, he assured the United States that he would not throw Indonesia to the Communist camp – and it was true that even though he had two members of the PKI in his cabinet, Aidit and Lukman, he carefully placed them in quasi-cabinet posts without portfolios, thus limiting the Communists' impact on the bureaucracy.¹⁷³ On the other hand, the United States had reason to be concerned with Indonesia's flirtation with the Communists as the influx of Soviet military aid grew rapidly. By 1965, Soviet military aid had exceeded US\$1.4 billion and Indonesia boasted an impressive 330,000-man army, 40,000-man navy, 10,000 marines, a 30,000-man air force, 26 submarines, a 19,000 ton cruiser, a dozen destroyers, 26 TU-16 long-range bombers, 25 IL-20 medium-range turbo-prop bombers, 27 MIG-16's, 50 MIG-17's, 13 MIG-19's and 17 MIG-21's – and the numbers kept growing. There was also talk of an Indonesian nuclear bomb (courtesy of the Chinese) by

¹⁷¹ Mortimer (1974) 196

¹⁷² Dipa Nusantara Aidit, "Some Questions Concerning the Indonesian Revolution and the Communist Party of Indonesia" In Dipa Nusantara Aidit, *The Indonesian Revolution and the Immediate Tasks of the Communist Party of Indonesia* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1964) 57, Sundhaussen (1982) 166

¹⁷³ Ewa T. Pauker, "Has the Sukarno Regime Weakened the PKI?" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 9 (September 1964) 1067

1965.¹⁷⁴ By sitting on the fence, Sukarno could force both the United States and the Soviet Union to compete to buy his loyalty.¹⁷⁵

Still, Sukarno's political tap-dancing between the United States and the Soviet Union was most likely due to the fact that he had no other alternative. True to his words, Sukarno was not a Communist. However, he put himself in a situation where he had to create a delicate balance between the Army and the Communists. In an analysis on the PKI's position in Indonesia, Hindley correctly indicates that the PKI was domesticated by Sukarno through the exploitation of the Communists' dilemma of lacking the ability to completely dominate Indonesian politics and fearing the Army's clampdown.¹⁷⁶ However it was a Faustian bargain. Contrary to his promise that he would ban the Communists should the United States support his claim on Irian Barat, by 1963, he simply could not do it anymore.

Sukarno could no longer depose the Communists because he needed them in order to maintain the balance inside Indonesia. The Army was beaten, but not yet out of the ring. It had the power of raw force to break the opposition through military coup and Sukarno was painfully aware of that. Moreover, even though Yani was not politically as capable as Nasution, both of them were ardent anti-Communists. Yani's selection as

¹⁷⁴ Arnold C. Brackman, *Southeast Asia's Second Front: The Power Struggle in the Malay Archipelago* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966) 99

¹⁷⁵ Apparently this was what happened in Washington. In a memorandum on January 16, 1963, Robert W. Komer declared that "the best way to keep Nasser or Sukarno from becoming prisoners of the USSR is to compete for them, not thrust them into Soviet hands." Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), January 16, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 657

¹⁷⁶ Donald Hindley, "President Sukarno and the Communists: The Politics of Domestication" *APSR*, Vol. 56, No. 4. (December 1962) 926

Chief of Staff of the Army was based on one simple fact: he was loyal and subordinate to the President, thus willing to maintain the status quo.¹⁷⁷

At this point, if Sukarno wanted to keep his power, it was in his best interest to maintain the status quo because he had no strong and organized source of power to fall back on. All his political maneuvers had come home to roost. Both the Army and the PKI completely depended on him as a legitimate source of power and through his politicking and browbeating of the opposition, there was simply no other alternative to either the Army or the PKI. This affected his foreign policy greatly. Should Sukarno throw himself completely at either the Soviet Union or the United States, it would break the status quo. As a result, he was forced to become a master of the political act of balancing. The existence of the "Guided Democracy" political system depended completely on him. Hatta was painfully aware of this in the early 1960s when he wrote that when Sukarno eventually disappeared from politics "his system will collapse by itself like a house of cards."¹⁷⁸

The cost of this political balance, however, was enormous: it strained Indonesia's fragile economy to the brink of collapse. The Soviet Union expected to be paid for its arms, as Khrushchev stated, "We do not engage in charity. The Soviet Union gives help on a fair commercial basis."¹⁷⁹ The strained Indonesian economy, however, could not cough up enough money. In June 1963, "debt repayment alleviation" was reluctantly agreed to by the exasperated Soviet Union.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978) 54-5

¹⁷⁸ Rose (1987) 199

¹⁷⁹ Guy J. Pauker, "General Nasution's Mission to Moscow," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 1, No. 1. (March 1961) 14

¹⁸⁰ Justus M. van der Kroef, "Indonesian Communism and the Changing Balance of Power," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Winter 1964-5) 377

Therefore, as the Irian Barat campaign ended, the economic problems were again brought to the forefront. On May 26, Djuanda declared fourteen regulations including various austerity measures that included cutting subsidies for public services and cutting the military budget. These measures were based on recommendations of an American survey team dispatched to help Indonesian economy back on its feet.¹⁸¹ In light of the Indonesian political situation, it was not surprising that the American proposals were seen by the Indonesians as "rationally economic" and hence "a little cold in this milieu of revolutionary romanticism."¹⁸²

Rational economy was not what Sukarno wanted. Even though the economic rehabilitation was a must, the political cost of fixing the economy was so huge that it was a hot potato. Unlike his options throughout the seven years of constitutional democracy, this time Sukarno could not blame someone else for controversial, unpopular, and painful economic reforms. The buck stopped at his desk.

Sukarno was not alone. Even though the Army was willing to consider economic reforms, it remained hesitant to demobilize its troops, as it continued to be concerned about a possible Communist takeover bid.¹⁸³ The Communists on the other hand realized that the success of the economic reform would be a problem. Not that they did not want to end the economic chaos, but they were concerned that the success of this economic reform would move Indonesia closer and would cause Indonesia to be more dependent on the United States since the Soviet Union, already seething due to the large loan, was unwilling (or unable) to match the American aid. Since the United States would demand

¹⁸¹ van der Kroef (1965) 270

¹⁸² Willard A. Hanna, "Observations on United States Aid to Indonesia" *American Universities Field Staff Reports Service*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (January 1963) 21

¹⁸³ Sundhaussen (1982) 167-8

the end of Communist involvement in the government, there were fears that the PKI would be sacrificed on the altar of economic reform. In short, the shift to the right would in most cases bolster the strength of the Army vis-à-vis the Communists.¹⁸⁴

More importantly, the shock from the economic reforms would force the abandonment of the status quo. With people agitating under the painful economic reforms, many would rally under the Communist banner. The shock would also hurt Sukarno, since it was Sukarno's cabinet that imposed the economic reforms, which meant the Communists would lose their protector from the Army. The Army, similarly, was concerned that the economic reform would drive people to the Communist side and therefore attempted to show people that the Army did care about alleviating suffering through "*operasi bhakti*" (Civic Action program), in which the Army employed its troops on various civic works such as building bridges. Sukarno, on the other hand, did realize that he needed to fix the economy. By 1964, he was desperate enough to seek Hatta's help.¹⁸⁵ However, he simply could not push for controversial economic reforms as the shock would bring down the house of cards.

The precarious balance in Indonesia in turn led to the second foreign policy crisis: the confrontation against Malaysia. One major question that many scholars have asked was whether *konfrontasi* was an inevitable result of Indonesia acquiring Irian Barat. The answer is no. Had the Dutch returned Irian Barat in 1955 or even in 1957, Indonesia's territorial desires would have been satisfied, simply because there was enough internal opposition against an aggressive foreign policy. The Masjumi, supported by the still powerful Hatta, would have applied the brakes on any talks on expansionism as Natsir

¹⁸⁴ Mortimer (1974) 206-7, 235, 263-4

¹⁸⁵ Rose (1987) 202

did in the early 1950s, as it was mostly concerned with economic problems. The PNI, as seen in the previous chapter, while pursuing an active foreign policy, was not pushing for a policy of expansion. The PKI was not yet as powerful as it would become in the 1960s, and was unable to influence the political discourse. Furthermore, the Army, not yet involved in the politics as actively as it would be in the 1960s, was not yet willing to be dragged into a confrontation which might end disastrously for the Army.

At this point, however, with a delicate balance of power inside Indonesia, there was no longer a safeguard against aggressive foreign policies. Any attempt to voice dissent was seen as unpatriotic. Besides, for both the Army and the PKI, the confrontation against Malaysia was a panacea: it allowed the maintenance of the status quo and abandonment of the austerity economic planning. As a result, the role of Sukarno was very critical in either pursuing or stopping the confrontation.

6.5. The Second Confrontation: Konfrontasi Malaysia and the Drift to Beijing

The plan to create a Federation of Malaysia comprised of the Malayan Federation, Singapore, Sabah, Sarawak, and Brunei started to be taken seriously in London in 1960 when Derick Heathcote-Amory, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, stated flatly that the British faced a serious balance of payments problem due to military spending. At this time, the British overseas military expenditure for 1960-61 was £200 million, and expected to grow to £235 million the next year. The Cabinet decided that the British needed to cut its forces in Southeast Asia.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ David Easter, *Britain and the Confrontation with Indonesia 1960-66* (London: Taurus Academic Studies, 2004) 9-10

Leaving Southeast Asia, however, was not easy. There were concerns about the growing influence of the Communists, especially in Singapore. In addition, even though the Malayan peninsula was secure, Sabah, Sarawak, and Brunei were seen as trouble spots. There was growing fear of the influence of Beijing in those three territories, especially as these territories had a significant Chinese population. In order to be able to leave the region, the British proposed a "Grand Design," creating a Greater Malaysia comprised of all these territories, which would allow the British to pull the plug and to relinquish its remaining colonial responsibilities in Southeast Asia.¹⁸⁷

By 1961, this idea gained acceptance in both Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, and Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Malayan Prime Minister, was adamant in insisting on the creation of Greater Malaysia, since a merger of Malaya and Singapore would give an absolute majority to the Chinese in the new federation.¹⁸⁸

The plan had two problems. First, Brunei was apprehensive the new federation because the Sultan of Brunei insisted on retaining all the oil revenues in Brunei for himself.¹⁸⁹ In addition, the tiny Brunei surprisingly had big territorial designs. Led by the fiery Sheikh Azahari, Brunei wanted to reclaim its old glory of controlling all of Borneo, and becoming a part in Malaysia meant an end to this dream.¹⁹⁰ The second problem was Diosdado Macapagal, the President of the Philippines, who insisted that Sabah was

¹⁸⁷ Matthew Jones, *Conflict and Confrontation in South East Asia 1961-1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 27

¹⁸⁸ Anak Agung (1973) 451

¹⁸⁹ Brackman (1966) 139

¹⁹⁰ It should be noted that there was no direct evidence that the Sultan and Azhari were working together, though apparently they did for a while when their interests seemed to be parallel. J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi: The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974) 117

illegally ceded by the Sultanate of Sulu to the British, and as the successor of the Sultanate of Sulu, The Philippines wanted Sabah back.¹⁹¹

The British informed Jakarta in 1961 about the impending merger of Malaya and the British colonial territories in North Borneo. The announcement caused barely a ripple. With Indonesia's attention focused on Irian Barat, it had no luxury either to be seriously concerned about the new Malaysia or to meddle and risk losing the benevolent neutrality of the British in the matter of Irian Barat. As a result, Subandrio expressed "no opposition and no active support" and several months later, he announced in the General Assembly that he had no objection to the merger "*based upon the will for freedom of the people concerned.*"¹⁹²

However, something happened in Brunei that turned the entire Malaysian issue into a major dispute. On December 8, 1962, an element of the North Borneo National Army (Tentara Nasional Kalimantan Utara - TNKU) of 2,000-men revolted and attacked Brunei. Led by Azahari (who happened to be in Manila, claiming that the insurrection was supported by the Sultan himself), this affair of what J.A.C. Mackie would later call as "trivial, almost Gilbertian, little uprising" collapsed fairly quickly. The rebels simply did not try very hard. They were unable to take over the Sultan's palace, even though they only faced police units. The Sultan decided to summon the British, who brought three mobile battalions within three days and quashed the unorganized and not well-armed

¹⁹¹ Macapagal's influence in pushing for Philippine's claim on Sabah was very critical. A senior Filipino diplomat confided that without Macapagal, there would have been no claim on Sabah. Brackman (1966) 167-8

¹⁹² Harsono (1977) 247, Mackie (1974) 105

rebels. It was supposed to be a mundane little affair and did not cause much stir even in Jakarta.¹⁹³

The British panicked. During October 1962 there were reports of the increasing interest of Indonesian military intelligence in Borneo, and intelligence reports in November stated that the Indonesians were training Brunei rebels.¹⁹⁴ On December 1, Tunku Abdul Rahman warned that there were clear signs of insurrection in Brunei. Even so, on December 2, Lord Selkirk, the Commissioner for Singapore and the Commissioner-General for Southeast Asia in 1959-1963, found a "general air of complacency" in Brunei. Apparently the warnings were unheeded, as only the police were alerted. The reason for the complacency was given on December 20. When grilled by the House of Commons, Nigel Fisher, the British Deputy Secretary of State for Colonies admitted that, "wolf" was being cried so often that it was somewhat discounted."¹⁹⁵ As a result, the revolt was such a major shock that after the failed revolt on December 8, in a turnabout, Lord Selkirk declared that "the revolution came within an inch of being completely successful."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ The culpability of the Sultan in the entire affair has been suggested and both Hanna and Mackie noted that there were inconclusive links between the Sultan and the rebellion. In Hanna's words, "The Sultan himself had publicly repudiated this Azahari-inspired plan, but evidently not frequently enough or vigorously enough fully to convince all of his subjects." Mackie stated the possibility that the Sultan simply backstabbed Azahari. Willard A. Hanna, *The Formation of Malaysia: New Factor in World Politics* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1964) 139, 142, Mackie (1974) 111, 117-8

¹⁹⁴ Jones (2002) 108-9, John Subritzky, *Confronting Sukarno: British, American, Australian and New Zealand Diplomacy in the Malaysian-Indonesian Confrontation, 1961-5* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 2000) 41. Indonesia's infiltration of Malaya's side of Kalimantan had been discussed as early as in 1953. In a conversation between Mr. Sunario, the Indonesian Foreign Minister in the Ali cabinet, and Ambassador Cummings, the former stated that he had contacted the Malayan authorities and the British officials on the Communists' attempts to cross the border between Indonesia and Sarawak. Telegram from the Ambassador in Indonesia (Cumming) to the Department of State, November 24, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 12, 401-2

¹⁹⁵ Mackie (1974) 120

¹⁹⁶ Easter (2004) 26-7

This "Gilbertian little uprising" exploded on December 11, when Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman of Malaya briefly and obliquely referred to Indonesian aid to the rebels in his speech to the Malayan Parliament. The next day, the Malayan press had a field day condemning Indonesia. Not surprisingly, Indonesians reacted in anger. Aidit thundered on December 13, calling on Indonesians to help "revolutionary struggle of the people of North Borneo." The Communists' anti-British activity was so intense that on December 28, Sukarno had to declare that "the sympathy of the Indonesian people for the struggle of the North Kalimantan people was definitely not the result of Communist influence," and instead he professed his sympathy to the people in North Kalimantan based on "the Indonesian people's love of freedom."¹⁹⁷ Nasution also announced in early 1963 that the Army had provided Azahari forces with covert trainings and other activity.¹⁹⁸

From this point, things spiraled out of control. Swept up by nationalistic euphoria, both Indonesian and Malayan governments traded insults. When Tunku Abdul Rahman declared that Indonesian hatred of Malaya originated from the Russians, Dr. Subandrio retorted that Indonesia's patience was not inexhaustible and on January 20, 1963, he further declared that Indonesia had adopted a policy of confrontation against Malaya. On February 13, Sukarno announced at a mass meeting that he officially declared that Indonesia opposed Malaysia, as it was an encirclement of the Indonesian Republic. Konfrontasi began.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Van der Kroef (1965) 275

¹⁹⁸ Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs (Bell) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Harriman), January 4, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 655

¹⁹⁹ Jones (1971) 269, Mackie (1974) 125

The reason why this "Gilbertian little uprising" turned into a major crisis can be traced to Indonesian fragile internal political arrangements, and mutual suspicions between Malaysia and Indonesia. For one, Tunku Abdul Rahman's suspicions against Indonesia were not without any basis as every single political actor in Indonesia had an interest against the creation of Malaya.

The PKI was widely known for being highly opposed to the formation of Malaysia. The PKI had assumed correctly that the creation of Malaysia was in order to create a bulwark against the Communists. In Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew's People Action Party was under siege and close to losing its power, and Lee himself confessed to Lord Selkirk that any new government in Singapore would be much further to the left and he "would be totally strung on a lamp-post." A merger with the Malaya Federation would dilute the Communists' strength and enable Singapore to remain non-Communist.²⁰⁰ Moreover, there was a sizeable Chinese population in Sarawak that belonged to the Sarawak Communist Organization, which would also be a loser in the anti-Communist Federation of Malaysia.²⁰¹

In addition to these factors, Aidit also faced unrest within the PKI itself. His close cooperation with Sukarno which gave only a few tangible gains to the PKI was heavily criticized. There were demands for a much more assertive posture.²⁰² Internationally, the party was also confronted with the growing rift between the Soviet Union and the People Republic of China, though the Soviet Union's debacle during the thirteen days of the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962 – which Aidit called a betrayal of fellow

²⁰⁰ Jones (2002) 65

²⁰¹ Mackie (1974) 65

²⁰² van der Kroef (1965) 268

Communists before a "nuclear bluff" of the imperialists – helped steered PKI toward China. On January 6, 1963, Aidit further declared that the Soviet Union was obstructing a solution of the conflict between China and the Soviet Union.²⁰³ Not everyone agreed with Aidit's line. On September 24, 1963, Subandrio, upon the inquiry of Dean Rusk about the strength of the PKI, stated that there was a split in the PKI between supporters of Beijing and Moscow and even though supporters of Beijing were the majority, supporters of Moscow were increasing in strength. The only way to maintain the cohesion of the divided party was to advocate militancy.²⁰⁴

At the same time, the Army also had reasons not to be enthusiastic about the creation of Malaysia. Regardless of the excuses that the British stated in creating this "Grand Design," the Army saw Malaysia as another way for the Great Britain to maintain its presence in Southeast Asia, and they saw themselves as being vindicated by the lingering presence of the British military bases in Singapore and the belief that "90 per cent of all Malayan rubber is in British hands."²⁰⁵ In addition, there were memories of the failed rebellion of PRRI/Permesta. In the 1960s, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, a main leader of that rebellion, had not yet been captured and he happily maintained his

²⁰³ Donald Hindley, "The Indonesian Communist Party and the Conflict in the International Communist Movement" *The China Quarterly*, No. 19. (July-September 1964) 103-4

²⁰⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, September 24, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 687. As the rift grew between the Soviet and the Chinese, Aidit tried to become a moderator between Moscow and Beijing. As both sides kept courting him however, Aidit became bolder and realized that the split between Moscow and Beijing actually allowed Jakarta to be independent from either Beijing or Moscow. Still, even with new-found independence, there were many people grumbling within the party that the PKI had strayed from the Moscow line. In July 1964, Aidit acknowledged that "'pro-Moscow' forces within the PKI were making an effort 'to form another so-called 'Marxist-Leninist' party side by side with the Indonesian Communist Party.'" As a result, the PKI had to push for militancy against both Malaysia and the United States. Brackman (1966) 249-51, Mortimer (1974) 243

²⁰⁵ Bernard K. Gordon, "The Potential for Indonesian Expansionism" *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Winter, 1963-4) 387-8

residence in Singapore, from which he channeled foreign aid and coordinated the rebels' smuggling operation.²⁰⁶

Moreover, there were also worries that Malaya actually had a design on Sumatra, which shared with it similar Malayan ethnic backgrounds. With Indonesia under the strain of economic collapse, a prosperous Malaya would be a very attractive alternative to many people from both Sumatra and Kalimantan.²⁰⁷ In fact, the fear of Malaya's hostility was not unfounded. Even before the confrontation erupted, in 1961 the Tunku had been pondering the idea of stirring trouble in Sumatra as he worried about a possible Indonesian expansionist agenda after Irian Barat.²⁰⁸ After the confrontation started, the Tunku wanted to help the dissidents in Indonesia break Indonesia apart, which would allow Malaysia to take over Sumatra and other area where the ethnic Malaysians were dominant, creating a federation of all "Malaysian" countries.²⁰⁹ The distrust between the Malaya Federation and Indonesia was mutual and it took only a spark to blow everything up.

Another important factor was the fear within the Army of the growing international presence of the People's Republic of China: with sizeable numbers of Chinese living in the new Federation of Malaysia, the Army believed that sooner or later, Malaysia would be drawn into the orbit of the PRC, as one army officer complained to Howard Jones:

I don't understand why you Americans, who profess to be so anti-Communist, don't see that in supporting Malaysia you are running the risk of the establishment of a Chinese Communist state right in the heart of Southeast Asia... I am not

²⁰⁶ Crouch (1978) 59

²⁰⁷ GNP per capita in Malaysia in 1963 was US\$279 in comparison to Indonesia's US\$80. Easter (2004) 29

²⁰⁸ Jones (2002) 106

²⁰⁹ Easter (2004) 68

looking at Malaysia today (where the avowed anti-Communist Tunku Abdul Rahman ruled), I am looking at Malaysia tomorrow.... Look at the rank and file (of the Chinese). It is the rank and file who have the votes.²¹⁰

Interestingly, even the usually dispassionate Hatta weighed in on the question of growing Chinese influence in the region. Writing in 1965, Hatta argued that "(Malaysia) would inevitably become a second China, dominated both politically and economically by the Chinese.... Such a second China would probably become an ally and accomplice of mainland China."²¹¹ In light of the PKI's and later Sukarno's growing cooperation with Beijing, the Army and the remaining moderates in Indonesia did have reasons to be concerned about Beijing's influence in the region as it would completely shift the domestic politics equation within Indonesia toward the PKI.

Finally, there were questions on where Sukarno would lead Indonesia after the end of the Irian Barat campaign. Both the United States and the Soviet Union were worried about the territorial ambitions of Sukarno. Regardless of the rhetoric, the Soviet Union had always been cautious in provoking a conflict with the United States. As long as conflicts could be contained, Moscow did not have much problem with it, such as in the case of Irian Barat, where the Soviet was never worried that it might become a state. Malaysia, however, was a different story. Supported by the British, the creation of Malaysia was a realistic possibility and Moscow hesitated to be strongly on the side of Indonesia lest the policy of confrontation escalate into a great power war.²¹² By 1964, as

²¹⁰ Jones (1971) 270

²¹¹ Mohammad Hatta, "One Indonesian View of the Malaysia Issue" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Mar 1965) 140

²¹² On the Soviet's interest in keeping the conflicts from escalating, see Fritz Ermarth, "The Soviet Union in the Third World: Purpose in Search of Power" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 386 (Nov 1969) 35. On the differences between the Soviet expectations on Irian Barat and Malaysia see Nadia Derkach, "Soviet Policy Towards Indonesia" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 5, No. 11 (Nov. 1965) 570

Konfrontasi escalated, the Soviet was actually pushing Sukarno to instead invade East Timor, declaring that the Soviet hoped that "their Indonesian friends complete their struggle to eradicate the vestiges of colonialism as soon as possible."²¹³

In an interesting twist, the same idea was brewing among members of the Kennedy administration as early as 1963, that it might be better if Indonesia could have Timor "in 2-3 years at outside."²¹⁴ Washington was deeply concerned about the instability of the region and, more importantly, so was Indonesia itself, especially as the administration was at the time heavily engaged in Vietnam and Laos.²¹⁵ Washington simply could not afford a distraction and therefore was annoyed with the British hysteria over Brunei. In February 1963, Ambassador Howard Jones cabled Washington, complaining that "our support for Malaysia may well have been another example of our following the British lead without examining sufficiently into the contents of the package. Whitehall's record for satisfactory architecture of this kind has not been outstanding."²¹⁶ Sukarno must not be provoked at any cost.

However, these arguments were assuming that Sukarno was an expansionist. It was true that Sukarno wanted to be a major player in world politics and in order to be seen as such, he needed to take an aggressive stance on various issues, especially on nationalism and anti-colonialism, the hot topics of the 1960s. This attitude was reflected in his behavior during the conference of non-aligned nations at Belgrade in 1961, where

²¹³ Brackman (1966) 127

²¹⁴ Apparently the Kennedy administrations had an axe to grind against the Salazar regime of Portugal, which held East Timor. In this same memorandum, W. Averell Harriman, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, was quoted as wanting to beat up Salazar by simply handing East Timor to Sukarno. Memorandum, January 16, 1963, *FRUS* 657-8

²¹⁵ Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, January 16, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 658

²¹⁶ Jones (2002) 135

he took a militant stance vis-à-vis Nehru. When the latter belittled the danger of colonialism and stressed the need to create a climate conducive to a thaw in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, Sukarno was reported to have said, "Mr. Nehru you are not going to wreck this conference, are you?" Menon, the close confidant of Nehru, did not buy Indonesia's affection either when in reply to Subandrio's statement that Indonesia was waging "confrontation" against the Dutch, he quipped that he did not understand what "confrontation" meant.²¹⁷

While Sukarno was taking a militant line in Belgrade, however, he always stopped short of making a final commitment on a break against the so-called colonial powers. In a telegram from Adlai Stevenson, the United States Mission to the United Nations, to the State Department, Sukarno was quoted as hoping that the United States "had noticed that in his wisdom he had not sought have his position on West Irian endorsed at Belgrade."²¹⁸ Besides, his goal in Belgrade was to garner the anti-colonialists' support to the Indonesia's claim over Irian Barat, not to pick a fight against the United States. Despite this, when Sukarno later formulated his conception of the "New Emerging Forces (NEFO)" in which Indonesia as a part of NEFO was in confrontation against the colonial powers belonging to the "Old Emerging Forces (OLDEFO)," the entire conception remained vague and full of ambiguity. Quoting Feith and Geertz, Legge argued that Sukarno's behavior was characteristic of a theater state, where Sukarno as a Javanese ruler acted more as a performer than a politician with substantive goals.²¹⁹ However, the reality was much more mundane: Sukarno simply acted like a rational,

²¹⁷ Anak Agung (1973) 332

²¹⁸ Telegram from the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State, September 16, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol 23, 431

²¹⁹ Legge (2003) 376-8

calculating politician. He would not be caught dead with a strong position that people could use against him in the end.

However, it is doubtful that Sukarno orchestrated the entire Brunei affair. Consider that his first reaction to the affair on December 10 was to give a vague non-committal statement (at a diplomatic reception of all places!) indicating that "the events in North Borneo could not be separated from the New Emerging Forces which are quickly altering the face of the earth,"²²⁰ hardly the statement of someone investing huge amounts of political capital and resources in a "Gilbertian little uprising." When Malaya suddenly denounced Indonesia, followed by the PKI's huge nationalistic outpouring, however, the question of whether the rebellion was a reaction of an anti-Malayan group in Brunei or whether Indonesia funded and trained the rebels became moot. Whoever was guilty in the entire Brunei affair was also no longer important. At that point the most critical option that Sukarno faced was whether he should retake the nationalistic flag back from the PKI or whether he would see an organization that he might not be able to control in the end. The Army at this point also could not do anything. Caught with his pants down during the Irian Barat affair, Nasution would not want to let either the PKI or Sukarno use the nationalist soapbox again at the expense of the Army.²²¹ Like it or not, the Army had to join the entire roller coaster of nationalistic orgies.

However, there were still ways to avoid a war. In the typical ambiguity of Indonesia's statements, and as Menon acidly asked, nobody was sure what "confrontation" meant. In fact, Indonesian conduct during the confrontation itself was more or less a huge question mark. On one hand, there were verbal barrages lobbed

²²⁰ Mackie (1974) 122

²²¹ Sundhaussen (1982) 174

between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur. On the other hand, nothing significant actually happened. There was no major military buildup on the border, unlike during Irian Barat affair. Tension was ratcheted up on April 11, 1963 when a group of raiders (around 60-75 men) attacked a police station in Sarawak, stealing weapons before leaving in the direction of Indonesia. Earlier that month, the British also received an unconfirmed secret report stating that "Subandrio was confident that the background threat of armed revolt, coupled with diplomatic action in playing off the Philippines against the Malaysians and the British would block Malaysia."²²²

In light of that incident, to British and Malayan surprise, Sukarno suddenly sent diplomatic feelers to Malaya in April - though as early as March, Subandrio had agreed with Macapagal's initiative to hold a ministerial-level talk including Indonesia, Malaya, and the Philippines. The Tunku, however, privately told British officials that he would stall any progress until April and he proceeded to state publicly that any talks would only deal with the reasons for Malaysia's formation rather than any consideration of the mechanism of its formation. Assuming that the raiders were backed by Indonesia, it would be a logical reaction to Tunku's stalling game.

At this point, Sukarno probably was heavily concerned with the cards in his hand. The economy was collapsing and worse, there was no support forthcoming from either Moscow or Washington on Indonesia's position about North Borneo.²²³ To make the

²²² Easter (2004) 46

²²³ Michael V. Forrestal, a member of the National Security Council, during a visit to Jakarta was ordered to let Sukarno know that the United States could not conceive of Malaysia ever becoming a threat to Indonesia. Moreover, Forrestal was also told to mention that the United States was convinced that Malaysia would be a feasible way to oppose the growing influence of Beijing and the British were sincere in their desire to leave the region. Therefore, Forrestal should tell Sukarno that "He should not attempt to block Malaysia which we intend to support vigorously" and pointed out that Sukarno "needs President Kennedy's good will since if he bases his foreign policy on 'go it alone' with only Russian backing, he will find

situation worse, the fragile political arrangement in Indonesia seemed to be collapsing. Cloaked with the nationalistic flag, the PKI had grown so much more powerful that the American Embassy in Jakarta reported that Subandrio and several other political leaders including Ali Sastroamijoyo were trying to court the PKI's favor in order to replace Djuanda.²²⁴

On the other hand, the Army was split: while Nasution supported the confrontation in order to upstage the PKI, Yani was not cooperating. In fact, during a visit to Manila, Yani stated that the Army was not prepared and he was hoping for a political settlement to the confrontation.²²⁵ This division would later have a devastating effect on the Army: it would start to lose its fragile internal cohesion that it had just gained through the ending of the PRRI/Permesta rebellion. By 1965, it would lose its ability to counterbalance the PKI.²²⁶

Sukarno realized that he needed an honorable way to back out from the confrontation without disturbing the fragile balance that he maintained. On 31 May and 1 June, he met privately with the Tunku and they issued a joint communiqué stating that

himself in their clutches." Sukarno replied that his main concern was "economic stability and growth" and his primary interest at that point was economic. Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, January 16, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 658-9. Probably a proof of Sukarno's willingness to deal in the matter of economy was his agreement on profit-sharing with American oil companies Stanvac and Caltex on June 2, 1963 (60 to the GOI, 40 to the oil companies). Before this agreement, there was a growing demand for the nationalization of Shell's assets, led by the PKI. Memorandum from Michael V. Forrestal of the National Security Council Staff to President Kennedy, June 10, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 672-3. There were no Soviet words of support to Indonesia on the confrontation policy until October 1963, when Khrushchev accorded some laudatory but noncommittal remarks. Still, it was not until May 1964 in Japan when Mikoyan publicly supported Indonesia that a country provided official praise for the confrontation policy, and the aforementioned Soviet words of support only came after Indonesia had started to shift its foreign policy toward Beijing. Derkach (1965) 569

²²⁴ At this point, Djuanda's health was deteriorating, though he would not die until November 1963. Ali Sastroamijoyo's fortunes, however, had fallen so low that the embassy added a qualifier "Ali Sastroamijoyo has hopes lightning will strike" in his quest to be the First Minister. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 1, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 661

²²⁵ Sundhaussen (1982) 174

²²⁶ Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Ball) to President Johnson, March 18, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 251

both governments would "refrain from making acrimonious attacks and disparaging references to each other," and would resolve their differences "in a spirit of friendliness and goodwill." Apparently, Sukarno was friendly with the Tunku and resigned to the establishment of the federation. The Tunku was so pleased that he felt Sukarno "had clearly called off his confrontation without having had to be given anything in return."²²⁷ What was needed at this point was a face-saving formula that would allow Sukarno to call off confrontation and a plebiscite would be a good way to do so.

The British, however, were desperate to leave Southeast Asia. The British Treasury had estimated that the cost of operations east of Suez would increase from £300 million to £400 million by 1970 and Reginald Maudling, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1963, argued that the cut was badly needed as the sluggish British economy could not sustain it.²²⁸ A Malaysian Federation must be formed with or without Indonesia's agreement. On July 9, 1963, the Malaysia Agreement was signed in London, which created a federation including Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo, and Sarawak.²²⁹ Brunei was not included, in light of the Sultan's insistence on maintaining control over Brunei's oil revenues in perpetuity in return for paying a mere US\$40 million to the Malaysian Federal treasury.²³⁰

Sukarno was enraged by the London agreement, which in essence jeopardized all his plans. On July 10, in a speech, he claimed that the Tunku was breaking his promise to delay the formation of Malaysia, by allowing a UN referendum to be held (providing Sukarno with a face-saving device to call off confrontation). The London agreement put

²²⁷ Jones (2002) 157

²²⁸ Subritzky (2000) 62

²²⁹ Jones (2002) 165

²³⁰ Mackie (1974) 142

no provisions on the formation of the federation referendum and it pushed the creation of Malaysia to August 31.²³¹

To everyone's surprise, however, Sukarno still attended the Manila Summit, which was held on July 30, 1963. Howard Jones reported that Subandrio was in high spirits as he had apparently managed to get the Tunku to accept his proposal of having the United Nations Secretary General ascertain public opinion in Sabah and Sarawak through an inquiry – in other words, a referendum.²³² Things apparently could be settled peacefully.

The meeting, however, was shadowed by a call from the British Charge d'Affaires on August 1 to the Tunku, in which the Charge d'Affaires insisted to both the Tunku and the Australian Prime Minister Mackenzie that August 31 was unalterable as the date for the Malaysian Federation.²³³ Apparently the Charge d'Affaires was instructed by Duncan Sandys, the British Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, to stiffen the Tunku's resolve, and he promised that the Tunku could count on the British to back him in conflict with Indonesia.²³⁴

While the conference indeed ended in what Howard Jones saw as an Indonesian diplomatic triumph, as the ascertainment would be held and completed by September 14, the British were not in a mood for cooperation. Jones acidly noted in his memoir that "Duncan Sandys had determined to make it as difficult as possible for the Indonesians to observe anything," so the Indonesians were not able to be present for three of the six days

²³¹ Jones (2002) 169

²³² Even though Howard Jones had tried to persuade Sukarno to attend the meeting, he admitted that he remained in the dark about Sukarno's intention until the last minute. Jones (1971) 280-1

²³³ Mackie (1974) 158

²³⁴ Easter (2004) 56

the observation team spent in North Borneo.²³⁵ Even U Thant, the UN Secretary General, who was responsible for the inquiry, was not satisfied. He believed that he was only given a short time and with the Tunku's announcement that Malaysia would be proclaimed on September 16, he complained that the British implied that they were going to set up Malaysia regardless of the UN findings.²³⁶

Roger Hilsman, the Director of the Bureau of Research of the United States State Department, complained that such an insult could not be ignored by the Indonesians. Blaming Sandys, he acidly remarked, "I knew that some of the people I would have to deal with in this job were going to be emotional. I never dreamed that among the most emotional of all would be some Anglo-Saxons."²³⁷ Not surprisingly, a wounded Sukarno in his memoir declared:

Setting another arbitrary date two weeks later despite the fact that the poll was not completed showed Britain's utter disregard of the outcome of this puppet survey.... I was infuriated. The Indonesian government had been tricked and made to look like a dummy. The subsequent demonstrations of enmity happened because of our bitter sense of betrayal.... This highhanded announcement, made while the ascertainment of the people's wishes was only in the opening stages, is ludicrous. Britain never even awaited the outcome of the U.N. assessment. I state that under the nose of the United Nations, internal conditions in Brunei were cleverly juggled by the colonialists who had considerable rubber, oil, and tin fortunes to lose. Indonesia has been duped and humiliated in the eyes of the whole world. This affront to my country is a personal hurt.²³⁸

²³⁵ Jones (1971) 287

²³⁶ Apparently Sandys himself went to Kuala Lumpur on August 23 to stiffen the Tunku's resolve because the British regarded the Tunku as "a rather incompetent little brown brother who had to be protected from himself." The Tunku was described by Charles F. Baldwin, U.S. ambassador in Malaya, as "visibly unenthusiastic about the visit of Sandys and colleagues" and the Tunku himself complained that the British were motivated "by pride and prestige or by belief that Indos will misbehave." The Tunku asked the ambassador to "persuade the British 'to have more confidence' in his ability [to] handle [the] situation." The Ambassador however, could not do much, having earlier heard the British calling the Tunku a "foolish old man." Easter (2004) 60-1, Hilsman (1967) 399, Jones (2002) 188

²³⁷ Hilsman (1967) 404

²³⁸ Adams (1965) 301-2

Therefore, when U Thant finally issued his findings on September 14 that "the wishes of a sizeable majority of the peoples of these territories to join in the Federation of Malaysia," and added his mild criticisms towards the British conduct,²³⁹ the reaction in Jakarta was predictable. The British, with their interference, were waving a red flag in front of the Indonesian bull and Sukarno would not accept this humiliation lightly.

On the morning of September 15, Howard Jones met an agitated Sukarno who declared that he could not accept the result of the ascertainment process, arguing that "certain procedures" were not carried out and accusing the British of playing the game that the Dutch played in Irian Barat.²⁴⁰ Later, a crowd of 10,000 left-wing youth demonstrators marched to the Malayan Embassy, throwing rocks at windows. After registering their protest against the formation of Malaysia, they soon departed to the British Embassy demanding to see Ambassador Sir Andrew Gilchrist.²⁴¹ The barely one-year old three-storied glass building that housed the British Embassy was soon deprived of all of its 938 large plate glass windows. When Major Roderick Walker, the assistant military attaché, emerged playing bagpipes, tempers further rose and the crowd broke into the compound, tore down the British flag and burned the Ambassador's car.²⁴² Gilchrist was also engaged in combative exchanges with the demonstrators, shouting "Long live U Thant" as the demonstrators left the embassy and thereby guaranteed that the Indonesians would hold no blows in the future.²⁴³

²³⁹ Mackie (1971) 176

²⁴⁰ Jones (2002) 195-6

²⁴¹ Mackie (1971) 184-5

²⁴² In his report, Gilchrist commented, "The charred corpse of my poor old Princess is causing an elegant traffic jam." Prime Minister Macmillan put a qualifying note beside that comment, "I hope the historian will not misunderstand this paragraph." Jones (2002) 196

²⁴³ On September 24, 1963, in a conversation between Subandrio and Dean Rusk, Rusk expressed his surprise of Indonesia's antagonism toward the British and inquired whether Indonesia had design over

The next day, the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur was attacked and Indonesian emblem was seized. The emblem was later presented to the Tunku and the crowd lifted the Tunku and lowered him to the emblem, stepping on the crest. The reaction in Jakarta was violent: on September 18, truckloads of young activists turned out at the British embassy and proceeded to ransack it and to burn it to the ground. This assault on the British embassy was followed by meticulous planned attacks on British properties (which carefully avoiding both American and Australian properties).²⁴⁴

At this point, Sukarno was no longer thinking of balancing Indonesian politics anymore. It was personal, and he never forgot insults. On September 19, when Howard Jones met Sukarno to protest the attack on the British embassy, he found the latter:

In a savage mood.... There were no exchanges of courtesy. None of usual banter.... In response my question as whether situation was now under control, Sukarno entered into tirade on subject Tunku's actions. "When did head of state ever grind his heel into state seal of another nation?" he demanded. He referred to his own photos having been torn down and stamped on. "My people are angry," he wound up. "This is Asia, 1963. I too am boiling inside."²⁴⁵

Facing such insults, Sukarno became obsessed with humiliating and destroying Malaysia. By 1965, his distaste toward the new Federation of Malaysia and Britain was so great that when the United Nations agreed to have Malaysia serve in the Security

Borneo. Subandrio replied that Indonesia did not have any Borneo ambitions, however he stressed that the Indonesians "had been "humiliated" by the British treatment of them in relation to implementation of the Manila agreement. He said that emotional reaction was a major factor." Memorandum of Conversation, September 24, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 687

²⁴⁴ Jones (2002) 196-8. The fact that it was the British embassy not Malaya's which was burned was explained in a conversation between Sukarno and Attorney General Robert Kennedy in Tokyo on January 23, 1964. During the conversation, Robert Kennedy had to repeatedly remind Sukarno that it was the Malaysians, not the British, who were required to make commitments on military activities as Sukarno kept talking about the British military activities. Sukarno basically assumed that the British were the ones pulling the strings behind the entire Malaysian problem, therefore his later declarations that Malaysia was a plot from the neo-imperialist and colonialist powers. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, January 23, 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 47

²⁴⁵ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, September 19, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 684

Council, Sukarno abruptly decided to pull Indonesia out of the United Nations, to the surprise of everyone including Indonesians.²⁴⁶

The perceived humiliation would also mark the turning point for Sukarno's flirtations with Beijing. Relations between Jakarta and Beijing had had their ups and downs since the beginning of Guided Democracy. They improved drastically after Liu Shao-chi, the President of the People Republic of China, visited Jakarta in April 1963, declaring his support for Indonesia's confrontation.²⁴⁷ In addition, as the embers of the remains of the British embassy were smoldering in Jakarta, Sukarno must have realized that with neither the United States nor the Soviet Union willing to back Indonesia in this confrontation, he needed new support.²⁴⁸ An alignment with Beijing, which was also

²⁴⁶ Mackie (1971) 283. Indonesia's withdrawal caught everyone off guard even among Sukarno's inner circle. Subandrio was reportedly so shocked by Sukarno's decision that he delayed the formal letter of withdrawal for three weeks. He also tried to persuade Sukarno without avail to remain in the United Nations and to instead register Indonesia's objections by walking out for the rest of the 1964 General Assembly session or by staying out until Malaysia's term expired. He would later confide to his officials at the Foreign Ministry that the decision to withdraw from the United Nations had been "too whimsical." Lukman, one of the PKI's leaders, confessed that the top PKI leadership was "taken aback" by this decision and he further admitted Sukarno's decision was far more daring than the PKI leadership had expected. Harsono (1977) 270, Helen-Louise Hunter, *Sukarno and the Indonesian Coup* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007) 120. Sukarno himself was not repentant over this decision. In a declassified CIA cable, it was reported during a conversation between Sukarno and some of the anti-PKI groups:

Sukarno said that he could even anticipate that the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] groups would not be able to support him in view of his most recent moves. In the past, the opposition of the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] group would worry him, because of the great international influence of the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] international organizations. However he was now determined to continue in the direction he was going even if it means making an enemy of the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] world, both domestically and internationally. He said, "My name is down, in the international world anyway, after our withdrawal from the United Nations." He added that Indonesia was now a renegade ("gila") nation which would continue along the course charted by himself. Intelligence Information Cable, January 13, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*, 3-4

²⁴⁷ Anak Agung (1973) 432

²⁴⁸ In a speech on October 28, 1963, Sukarno complained that "our friends in the socialist countries" belittled Indonesian efforts to fight an anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist war. The final blow was on June 26, 1964, when the Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers Mikoyan, during a visit to Indonesia, hinted that the Indonesians would have to rely on their own resources if they were determined to destroy Malaysia. This remarks essentially closed any hope from Sukarno for receiving any support from the Soviet Union to crush Malaysia. Antonie C.A. Dake, *In the Spirit of Red Banteng: Indonesian Communists Between Moscow and Peking* (The Hague: Moutan, 1973) 181, Andrew Hall Wedeman, *The*

highly interested in the collapse of the Malaysian venture, was the solution that he needed.

In addition, aligning Beijing was also a very useful to put pressure on Washington. By this time, the United States was heavily embroiled in Vietnam and the United States would not be happy to see Indonesia, the most critical domino in Southeast Asia, fall into the Communists hands. As a result, Sukarno believed that he had a trump card in Indonesia's critical position in Southeast Asia. A CIA report from Jakarta stated that in a conversation taking place in January 1965 between Sukarno and a group of right-wing politicians:

Sukarno said that he was deliberately allowing the PKI to expand its influence and deliberately bringing Indonesia closer to Communist China for one important reason: he expected Communist China and the United States to be at war within a few years, either through American escalation of the Vietnam war or through a direct American attack on Communist China. Sukarno said he is confident that the United States' will be so worried about Indonesian support of China, should a war break out, that it will go to any lengths to bring Indonesia back into the neutral camp. Sukarno said he believes that the United States may even turn its back on Malaysia and withdraw support to that country in return for an Indonesian commitment to pull away from Communist China.

Sukarno explained that Indonesia had achieved independence in the aftermath of a Great Pacific War. He believed that Indonesia could only bring about the independence of British-dominated Malaysia in the aftermath of another war in the Pacific area. He said the United States is the key element in this calculation. Its production of armaments, which had to be used at some point, combined with Chinese Communist opposition to America's aims in Asia would inevitably lead to a clash on a large scale. Then the United State Government's attention would be shifted from support of the British in Malaysia to the larger conflict against China. Sukarno reiterated his belief that the United States could weaken Malaysia's position by "pushing a button." It might well do so if it felt that such action would pull Indonesia out of an alliance with Communist China.²⁴⁹

East Wind Subsidies: Chinese Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Cultural Revolution (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute Press, 1987) 189

²⁴⁹ In evaluating the reactions, the CIA report further noted:

[*Less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] comment: Those present at the President's discussion were amazed by his frankness and came away with the feeling that they had been given

In addition, Sukarno grew disenchanted at this time with the Army. Similar to the Irian Barat situation, the Army faced two unattractive choices: either to go forward and commit fully to the confrontation or to oppose it. The first option was not acceptable. Even though on paper, the strength of Indonesia's military was impressive thanks to the huge amount of military aid from the Soviet Union, there were still doubts about the quality of Indonesia's armed forces in open warfare, and the Army itself was not sure whether it could win in a war against the British.²⁵⁰ Defeat, of course, would mean the loss of prestige and loss of power vis-à-vis the Communists. The second option was also not attractive either, as it would give the PKI further ammunition to tear down the Army and there were people within the Army who sincerely believed that they could win.²⁵¹

Caught between a rock and a hard place, the Army was split. Even though Nasution, in trying to preempt the PKI, agreed to the confrontation,²⁵² Yani's disagreement caused the Army to be unable (or rather unwilling) to seriously attack Malaysia militarily. As Sukarno started to press a military solution to the Malaysian

an unexpected but significant insight into the President's political thinking. Sukarno seemed to be speaking to those present with frankness reserved only for private discussions with the First Deputy Prime Minister Subandrio.

[*Less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] comment: In the past it has been normal for Sukarno to underplay his support to the PKI and Communist China when talking to the representatives of right-wing anti-Communist groups. It may be significant that in the above discussion Sukarno did not feel impelled to minimize his apparent internal support for the PKI and his external support from Communist China. Sukarno's willingness to admit that he is pushing Indonesia toward the left, whatever his rationale, may indicate that he now feels little threat to his position from the decimated ranks of right-wing anti-Communist groups. Intelligence Information Cable, January 13, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*, 3-5

²⁵⁰ Circular Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Posts, October 22, 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 168

²⁵¹ Report From Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker to President Johnson, undated, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, vol. 26, 255

²⁵² Another factor was his fear of Beijing's domination over the new Malaysia. See Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, December 7, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 702

problem, the Army dragged its feet further – even though it did not show its oppositions to the policy of confrontation openly. Brigadier General Suparjo, the commander of one of the operational units in West Kalimantan, would later bitterly complain that even though there was no open opposition from the Army's upper echelon to the entire Malaysian campaign, "We felt that things were not being done wholeheartedly and were even being sabotaged."²⁵³

This development was not lost on Sukarno. Sensing "sabotages," he became more and more suspicious toward the Army. Moreover, the split of the Army and the failure of the Malaysian campaign strengthened the hands of the PKI greatly. As the Army was divided and in disarray, the PKI seemed to be growing into the strongest power in Indonesia. Sukarno might not like the idea that he would be dependent on the Communists, but with the Communists as the most energetic political group supporting the confrontation, he did not have any other choice.²⁵⁴ He needed the PKI to support his anti-Malaysia campaign. Besides, the PKI's position was highly bolstered by the success of Beijing to explode its first nuclear device on October 16, 1964, which greatly

²⁵³ Mackie (1971) 214. Suparjo would later join a group of "progressive officers" who would stage a pre-emptive coup on September 30, 1965 against the Army leadership. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

²⁵⁴ Sukarno's wariness about the PKI was still evident in 1964. During a cabinet reshuffle, he passed over Aidit and Njoto, two of the main leaders of the PKI, for positions of any significance and retained both of them as ministers without portfolio. Even in 1965, both of them remained ministers without portfolio. Brackman (1966) 251. Moreover, a declassified CIA document gave an interesting insight to Sukarno's mind. In an informal conversation with "right-wing political leaders," Sukarno noted that he could not tolerate opposition to the PKI as he needed the support of the PKI in facing Malaysia question. Interestingly, he added, "Some day the PKI's turn will come." In opposing the PKI, the right-wing politicians would essentially oppose Sukarno's policy and Sukarno warned "you can be my friend or you can be my enemy, it's up to you." He ended the conversation saying "for me, Malaysia is number one. Someday I will take over the PKI but not now. If you want to show your strength [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] don't be anti-communist---show your strength and loyalty to Sukarno. Then the PKI cannot harm you." Intelligence Information Cable, January 13, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*, 2,4

impressed Sukarno and further cemented his desire to align Indonesia with China.²⁵⁵ By November 25, 1964, Ambassador Jones reported that:

Adam Malik, Chaerul Saleh, General Nasution, General Sukendro and others have made strong pleas for US help in rescuing moderates within Indonesia from what could easily become untenable position... Important segments Indo military have been embarrassed by obvious failure of efforts against mainland Malaya.²⁵⁶

Still, the split of the Army to some degree helped maintain the status quo in the confrontation against Malaysia. Regardless of Sukarno's rhetoric and antics (such as his decision to leave the United Nations in 1965) the situation never degenerated into an open warfare simply because the Army kept dragging its feet. Interestingly, the PKI was also willing to maintain the status quo. Even as publicly Aidit supported the escalation of the conflict, privately, he was concerned with the military escalation. He surmised that as the Army escalated the tension, it would also try to increase its political power, possibly through a state of emergency.²⁵⁷ As a result, the PKI kept launching a guarded militancy during this entire period and remain worried of possibilities of army coup, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

To Whitehall's chagrin, intense guerilla warfare across the border of Malaysia kept the British on their toes. Moreover, there were costs associated with the confrontation. With the large balance of payments deficit running at approximately £800 million by October 1964, the British could not afford to spend the rising cost of confrontation that reached £ 1 million *each day* by early 1965. By this time, the British

²⁵⁵ Sukarno's support for Beijing's nuclear explosion caught Subandrio off-guard. Subandrio had earlier denounced the test as a violation of the 1963 Test Ban Treaty. Mackie (1971) 287

²⁵⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, November 25, 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 185

²⁵⁷ Mortimer (1974) 242-3

government admitted that they could only maintain its involvement for another six to twelve months.²⁵⁸

In this situation, Washington had to get involved, even reluctantly due to its commitments with the developments in Vietnam. There was grumbling in Washington that London needlessly provoked Indonesia, especially in light of Duncan Sandys' hostile attitude toward Indonesia. On September 2, 1964, for instance, in light of Sandys' suggestion of air strikes on Indonesia, Dean Rusk instructed the United States Embassy in London to make it clear that "we cannot give them a blank check and pick up the tab for escalation by the use of US forces.... They must not take anything for granted in an area where we have our hands full."²⁵⁹

However, Indonesia's relationship with the United States was declining as Indonesia's growing flirtation with Beijing, its intransigence against both Malaysia and Great Britain, its disillusionment with the lack of forthcoming American support for the confrontation, and the PKI's attacks on the United States' interests and libraries in Indonesia.²⁶⁰ The American recognition of Malaysia and arms assistance were seen as "a

²⁵⁸ Subritzky (2000) 127, 199, 201. Apparently the British had committed over 60,000 army, navy, and air force personnel in the British Far Eastern Command, the bulk of which were committed to the Malaysian theater. In addition, the Malaysian armed forces numbered about 35,000 personnel. With the addition of troops coming from Australia and New Zealand, the British had over 95,000 personnel in Malaysia. Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission of the United Nations, January 15, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, vol. 26, 209. By December 16, 1965, the United States State Department estimated that the British had approximately 56,000 personnel and the outlays were running at an estimated US\$900 million a year. National Intelligence Estimate, December 16, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, vol. 26, 599

²⁵⁹ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, September 2, 1964, *FRUS*, Vol. 26, 149

²⁶⁰ On February 1965, Carl T. Rowan, the director of the United States Information Agency, complained to Dean Rusk about the anti-American activities against USIS (United States Information Service) libraries in Indonesia since August 1964. He noted that the attacks were part of a "well-established strategy of exerting a steadily-increasing pressure on the officials and private interests of foreign countries with whose policies it does not agree with the expectation that it can force a change in those policies." Memorandum From Director of the United States Information Agency Rowan to Secretary of State Rusk, February 18, 1965, *FRUS*, vol. 26, 223.

slap in the face," bringing the entire relationship to hit rock bottom.²⁶¹ Indonesia also started a campaign of harassment against the United States' interests in Indonesia in order to force the United States to decide whether it would be preferable to rebuild its ties with Indonesia by breaking with Malaysia, or to stick with Malaysia.²⁶² Even though Ambassador Jones kept trying to be optimistic about Sukarno, there was growing disenchantment with him in both the American Embassy in Jakarta and Washington itself. Frank Galbraith, then a staff member in Jakarta recalled:

I found myself between the ambassador and an increasingly hostile staff. Hardly anyone but Howard Jones could manage any optimism about Sukarno.... Whether the extent Sukarno used him and pulled the wool over his eyes, Jones's tactic of turning the other cheek kept us in Indonesia when a less patient, enduring ambassador might have pulled us out to avoid further humiliation.²⁶³

Not surprisingly, Howard Jones acquired a nickname "Sukarno's houseboy" in the diplomatic corps. By the time Jones left Indonesia in 1965, the entire American embassy staff including the Marine guards had enough. Keyes Beech remarked, "I have seen unhappy embassies, but this was the first one I saw that was ready to mutiny."²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ Report From Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker to President Johnson, undated, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, vol. 26, 255, 261-2

²⁶² The CIA report stated that General Magenda, Chief of Armed Forces Staff Intelligence Directorate (Dinsab), told his officers that Sukarno himself had ordered the harassment. The report further stated that: Sukarno believed that a gradual worsening of U.S.-Indonesian relations, in conjunction with Indonesian moves towards the Chicoms, will induce the U.S. to step in on the side of Indonesia in its confrontation against Malaysia.

...From an independent source quoted President Sukarno as saying that, facing the prospect of all-out war with China over Vietnam, the Americans will find it necessary to repair their relations with Indonesia. The price of this, Sukarno made clear, would be support for breaking up Malaysia. Intelligence Information Cable, March 4, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*, 2

²⁶³ Gardner (1997) 186-7

²⁶⁴ Beech (1971) 219. In retrospect, Jones might have been correct. As noted above, Sukarno believed that the United States and Communist China would go to war with each other within several years, either through American escalation in Vietnam or through a direct American attack on China. Sukarno might have deliberately tried to push the United States into a corner in order to force the United States to give as many concessions as possible to draw Indonesia away from China, such as withdrawing United States support for Malaysia. As a result, Sukarno might not have wanted a complete break with the United States, but he might have he wanted to push the United States to the corner so the United States would have no

It was also likely that relations with United States deteriorated due to Sukarno's paranoia about the role of the CIA in Indonesia.²⁶⁵ He had not forgotten the fact that the CIA was heavily involved in the failed PRRI/Permesta rebellion and he was concerned with assassination plots concocted by "rogue CIA agents."²⁶⁶ On March 13, 1965, Jones had to cable Washington, asking Johnson to reassure Sukarno that CIA had no intent to

choice but to appease Sukarno. See Intelligence Information Cable, January 13, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*

²⁶⁵ Sukarno's poor health might have been a factor that contributed to his paranoia. For several years already, Sukarno's health was in question, and there was talk of his impending demise as early as 1962. As noted above, Luns was hoping that by stalling negotiations, Sukarno might die before the Irian Barat problem was brought to a conclusion. In London, there was hope that Sukarno's death would end the confrontation. Even in Washington, Sukarno's impending demise was seen as probably the only way to stop the rising power of the PKI.

Kidney stones were one of the most quoted ailments that Sukarno had. He feared getting under the surgeon's scalpel as there was a prophecy that he would die under a knife. Unfortunately, Sukarno's health is rarely discussed in the literature and there is not a good summary or diagnosis of his illness aside from the Chinese doctors' widely quoted diagnosis to Aidit that the President suffered from kidney stones and over-consumption from unhealthy habits. An interesting discussion on how illness might influence leaders' decision-making process can be found in Post, Jerold M. and Robert S. Robins, *When Illness Strikes the Leader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994)

²⁶⁶ The CIA's sinister hands were blamed for many economic and social ills in Indonesia. However, in 1965, the prospect of major CIA involvement in Indonesia was low. With the increasing power of the PKI, everyone suspected of dealing with American citizens would face heavy pressure and even punishment. As the CIA depended on its contacts in Indonesia for their operations, such as they had done during the PRRI/Permesta debacle, this sharply reduced its effectiveness. Robert J. Martens, a political officer of the embassy recalled:

[My Indonesian friend] had been viciously attacked by... a leader of the PKI front organization for university graduates and warned to stop all contacts with Westerners and get in line with the "revolution." Naturally, I agreed that we should no longer see each other. A year later, in August or September 1965, I happened to meet him at a small function of a Third World embassy. We found ourselves alone on the porch after dinner. When I asked him how he was, he said he had tried to distance himself from his noncommunist beliefs but it was clear that this would not be enough to save him and his family. He then broke into uncontrollable weeping.... As it turned out, he was wrong, but his fear and desperation at that time were dramatically clear. Gardner (1997) 203

The American inability to interfere at all in Indonesia became so pronounced that on April 23, approached by someone "privy to plans for a coup in Indonesia," Jones replied that the United States "can in no way participate in any effort of this kind," in contrast to the ready acceptance of the rebellion plans in 1957-8. Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, vol. 26, 254. On August 8, 1965, Marshall Green, the new American Ambassador in Jakarta, reported that "*US officials in Indonesia are becoming increasingly isolated*. Indonesian contacts shy away from us when political climate heats up, and this is hot season in Djakarta." Telegram from the Embassy In Indonesia to the Department of State, August 8, 1965, *FRUS*, vol. 26, 279

kill him.²⁶⁷ Moreover, Sukarno himself was offended by the growing critical articles about him in American publications such as *Time*, *Life*, and *Newsweek* and apparently these had a major impact on his decision to give the Communists free rein in attacking American interests in Indonesia.²⁶⁸

The entire Confrontation affair, Indonesia's declining relationship with the United States, the growing influence of Beijing and the PKI in Indonesia in the years between 1963-5, and Indonesia's sudden withdrawal from the United Nations could only be explained satisfactorily if the factor of Sukarno as an independent political leader is included. Without the "Sukarno" factor, it was unlikely that these events might have taken place. Without Sukarno, Indonesia might have acquiesced to the creation of Malaysia regardless of how reluctantly it would do so. Without Sukarno's sudden interest in Beijing stemming from his need for support for the confrontation, pushing the United States to decide whether it found Indonesia or Malaysia to be more important for its interests, and his desire for the nuclear bomb, Indonesia, as shown by Subandrio's reaction, might have reacted adversely to Beijing. The threat of Chinese domination in

²⁶⁷ Apparently Washington had grown tired of these requests that Chester L. Cooper, a National Security Council staff, stated "Sukarno is psychopathic on [the CIA plot] and he has been assured, reassured, and re-re-assured to no avail. He seems to enjoy this deathwish and appears to use it to justify to himself and to others any of his anti-American acts. Memorandum from Chester L. Cooper of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), March 13, 1965, *FRUS*, vol. 26, 249

²⁶⁸ In an interview between Sukarno and Ambassador Green, Green noted that the major obstacle to improving the relationship between the United States and Indonesia was the attacks against American properties and people. Sukarno retorted that "popular feeling against the United States, including demonstrations, was bound to continue as long as the American newspapers and magazines printed defamatory articles about Indonesia and its leaders." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, September 1, 1965, *FRUS*, vol. 26, 293.

Southeast Asia was very real and was every strategic planner's nightmare. Without Sukarno, Indonesia's withdrawal from the United Nations was simply unthinkable.

The British mismanagement of the Malaysian affair created a sudden catalyst for Sukarno's belligerent attitude. Without British pressure, Sukarno might have agreed to the creation of Malaysia regardless of how reluctant he was. Probably, had the British used more tact in the entire North Borneo fiasco, Indonesia might grumble, but Sukarno's interest in maintaining the fragile balance of power between the PKI and the Army might stop Indonesia from going too far in the Confrontation. However, the British actions gave Sukarno too much humiliation, creating a pretext for Indonesia's armed intervention and resulting in Sukarno throwing his fragile attempt to balance the powers in Indonesia to the wind.²⁶⁹

The military, divided and demoralized, was unable to be a proper counter-balance. The Army also found itself in a very unenviable situation: caught between the Communists and the British, it could not do anything. It could not stage a coup because it

²⁶⁹ George McT. Kahin, who was present during the Manila discussion and was even included in Sukarno's entourage, observed that Sukarno's main goal was to be able to return and to tell the Indonesians that: Not only had (Sukarno and Macapagal) been consulted in the process of Malaysia's establishment, but that – and this was the essential ingredient – the establishment of Malaysia came only *after* it had been ascertained that the people of North Borneo and Sarawak had been consulted and had agreed to this. The Philippine and Indonesian presidents were further protected from nationalist criticism at home by virtue of it being agreed that the UN teams in these two Borneo territories would be accompanied by several observers from both Indonesia and the Philippines.... As Howard Jones... correctly observed: "Whether or not Sukarno thought the survey would show support for Malaysia, on balance it appeared that prior to the August 29th announcement [by the Tunku and Sandys] he was willing to accept the UN verdict." On the basis of my talks with him and with Subandrio and other members of the Indonesian delegation returning from the Manila conference, I can attest to this having indeed been the case. George McT. Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) 171-3

Washington also reached similar conclusion to Kahin's. A paper prepared for the National Security Council meeting on May 12, 1964 stated that Sukarno's main goal was "less than of bringing about Malaysia's downfall than that of avenging the fancied humiliation he suffered when Malaysia was formed and scoring what he can claim as a major diplomatic victory before the world." Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Read) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), May 12, 1964, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 104

would destroy any remaining cohesion within the armed forces, considering that there were many troops who remained loyal to Sukarno. Even if it staged a coup, the Army would face an unenviably bad situation of fighting Communist guerillas in the face of a potential British escalation.²⁷⁰

While Hindley argued that the PKI was domesticated, by this point the process of domestication had backfired. Through the use of the Malaysia issue and Sukarno's growing closeness to Beijing, the PKI had gained more power. Regardless of how reluctant Sukarno had been, he had become more and more dependent on the PKI, even though, as noted above, he would not be reluctant to ditch the PKI had the opportunity presented itself. His abandonment of the fragile balance of power came back to haunt him. Even though he tried to curb the PKI's power, the overall trend was a growing tilt of Indonesia toward the left. By May 1965, Sukarno was worried enough about the growing power of the PKI and the identification of Indonesia with Communist China that he pondered the reinstatement of the Murba party, a pro-Army nationalist party which he had banned earlier on January 6, 1965, under the pressure of the PKI.²⁷¹ He also entertained the idea of sending Nasution to Moscow to invite Soviet Premier Kosygin to visit Indonesia²⁷² to counter the influence of Beijing, especially as the PKI itself had grown closer to Beijing. Moreover, he refused to aid the PKI in silencing the anti-

²⁷⁰ The Army did have a very dim view of the British. When the Army finally took action against the PKI after the September 30 Affair, which will be discussed in the next chapter, it contacted the United States embassy on October 10, 1965, to pressure the British not to escalate the Malaysian confrontation because it would weaken the Army's position. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 10, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 318. As late as November 18, 1965, the Army believed that the September 30 Affair was instigated by both the Chinese and the British. Intelligence Memorandum, November 18, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 372

²⁷¹ Guy Pauker, "Indonesia in 1964: Toward a "People's Democracy"?" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Feb 1965) 93-4, Mortimer (1974) 377-8

²⁷² Nasution was apparently chosen because Sukarno believed that the Soviet respected and trusted Nasution. Intelligence Information Cable, May 14, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*

Communist force among the Islamic groupings such as HMI, the Islamic Student Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia).²⁷³

Still, the PKI remained strong. By September 1, 1965, the State Department was resigned to the idea of Indonesia under the domination of the PKI. The only reason that the PKI did not try to seize power was because Sukarno's policy was favorable to the PKI. Therefore, the longer Sukarno lived, the stronger be the position of the three-million strong PKI would become.²⁷⁴

However, there was an unexpected development that caught everyone off guard. On the night of September 30, 1965, six army generals were arrested and killed by a group led by Colonel Untung.

²⁷³ Mortimer (1974) 379

²⁷⁴ Special National Intelligence Estimate, September 1, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 290

CHAPTER 7

THE END GAME:

THE FALL OF SUKARNO AND THE RISE OF THE NEW ORDER

(1965-1967)

Any human being, given certain circumstances and relationships, can be a hero and a martyr. History, in fact, shows that even the mass, with its conglomeration of uneducated individuals, can act collectively with heroism and martyrdom.

Soetan Sjahrir¹

They wailed, amazed, seeing the disappearance of Sanctity; the cult-statue was naked.

Nagarakrtagama 57, III, 4²

Sukarno will never yield to pressure. Not for the whole Dutch army and not for one Indonesian battalion!

Sukarno³

¹ Soetan Sjahrir, *Out of Exile* (New York: The John Day Company, 1949) 7

² Benedict R. Anderson and Ruth T. McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971) 54. This analysis would famously be known as the Cornell Paper.

³ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: the Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 266

7.1. Early Morning of October 1, 1965

The evening of September 30, 1965, a Thursday, started with business as usual. Sukarno was at the Senayan sports complex (paid for by the Russians) in Jakarta, addressing a conference of national technicians with a tale from the *Mahabharata*.⁴ In the meantime, Ambassador Marshall Green,⁵ the already-suffering new American

⁴ Sukarno's tale was prompted by seeing a huge banner with a legend fifty feet in length that bore an admonition in Sanskrit: "Krishna says carry out your tasks without regard to the consequences." Apparently every word in the banner except one was printed incorrectly, leading Sukarno to correct them and thus start his tale. Considering that the narrative of *Mahabharata* ends in a war between the cousins of Pandawa and Kurawa and Sukarno's parting remark was "carry out your task without regard to the consequences," some people, including Brackman and Mohammad Hatta, pointed at this speech as a proof of Sukarno's culpability for or at least approval in the murder of the generals that would happen within several hours. Arnold C. Brackman, *The Communist Collapse in Indonesia* (W.W. Norton & Company, Inc, 1969) 71-2, Paul F. Gardner, *Shared Hopes, Separate Fears: Fifty Years of U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997) 212.

However, Hughes, while writing about Sukarno's speech in Senajan, did not mention the *Mahabharata* speech at all. He only noted that "Some observers say [Sukarno] seemed to falter." He, however, discounted the accusation that Sukarno's "sudden deterioration in his health" during that speech caused the plotters to hastily decided to move that night as by this time, the coup preparation were already too far advanced. John Hughes, *Indonesian Upheaval* (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1967) 52.

The CIA report first published in December 1968 concurred with Hughes' argument. The CIA report relied mostly on testimonies during the trial, which might cause some problems in terms of objectivity. Even so, the report remained a very important source of information and in order to make sure that the "balance issue" is addressed, it is used extensively in this chapter only after cross-checking it with other sources. Helen-Louise Hunter, *Sukarno and the Indonesian Coup* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007) 157. This book was essentially a reprint of a CIA report published in 1968 with an additional chapter included in the end. Unfortunately, this new version was lacking maps and photos that accompanied earlier version. See CIA Research Study, *Indonesia-1965: The Coup that Backfired* (Washington: Central Intelligence Agency, December 1968).

Apparently both Brackman and Hughes mistook the participants of the conference as "technicians," as both of them were not in Indonesia at this time. H. Rosihan Anwar, an anti-Sukarno journalist, in his diary stated that the Senayan conference was attended by 5,000 members of the Communist-sponsored Association of Indonesian University Student Movement (CGMI/Central Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia). The mistake was probably due to the fact that Hughes was in Philippines and did not arrive in Jakarta until October 4. Brackman himself was banned from Indonesia and he came to Indonesia only in early 1968, well after the fall of Sukarno. Anwar, however, did not mention the *Mahabharata* anecdote. He only mentioned that a PKI official stated that the Motherland was expectant, giving Anwar a bad premonition. H. Rosihan Anwar, *Sukarno, Tentara, PKI: Segitiga Kekuasaan Sebelum Prahara Politik 1961-1965* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2006) 374. The Cornell Paper did not mention this incident at all.

⁵ Green's first name became the butt of a joke for Sukarno. Sukarno had a field day telling his audience that because Green denied being a "marshal" of the air force, he must be a "marshal of the CIA."

ambassador to Indonesia, who bitterly wrote in his memoir about being forced to eat *durian*⁶ by Sukarno two days prior, spent the evening with the entire staff of his Embassy at a shadow puppet performance staged by the ambassador of New Zealand in a village on the outskirts of Jakarta.⁷

Within several hours, however, all hell broke loose. In the dawn of the morning of October 1, around 4 AM, *Cakrabirawa* (Presidential Guard) troops led by Colonel Untung abducted six generals of the Army from their homes. They narrowly missed capturing Nasution, as the latter managed to escape during the shootout. All six generals were later murdered. By 7:15 AM, Untung had taken over the radio station and he declared that a "Generals' plot" was averted. He further proclaimed the creation of a 40-man Indonesian Revolution Council which he personally would lead. Conspicuously missing from the list of the Council members was President Sukarno himself.⁸ It was later known that on October 1 Sukarno was staying at Halim airport, close to "Lubang Buaya,"⁹ which was the command post of Untung and his troops. By the evening of October 1, however, the countercoup movement by the Army, led by General Suharto, the commander of the Army Strategic Command (KOSTRAD/Komando Strategis Angkatan Darat), managed to regain control of the situation.

⁶ *Durian* is a very memorable fruit that many Americans love to hate even though it is one of the most popular fruits in Southeast Asia. Green described that fruit "smells like strong cheese and has the consistency of dough," which was very mild compared to what other durian-haters have said.

⁷ Marshall Green, *Indonesia: Crisis and Transformation 1965-1968* (Washington, D.C.: The Compass Press, 1990) 30, 40, 52

⁸ During the confusion, in a State Department memorandum to Dean Rusk dated on October 1, it was suggested that the absence of Sukarno's name from the list indicated Sukarno was either dead or incapacitated. National Archives and Records Administration, RG59, Central Files 1964-1966, POL 23-9 INDON, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 300

⁹ Lubang Buaya (Crocodile Hole) is a hamlet on the outskirt of Halim Air Force Base, about seven miles from Sukarno's Presidential Palace (Istana Merdeka/Freedom Palace) in Jakarta. It was the place where the Communists trained their volunteers for Konfrontasi.

The killing of the generals generates debates even today.¹⁰ Several facts were accepted among scholars notably that the killings were done by an element within the Army which had a close relationship with the PKI. However, scholars disagree on the role of Sukarno and the Communist party itself. There were questions on Sukarno's depth of involvement in the entire affair especially considering the fact that Sukarno's name was absent from the list of the Revolution Council and yet he was present at Halim.

The Cornell Paper argues that the absence of Sukarno's name from the list meant that Sukarno was not involved with the coup and in fact it marked unwillingness from Sukarno to cooperate with the plotters.¹¹ However, it was simply impossible that Sukarno was not aware of what was going on, considering the fact that it was a very dangerous time, as rumor mills worked overtime with stories of impending coups from either the Communists or the Army.¹² Dr. Subandrio, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Indonesian Foreign Minister, head of the Indonesian Intelligence Agency (BPI – Badan Pusat Intelijen/Central Intelligence Agency) and the head of at least eight other governmental positions, had been warned about the activities at Halim and by late September 1965, reports had multiplied. Yet nothing was done.¹³

¹⁰ An excellent summary of the debate can be found in Chapter 4 of Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978)

¹¹ Anderson and McVey (1971) 38

¹² Sjarifuddin Prawiranegara, languishing in prison at that time for his involvement in PRRI/Permesta, reminisced:

In our cell block one of the prisoners, who was not one of us, told us a coup was coming – can you imagine, even in prison there were people who expected some sort of coup! I also remember a student friend of our eldest daughter warned her that something would happen soon. This was September 29. The children felt the tension. Everyone expected something; but nobody knew what. See Brackman (1969) 67-9

¹³ Interestingly, in his trial, Subandrio admitted that he never passed the rumors about the Communist plot to Sukarno because "he was sure the President knew all about it." Hughes (1967) 113

It was also highly possible that Sukarno was informed about the impending coup, though he might not have been aware of the minute details of it. In the trial of Sjam, a shadowy figure with a number of pseudonyms who was the liaison between the PKI and the plotters, when the judge tried to imply that Sukarno would not accept a coalition cabinet which would be formed by the Revolutionary Council, Sjam snapped, "We knew he would approve!"¹⁴ Therefore, it was not surprising when Major General Sugandhi, a former Sukarno Aide-de-Camp, went to Sukarno on September 30 to warn him of activities in Halim, Sukarno yelled at him to "mind your own business."¹⁵

In fact, Sukarno probably saw the coup as a logical reaction to the Army, as the Army was particularly seen as the most possible entity to stage a coup. On August 22, 1965, Rosihan Anwar wrote in his diary that the Army (especially Yani, who was one of the murdered generals) rejected Sukarno's desire to have Brigadier General A. Jusuf, a junior general in the Army, become his fourth deputy prime minister.¹⁶ In light of the "Gilchrist Document" Affair, a fake document suggesting the existence of a plot by both the British and the Americans to push the Army's "Council of General" for a coup was disseminated, the August incident further increased Sukarno's discomfort to the Army and there was no way Sukarno could be left unaware about what was going on.¹⁷ Not

¹⁴ Hunter (2007) 145

¹⁵ Brackman (1967) 69

¹⁶ Anwar (2006) 362

¹⁷ The Gilchrist Document was as follow:

I discussed with the American Ambassador the question set out in your letter No. 67786/85. The Ambassador agreed in principal [sic] with our position but asked for time to investigate certain [illegible] of the matter.

To my question on the possible influence of Bunker's visit to Jakarta the Ambassador stated that he saw no chance of improving the situation and that there was therefore no reason for changing our joint plans. On the contrary the visit of the U.S. President's personal envoy would give us more time to prepare the operation [penciled in: in the utmost detail].

The ambassador felt that further measures were necessary to bring our efforts into closer alignment. In this connection, he said that it would be useful to impress again on our local army

surprisingly, in light of General Sugandhi's warnings, Sukarno retorted, "Don't pull that PKI phobia on me. Do you know about the Council of Generals? Do you know that the generals are rotten?"¹⁸ Something needed to be done to curb the Army's independence and as Hughes argued:

Sukarno... wanted his obstructive generals out of the way. He did not seek revolt, or the destruction of the Army. Nor, in fact, did the plotters attempt to do other than remove the Army's existing command. Sukarno wanted the Army retained, but he wanted it led by generals pliable to his own will, rather than generals of stubborn independence like Nasution and Yani, who thwarted him.¹⁹

From a historical perspective, it is tempting to argue that Sukarno was responsible for the entire affair and the death of the generals. This explanation however, does not fit with Sukarno's psychology. Sukarno might have had misgivings about the generals and he might have feared the coup, but it was a complete out of character for Sukarno to demand the killings of his political opponents. Sukarno was a politician, not a murderer or a revolutionary. Even as far back as during the Revolutionary Period that was discussed in Chapter 3, Sukarno continued to support Sjahrir's diplomatic approach rather than throwing his lot to Tan Malaka's armed struggle approach. Moreover, there was no history of political killings in Indonesia and it was highly doubtful that Sukarno would want to set that kind of precedent.²⁰

friends that extreme [penciled in: discipline] and coordination of action were essential for the success of the enterprise.

I promised to take all necessary measures. I will report my own views personally in due course. Kenneth Conboy, *Intel: Inside Indonesia's Intelligence Service* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing (Asia) Pte. Ltd., 2004) 41

¹⁸ Robert Shaplen, *Time out of Hand: Revolution and Reaction in Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970) 100

¹⁹ Hughes (1967) 115

²⁰ The murders of Amir Sjarifuddin and his associates in 1948 should be seen through the context of the Dutch invasion, when the chain of command was broken. In fact there were no order from Sukarno or even Sudirman to kill them, and Sukarno himself had apparently gone out of his way to tell the Army not to harm Amir. Similarly, the assassination of Colonel Warouw in 1960 was undertaken by a rogue unit, not by Warouw's political enemies in Jakarta. Sukarno himself was content enough to imprison the majority of his

On the other hand, the Communists were also very concerned about the situation, especially when Sukarno collapsed on August 4, forcing Aidit to cut short his visit in China and to return to Jakarta with a team of Chinese physicians. The physicians were not optimistic about Sukarno's health.²¹ With the rumor of impending coup growing, the Communists needed to be worried with the precarious health of Sukarno as he was the only one who could stop the Army from eradicating the Communists.

Interestingly, the Communists' fear of the military coup might have been of their own making. As the Communists spread the rumor of the Council of Generals, Subandrio's indefatigable BPI picked up the rumor and reported it as the truth, which spread the rumor further and ratcheted up the political temperature in Jakarta.²² By August 21, the vicious circle had reached such ridiculous proportions that when a BPI agent, reported that Aidit, citing information he had received from the BPI chief of staff (who presumably gathered the information through the PKI's rumor mill), told the politburo of an impending coup by the Council of Generals, causing the PKI central committee to warn all branches to be prepared.²³ Of course, the fact that there would be a

political opponents instead of pushing for a death penalty. Even after the bloody purge of the PKI, in which the PKI's leaders were virtually wiped out, the Army was unwilling to carry out the death penalty on Dr. Subandrio and surprisingly, Colonel Abdul Latief, one of the leaders of the plotters. Only Colonel Untung was later executed. In fact, the attack on the PKI and its sympathizers could only be explained by the desire of the Army to take revenge for the death of their six generals in what they saw as a complete deviation from the normal "rules of the game."

²¹ Crouch (1978) 109

²² Apparently this was a sad case of the classic "telephone game." In his trial, Subandrio stated that BPI had no proof at all of the existence of the Council of Generals. Hunter (2007) 128. In Brackman's words:

Unquestionably, the Communists worked with deliberation to spread the tale. Thus, police Brigadier General Soetarto, chief of staff of Subandrio's BPI, conceded that he first heard about the existence of a Council of Generals from a Communist member of parliament, and that he received a second report on the Council from no less a source than a member of Sukarno's palace honor guard (Tjakrabirawa), who, in turn, said – surprise! – he first learned of it from a member of the PKI. See Brackman (1969) 42

²³ Roland Challis, *Shadow of a Revolution: Indonesia and the Generals* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2001) 78. John Roosa published one of the most recent analyses on the attempted coup in 2006.

significant increase in the number of military units in Jakarta in preparation for the Armed Forces Celebration on October 5 did not help at all in quelling Aidit's fears.

During this period of uncertainty about Sukarno's impending death, Aidit took no chances. He decided to support a group of "progressive officers" who seemed to be interested in preventing the Council of Generals from staging a coup. According to the Cornell Paper, this group was comprised of officers from the Diponegoro Division, who saw soldiering "less a matter of techniques and skills, than the development of moral and spiritual faculties" and they disliked the cosmopolitan lifestyle of the "corrupted" generals in Jakarta:

The most striking example was Yani himself, who rapidly developed into almost a caricature of the "corrupted" Diponegoro officer: highly intelligent, polygot, immensely rich, with two wives, palatial homes and several cars, close to the Americans, shrewd, cynical, anti-Communists and deft at political wheeling and dealing.²⁴

The Cornell Paper's analysis of the "progressive officers" was interesting as it went back to the dichotomy of the pre-Jogjakarta charter that has been discussed in previous chapters. These "progressive officers" were basically pro-Sukarno, and to some degree the successors of the Peta group, who put more emphasis on the spirit of

His book relies mostly on Suparjo's memoir as a counterbalance to what he sees as problems from relying too much on the testimonies of the coup participants during their trials. In this book, he argued that the PKI's fear was real and the Army was simply waiting for the PKI to make a blunder as a pretext for "a full-scale war on the party," though he admitted that the Army was also caught off-guard by the killing of the generals. This explanation, however, assumes that the Army was operating as a single entity, while as has been throughout this dissertation and later in this chapter, the Army was far from united: it needed to take into account reactions from pro-Sukarno military leaders. Moreover, Roosa also put Sukarno as an innocent bystander, unaware of what was going on, while this dissertation argued that Sukarno was well aware of the coup. Aside from that, his description of what was going on during that fateful day was similar to that of this dissertation. John Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: the September 30th Movement & Suharto's Coup d'etat in Indonesia* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2006) 177

²⁴ Even if we take these descriptions to be true, interestingly, these officers did not have any qualms in working with the Air Marshall Omar Dhani, who actually had a palatial mansion on the outskirts of Jakarta as compared to Yani's regular suburban home! The Cornell Paper noted that "Dhani was notorious in Djakarta for his luxurious 'Solonese' style of living, 'feudal' background and indecisiveness." Anderson and McVey (1971) 4-5, 19

revolution and dismissed the Western-oriented rationalization programs espoused by the technocrats in the Army. However, one other important factor that would cause the split in the Army to be wide open was the politics of Confrontation. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Confrontation left the Army divided and bitter, with accusations that the Army upper echelon sabotaged the Malaysian campaign. It could be conjectured that those who supported Sukarno's policy of confrontation were those who came from the groups identified by the Cornell Paper. These officers might not be completely leftist. They, however, had reasons to be bitter with what they saw as the High Command's betrayal of the spirit of revolution. They shared a kindred spirit with the Communists who at least rhetorically supported the aggressive posture toward Malaysia.

The key contact person between these officers and the Communists was Sjam.²⁵ In his trial, Sjam testified that the Communists approached this group on August 12, and it was possible that both the Communists and the "progressive officers" decided to cooperate to preempt the expected coup by the Council of General.²⁶ Sjam apparently had a major role in drawing the list of targeted generals in consultation with Aidit.²⁷ With rumors swirling around in Jakarta of a possible Army coup on the Armed Forces Day, on October 5, a preemptive action was needed and the progressive officers decided to strike on October 1.²⁸

²⁵ Sjam might not have had much difficulty in integrating himself with these officers. Many of these officers were known to have a left-leaning tendency. Untung himself was involved in the Madiun Revolt of 1948, where he fought on the side of the PKI. Hunter (2007) 73

²⁶ Sudisman, a member of the PKI politburo, admitted in his trial that Aidit asked Njono to recruit about 2,000 members of mass organizations to become reserve forces for the progressive officers. Harold Crouch, "Another Look at the Indonesian "Coup"" *Indonesia*, Vol. 15 (April 1973) 8

²⁷ Crouch (1978) 115-7

²⁸ Hughes (1967) 103. Even today there are questions on why the coup was staged in the early morning of October 1. The Cornell Paper, focusing on the facts that these officers were Javanese and insisted on referring to themselves as the September 30th Movement, proposed that "it is possibly no coincidence that

Surprisingly, in light of the rumors and high political tension in Jakarta, Untung and his men did not have significant problems in arresting (and murdering) the generals. Only Nasution and Yani's houses were heavily guarded, though that was due to the fact that they held the highest positions in the Army. The rest of the generals had no soldiers guarding their homes.²⁹ General Soeprapto, General Parman, and General Soetojo were arrested without much resistance. General Yani was almost taken without resistance, before he knocked down one of the abductors in anger, offended by the rude behaviors of the abductor, and was gunned down as a result. General Pandjaitan, seeing that the attackers had shot his young relatives, tried to escape and was shot dead. General Harjono ordered his wife and children to go to the rear of his house, while he himself resisted the arrest.³⁰ In the end, he was overpowered and stabbed to death.³¹ General Nasution broke his ankle after he climbed the wall and dropped into the Iraqi Ambassador's garden. However, he was safe. The abductors did not pursue him as they mistook his adjutant, Lieutenant Pierre Tendean, for him and dragged Lieutenant Tendean to the Crocodile Hole.³²

the night of the 30th was also a Thursday night (*Malam Jumat*), a time when, in universal Javanese belief, magical forces are abroad, and spiritual strength and support most readily obtained." Anderson and McVey (1971) 11. A more mundane reason was that it was Untung's day off.

²⁹ Anderson and McVey (1971) 12-17

³⁰ General Harjono's resistance could be explained by the fact that he had already had a bad premonition of what would happen. He had confided to a friend in late September, "The situation is extremely serious – I know I am being watched all the time." Brackman (1969) 69

³¹ The CIA report stated that all the victims except Lieutenant Tendean, who received several blows from rifle butts, were shot without any hint of torture or mutilation. Hunter (2007) 14. Interestingly, according to the autopsy report published by Ben Anderson in 1987, there was no mention of bullet wound on General Harjono, even though he resisted the arrest and earlier reports suggested that he was shot. The autopsy report only stated that there was "on the abdomen, a cut caused by a sharp object, penetrating the abdominal cavity." He might have been stabbed to death with bayonettes. Ben Anderson, "How Did the Generals Die?" *Indonesia*, Vol. 43 (April 1987) 123

³² Hughes (1967) 31

Considering the high political tension in Jakarta, it is also a critical question, why of all seven generals, probably only General Harjono foresaw the murderous intent of the abductors. This became much more puzzling considering that General Parman, bragging about the effectiveness of his espionage on the Communists, claimed that he "was never more than three hours behind the PKI at any moment."³³ In fact, both Parman and Yani had received reports of possible assassination attempts as early as September 14 and another of a "kidnapping plot" in late September. Instead, Yani laughed them off and even reduced the guards at his home!³⁴

While they took their reasons to their graves, their lack of foreboding and urgency was reinforced by a mistake made in an earlier report on September 14. In the intelligence report prepared for General Parman, the report specifically stated the names of all seven targeted generals, with the addition of Suharto, Mursjid, and Sukendro. However, the date specified in the intelligence report on September 14, was that of September 18. The Army took special security precaution on that night, and that night went without a hitch. This probably influenced the top brass' thinking when later, General Sudono, former military attaché in Beijing, told General Harjono that there was a plan to abduct the generals. Seeing how earnest Sudono was, Harjono decided to call a staff meeting on September 30, the day of the coup, in which General Sudono became "the butt of laughter" of everyone. The PKI apparently learned about this meeting but they

³³ Anderson and McVey (1971) 64

³⁴ Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 201

took the wrong conclusion from it. They believed it was the meeting of the Council of Generals, preparing for the coup.³⁵

In addition, there was probably another mundane reason: as noted above, there had never been any history of bloody takeovers or blatant murders of political opponents in Indonesia. To put it simply, the generals did not have any reason to be concerned for their own lives. General Parman probably reflected the feelings of the other generals, when his wife overheard him shouting, "So, I have been slandered!" as he was taken away. It was not the behavior of someone who foresaw himself being summarily executed. The ex-Prime Minister Wilopo, who lived close to the house of one of these generals, summed it up as he recalled that fateful day, "I had anticipated a rough time, but neither that day – *nor in that manner* (emphasis added)."³⁶ The generals had expected the slanders, and they might have even considered the possibility that they would be arrested on the order of Sukarno and tried. However, the worst-case scenario of being murdered was simply unthinkable.

It was not surprising that the killings of these six generals (and the attempted murder of Nasution) shook the Army to its core. The Army was furious over the killings, and the resulting bloodbath and massacre, especially against the Communists and their sympathizers, was the result of this coup. In Cribb's analysis of the resulting military purge of the Communists:

The coup itself was presented as definitive evidence that the PKI had at last gone too far, but this message was rammed home by careful exploitation of the alleged circumstances of the coup. Indonesian politics had been virtually free of assassinations since the revolution, and little effort was needed to portray the killing of the generals as a transgression even of the tolerant standards of Guided

³⁵ Hunter (2007) 1

³⁶ Brackman (1969) 77

Democracy.... In the highly charged atmosphere of the time (the killings and the later embellished stories of the torture of the generals) were sufficient to make the party in general appear to be a demonic force whose destruction would be a service to the nation.³⁷

While many scholars have argued that Untung and his fellow plotters miscalculated by ignoring General Suharto, who was at the time a political unknown but would take over command of the Army and stage a counter-coup,³⁸ in light of the killings, the Army might have regrouped together under different generals or even colonels. In fact, with Nasution remaining at large, and considering the bloodbath that would happen later in Central and East Java and Bali, it was highly possible that the result of the counter-coup would be much bloodier in Jakarta or even would lead to civil war because there was neither Nasution nor Suharto available, who still had deference

³⁷ Robert Cribb, "Problems in the historiography of the killings in Indonesia" In Robert Cribb, *The Indonesian Killings: 1965-1966* (Clayton: Monash University, 1990) 29

³⁸ Wertheim would later try to build a case blaming General Suharto as the mastermind of the entire affair, arguing that "it is much more obvious to look in the direction of those who benefited the most from the coup." W.F. Wertheim, "Suharto and the Untung Coup – The Missing Link," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 1:2 (Winter, 1970) 52. Colonel Abdul Latief, one of the plotters who was held without trial until he was released in 1999 after the fall of Suharto, declared in his memoir that Suharto had a foreknowledge of what was going on as he briefed Suharto during his meeting while Suharto was at a hospital waiting for his sick son. Latief stated that told Suharto that seven generals would be arrested by morning and would be brought to the President, and the entire movement was led by Untung. Abdul Latief, *Predoi Kolonel Abdul Latief: Soeharto Terlibat G30S* (Jakarta: Institut Studi Arus Informasi, 2000) 129

In his memoir, Suharto did not deny that he met Latief at the hospital. However, he only stated that he saw Latief passing by his son's room. G. Dwipayana and Ramadhan K.H., *Soeharto: Pikiran, Ucapan, dan Tindakan Saya* (Jakarta: Citra Lamtoro Gung Persada, 1989) 118. Earlier on, he had also admitted this fact to Brackman, noting that Latief "did not go to the hospital that evening to check on my son but, rather, to check on me. He must have verified the genuine seriousness of my son's accident and confirmed my preoccupation with his condition." Brackman further added that Untung had served under Suharto and this probably made Untung unable to put Suharto on the death list. Brackman (1969) 100

Still, it needs to be emphasized that the word "murder" was never used in Latief's recollections. Even if Latief did inform Suharto about the impending arrest of the generals, from Suharto's perspective, it would be simply another confrontation between the increasingly prickly Sukarno, afraid of the so-called Council of Generals, and these generals, which would end in Sukarno releasing the generals out of fear that the generals would be so outraged that they would stage a military coup. Suharto, who was back then considered to be politically neutral and indifferent, would never ponder the possibility that there would be a coup attempt that would eliminate the Army's top brass in one night, especially when there were many military units in Jakarta in preparation for the Armed Forces Day!

toward Sukarno and would have tried to temper the emotion.³⁹ The massacre that happened between 1965 and 1966 was gruesome enough, with a death toll estimated from as low as 78,000 to as high as 2,000,000.⁴⁰ It was probably a blessing in disguise that the plotters did not target General Suharto. Without the tempering influence of General Suharto, the Army would have decided to strike against Sukarno and the countercoup might have plunged the nation into civil war, leading to significantly greater casualties.

Of course, such explanation then demands the question: if the Army would have reacted forcefully with or without Suharto, then why the assassinations of the six generals in the first place? At this point, with most of the people involved in the coup dead or interested only in vindicating themselves, we can only make an educated guess about what was going on.

³⁹ Nasution's daughter was shot during the botched kidnapping attempt and she died five days later. Shocked by the kidnapping attempt, at this point, it was highly unlikely that Nasution would be emotionally capable to command the Army. See Richard Cabot Howland, "The Lessons of the September 30 Affair," *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 14 (Fall 1970) 19. Without the tempering element of Suharto, the Army such as the RPKAD (Resimen Pasukan Komando Angkatan Darat/Army Commando Force Regiment) unit under the staunch anti-Communist Colonel Sarwo Edhie might actually have staged a full assault. Apparently, the plotters had calculated the possibility that this unit would be a strong stumbling block. In August, this unit was ordered to leave for Kalimantan on October 1. Sarwo Edhie, however, on his own initiative, cancelled this order once he heard what was going on. Hughes (1967) 21. Suharto in his autobiography claimed that without him stopping Sarwo Edhie, the latter might have immediately assaulted the Communists' position, causing many casualties. G. Dwipayana and Ramadhan K.H. (1989) 124. Sarwo Edhie himself would later distinguish himself in ruthlessly eradicating the Communists in Java. In one incident:

Sarwo Edhy (Edhie) himself was on the scene when an armored car heading a column was halted at the approaches to a village that was threatening to resist. Women members of the Communist Gerwani organization danced out into the road, turned around, and bared their posteriors to the troops in a gesture of insult. Sarwo Edhy did not hesitate. Tersely he ordered the gunner in the armored car, "Shoot them." The gunner obeyed the command. Then some of the villagers surged forward in protest. The gunner looked at his general for instructions. "Shoot them, too," was the command. After the guns had stopped chattering, Sarwo Edhy gave the villagers one hour to turn in their weapons. From the scene they had just witnessed, they knew he would deal ruthlessly with resistance. The weapons were handed over, the village did not fight, and the power of the Communist Party there was broken. Hughes (1967) 150

⁴⁰ Cribb (1990) 12. Ambassador Green in his memoir noted that based on his polling of his Embassy staff, he estimated that the number of deaths was around 300,000. However he later felt that the estimated number was too high. Green (1990) 61

From the testimonies and the narrative of events, one cannot help reaching the conclusion that the killings were not planned at all. In the trials of both Sjam and Untung, both \denied that they ordered the killings of the generals, and Untung himself stated that Sjam always used the Indonesian word "mengamankan" (to secure) in talking about the actions toward the generals. Furthermore, General Parman was a brother of Sakirman, a critical member of the plotting group who was in Semarang on that night, and he was apparently deeply affected by his brother's death.⁴¹ Still, one testimony was important. Untung admitted to ordering Lieutenant Dul Arief, who was in charge of the raids, to make sure that none escaped.⁴² Dul Arief somehow told his men to take the generals "dead or alive."⁴³ While this might be a minor exaggeration of the original order, in light of the charged atmosphere and considering the low education of the soldiers, the order might have been taken literally.⁴⁴

Moreover, there was also some confusion among the plotters about their real objectives.⁴⁵ General Suparjo, one of the plotters, told Army interrogators that when he arrived in Jakarta on September 28 to join the coup, he found everything was in chaos and "there was no clear chain of command." In launching the movement, Sjam assumed that "if necessary, the President would be set aside," an assumption that of course would

⁴¹ Hunter (2007) 83, 96

⁴² Roosa noted that the order was "Grab them. And make sure not one of them gets away." Roosa (2006) 217

⁴³ Crouch (1978) 126

⁴⁴ The CIA report, however, concluded that the plan really was to murder the generals, based on Latief's order to Gatot Sukrisno, the commander of the volunteer forces, that "it was advisable that the generals not be shot in their homes but rather gotten rid of at some other place." Hunter (2007) 84. Antonie Dake stressed that Latief did not have any qualms about finishing the generals. Antonie C.A. Dake, *The Sukarno File, 1965-1967* (Leiden: Brill, 2006) 69-70

⁴⁵ As Roosa stated, "One reason that Parman remained in the dark about the plot may have been because many plotters themselves remained in the dark." Roosa (2006) 215

not be accepted by the pro-Sukarno "progressive officers."⁴⁶ However, the "accidental" killing of Yani was a watershed moment. With Yani dead and Nasution escaped, the plotters realized that they had crossed the Rubicon. There was nothing else to be done except to risk it all by killing the rest of the generals and to wait for the President's next move. The bodies were dumped in an old abandoned well.⁴⁷ Later in his interrogation, Sjam admitted, "We simply lost our senses."⁴⁸

The Communists were also caught off guard with the killings. While Aidit and his PKI cooperated with Untung, it was doubtful that Aidit desired the deaths of the generals. Even though he was the head of the largest Communist party outside of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, Aidit was not a ruthless revolutionary who sought blood. He was content working and cooperating under Sukarno until the time came when Sukarno would presumably neutralize the Army and hand over the power to the PKI.

Moreover, it was simply inconceivable that he forgot the lesson of Madiun, where an armed revolt led to a swift and bloody repercussion from the Army. In fact, learning from the disaster of Madiun, Aidit had stressed the tactical need to cooperate with the bourgeoisie to advance the PKI's interests.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the PKI's track record from 1950 to 1965 did not show an organization that would willingly push for a total war with

⁴⁶ Howland (1970) 16

⁴⁷ The autopsy reports for the generals stated that all of the victims were shot around eight times. There was no hint of torture. Anderson (1987) 111-3

⁴⁸ Hunter (2007) 83. Sjam went into trial twice, the first one was in 1967 as a witness and the second one was in 1968 as the accused. The CIA report was based on his 1968 trial. In Roosa's translation of Sjam's 1967 testimony, Sjam stated:

Once the movement was underway, the movement, according to the plan, carried out a safeguarding of the generals who were members of the Council of Generals. If at that time killing occurred, there was actually no prior plan for that because the aim of the movement was to take the generals into custody [pengamanan] and to search for facts and clear evidence about the Council of Generals. So the killing was a certain excess of the movement, certainly it was one result. Roosa (2006) 67, 252

⁴⁹ Justus M. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1965) 141

the Army. In fact, in most cases, the PKI retreated after it faced a strong reaction from either the Army or Sukarno. Aidit and the PKI might provoke the Army but only through local and isolated incidents such as land seizures, not through a full fledged coup and assassinations.

In any case, from Aidit's perspective, there was simply no gain in killing the generals. A CIA memorandum (the least likely place to find an analysis that would actually defend the Communists in light of all the rumors of a CIA-funded Communist purge!) dated on October 6, 1965, even argued that:

It does not seem likely that party chairman Aidit would approve the murder of the generals or even the change of the government. The Indonesian situation, both foreign and domestic, was highly favorable to the Communists and – barring Sukarno's immediate death – showed every sign of becoming progressively more so.⁵⁰

Still, that does not mean that the PKI was off the hook. It is highly possible that Aidit agreed with the plan to kidnap the generals based on his fear of a forthcoming coup from the Army. However, his objective probably was to have a show-trial in front of Sukarno, where the generals would be forced to admit their wrongdoings and their plans to stage a coup, as admitted by Sjam in his trial.⁵¹ Demoralized from losing their leaders, anti-Communist faction of the military would be discredited.⁵² Only those who were pro-Sukarno and pro-Communist would remain in the Army. Sukarno then would end up as the only powerbase with the PKI in line to succeed him.

As a result, the cooperation of Sukarno in this coup was vital and, in fact, the success of this coup hinged on whether Sukarno would give his blessings and play his

⁵⁰ Intelligence Memorandum, October 6, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 315.

⁵¹ Crouch (1978) 126

⁵² Harold Crouch argued that Sukarno would have endorsed the coup had the generals been taken alive, significantly weakened the hawks in the Army. Crouch (1973) 18-19

role as the king who would chide his errant subjects, notably the generals, or whether he would back off from his supposed role. Once Sukarno decided against the coup, the house of cards would tumble down.

It was unclear about Sukarno's movements throughout the fateful day. During the entire incident, Sukarno was at Dewi's house (one of his wives). At 6 AM, he was informed by one of the plotters about the shootings at Nasution's house. Sukarno was probably aghast. He might have agreed with the kidnappings but he was not prepared for the killings. He refused to associate himself with the plotters' announcement that was broadcast at 7:15 AM. Several hours later, he decided to head to the palace, before changing his destination to Halim after he heard reports of unidentified troops near the palace. Arriving at Halim at 9:30 AM, he received a more complete briefing from General Suparjo.⁵³ Hearing about the deaths of the generals, Sukarno was reported to

⁵³ The Cornell Paper stated that the President went immediately to Halim after being informed of the kidnappings and the news of unidentified troops around the palace. This suggested that the President arrived in Halim earlier than 9:30 AM and probably even earlier than the 7:15 AM broadcast. The Cornell Paper stressed that while Sukarno might regret the killings, he "could not have been entirely displeased to learn that the main political obstacle to the full implementation of his leftward plans for Indonesia's future had been eliminated." Anderson and McVey (1971) 20, 23-4. Roosa's version of Sukarno's movement is follows the Cornell Paper's version, though he argued that the reason why Untung was unable to reach Sukarno was because Sukarno was shuttled around to various hideouts, and Sukarno's arrival at Halim was simply by chance. Roosa put Sukarno's arrival time in Halim between 9 and 9:30 AM. Roosa (2006) 40, 217-8. Brackman, however, argued that after being informed at 6 AM, Sukarno stayed at Dewi's house for another three hours, receiving trickle of information about the kidnappings and shootings, before leaving for the palace. This would explain his sudden change of destination when he heard reports of unidentified troops near the palace. Brackman (1969) 86-7. Hughes' version was not that clear on the exact time of Sukarno's whereabouts. He stated that the President left immediately at 6 AM and was trapped in a traffic jam when he was informed of the mysterious units outside the palace. The President then decided to move to the house of Harjati, his other wife, and after an unspecified time, from there he went to Halim. Hughes (1967) 53-4. The CIA report stated that Sukarno was already on his way to his palace at 6 AM and he received the reports of the kidnappings on the car radio and he decided to go to Harjati's house. The report speculated that Sukarno was in Harjati's house from around 6 AM to 9:30 AM when he arrived at Halim. Hunter (2007) 11-12. The differences in these versions were significant in further building up the case of the extent of Sukarno's involvement in this affair. The Cornell Paper painted a picture of Sukarno who practically had no clue about what was going on as he was immediately shuffled out of Dewi's house to Halim and who was therefore at the mercy of the plotters. Roosa's version painted a confused Sukarno and the subsequent meeting with the plotters was simply a matter of chance. Both Brackman and the CIA reports argued that Sukarno was in control of the entire affair and managed to make intelligent decisions on

have patted Suparjo on the shoulder, saying "good, good, good" before asking for the evidence of the generals' plot. Sukarno then said something like: "This is an incident in the revolution, especially in a big revolution, which with its ups and downs sometimes becomes bloody; but a revolution must not become stagnated; and now we must have no more bloodshed." Apparently, Sukarno also jokingly added, "If you cannot stop the movement, I will kill you."⁵⁴

Crouch noted that after this incident, Suparjo returned to the Crocodile Hole and reported to his dismayed colleagues about Sukarno's desire to have the movement stopped.⁵⁵ Regardless of whether or not Sukarno approved of the movement to kidnap the generals, it seemed that the killings repulsed him and he wanted the movement to be stopped before conditions spiral out of his control with the enraged army launching a counter-coup.⁵⁶

The condition did spiral out of Sukarno's control. The Army under General Suharto regrouped and crushed the coup. Sukarno's unwillingness to give his blessing to the plotters meant that the plotters could not rally other pro-Sukarnoists to their side, and General Suharto was able to frame the entire affair as a Communist-driven plot which prevented those in the Army who were pro-Sukarno and anti-Communists from jumping

what he wanted to do, given enough information and time to decide. He moved to Halim because he knew Nasution was still alive and was afraid of the Army's retaliation. Hughes' version was ambiguous on whether Sukarno was a dupe or he knew all along about what was going on, even though Hughes throughout the book indicated his belief of Sukarno's involvement in the coup. In addition, Brackman placed Untung at Halim, while Hughes and Crouch put Untung at the Crocodile Hole, which was located about one mile from Halim. Still, it was clear from the testimonies at the trials that Sukarno was at Halim by 9:30 AM.

⁵⁴ Brackman (1969) 87-8, Hughes (1967) 56

⁵⁵ Crouch (1978) 128

⁵⁶ The CIA report stated that Sukarno's sudden reversal of his support of the coup was caused by Suharto's asserting his command over the military, which was completely unexpected. Moreover, he apparently believed that Sarwo Edhie's troops had left Jakarta, therefore his outburst to one of the plotters "You told me that the RPKAD would not be in Djakarta!" Hunter (2007) 23, 176

into the fray. With Sukarno's faction in the Army remaining neutral, the Army could act decisively. Moreover, to Sukarno's chagrin, Suharto also committed acts of insubordination: he refused to turn over command of the Army to General Pranoto (Pranoto had been appointed by Sukarno to replace Yani) and he also forbade the latter to answer Sukarno's summons to Halim. In light of the situation, Suharto had every right to be cautious: he was unsure of Sukarno's involvement in the coup and Halim was close to Untung's base.⁵⁷

By the end of the day, the coup movement was broken. At 7 PM, having taken the radio station back, Suharto sent Sukarno's messenger back to Halim with an ultimatum for Sukarno to leave Halim because the RPKAD was about to storm it. Sukarno blinked. Sometime between 8 and 10:30 PM, Sukarno left Halim for his palace in Bogor, where he arrived shortly after midnight. At 9 PM, Suharto announced that the Army had control of the situation and had broken the coup. About midnight, Aidit, under the impression that Sukarno had evacuated to Bali, flew to Jogjakarta to distance the PKI from the coup, and to halt any planned demonstration.⁵⁸ In hindsight, he would regret his journey to Jogjakarta, as he could no longer control what happened in Jakarta.

7.2. Pale Horse

The Communists committed a fatal error when on October 2, *Harian Rakjat* (People's Daily), the PKI's official newspaper, published an editorial supporting the

⁵⁷ Sundhaussen (1982) 209

⁵⁸ Anderson and McVey (1971) 43, 45-6, 51. Crouch noted that Aidit went to Jogjakarta to organize the PKI supporters to hold demonstrations in support of the President. Crouch (1978) 145. The CIA report however stated that Aidit was aware that Sukarno had left for Bogor. It was reported that a furious Aidit "threw his coat on the ground and stamped on it." In the end, he left for Jogjakarta believing that Sukarno would join him later and thus he was trying to find a safe hiding place for Sukarno. He indicated that Sukarno suggested that idea. Hunter (2007) 37

movement. Apparently the editorial was written and the paper was published late on the previous afternoon and it was possible that the mistake was due to the fact that Aidit was not there to stop the distribution of the newspaper. At the same time, SOBSI also commenced the takeover of the state enterprises.⁵⁹ These actions were the PKI's last major blunders, as these movements, seemingly in coordination with the Untung coup, provided the Army a "proof" of the PKI's involvement in the coup. Almost immediately, the Army launched a purge on the Communists.

Aidit was hoping that Sukarno would rein in the Army. However, he was to be disappointed. Even though as early as in the afternoon of October 1, Sukarno attempted to impose his control over the Army by appointing General Pranoto, Suharto was unwilling to cooperate. He had taken over the command of the Army based on his position as the commander of KOSTRAD, and he was later supported by Nasution.⁶⁰ Moreover, he was unwilling to stop the momentum in favor of the Army – not to mention the fact that the Army was outraged and for Suharto to stay on top, he had to placate the Army.⁶¹ Sukarno then summoned Suharto to Bogor, where the meeting between Suharto and Sukarno lasted for five hours. In the end, Sukarno officially took "formal" command of the Army, General Pranoto was to carry out "daily tasks" of the commander, but

⁵⁹ Crouch (1978) 145-6, Hughes (1967) 77

⁶⁰ Nasution was found to be safe at 8 AM in the morning after the coup but he was kept hidden until he could be brought to KOSTRAD headquarters under heavy escort. Hughes (1967) 62-3. Nasution was reunited with Suharto on the evening of October 1. Suharto offered command of the Army to Nasution, but Nasution declined. He was not emotionally prepared and he probably believed that his acceptance would support the so-called Council of General plot. Brackman (1969) 99

⁶¹ Suharto later stated, "You can imagine the fury of a soldier once he learned what had happened. Perhaps an officer could be controlled, but an ordinary soldier would be very hard to restrain." Hughes (1967) 123

Suharto was responsible for the "restoration of security and order."⁶² This arrangement was announced through by radio on October 3.

On one hand, Suharto seemed to gain the upper hand in this arrangement. One of the main concerns for Suharto was the neutralization of pro-Sukarno elements in the Army. Thanks to this arrangement, other pro-Sukarno units such as the Brawijaya division of East Java⁶³ would not join the "progressive officers" who by then had escaped to Central Java and who managed to cause defections among the officers' ranks. General Surjosumpeno, an anti Communist general, managed to contact several rebel officers "who in some cases tearfully confessed their involvement and requested his forgiveness."⁶⁴

On the other hand, this arrangement was a result of Suharto's realization of his own weaknesses: Central Java was the hotbed of the "progressive officers," with five battalions out of seven Diponegoro infantry divisions siding with Untung.⁶⁵ The PKI was also widely popular, and Suharto could only rely on his RPKAD and Siliwangi division of West Java, led by Adjie, a pro-Sukarno but anti-Communist general who led a staunch anti-Communist division.⁶⁶ To openly oppose Sukarno meant to open Pandora's Box.⁶⁷

⁶² Crouch (1978) 137. In his memoir, Suharto stated that he arrived in Istana Bogor (Bogor Palace) at around 2 PM and left after a four-hour meeting. Interestingly, Suharto also mentioned that the energetic Sarwo Edhie also went to Sukarno's palace to find him, riding a panzer. While Suharto stated that Sarwo Edhie did not meet him and instead only met Sukarno, one cannot help speculating that Sarwo Edhie might have hinted about a possible military action had Sukarno been unwilling to accommodate the Army's demands. G. Dwipayana and Ramadhan K.H. (1989) 131-2. The CIA memorandum on October 6 expressed the opinion that Suharto had the troops training their guns on the palace. Intelligence Memorandum, October 6, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 312

⁶³ Sundhaussen (1982) 212

⁶⁴ Crouch (1978) 144

⁶⁵ Sundhaussen (1982) 215

⁶⁶ Anderson and McVey (1971) 61. Adjie himself was bypassed by Sukarno in favor of Pranoto because Sukarno saw him as "too stubborn and too much known as an anti-Communist." Hunter (2007) 57

By reaching an agreement with Suharto, Sukarno managed to prevent an assault to his position and to buy more time to think about his next move. For now, he was able to survive and to fight another day. This arrangement, however, was a bad news for Aidit and the PKI. There was no reference to the PKI at all in the radio speech on October 3.⁶⁸ Tainted with their involvement in the coup, Aidit and the PKI were no longer strong political assets. Sukarno decided to sell them down the river.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Much later, in 1970 after the dust had settled down, Suharto was planning to covertly assist Lon Nol government of Cambodia. When Suharto was challenged by Sudjatmoko, the Indonesian ambassador to the United States, that the covert assistance would hurt Indonesia's non-alignment status:

Suharto ... told Sudjatmoko that he had informed Lon Nol to go slowly in shift from monarchy to republic and that he had urged Lon Nol to try to use Sihanouk or Queen Mother to neutralize their supporters, somewhat in the fashion he had used Sukarno's supporters after 1965 coup. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, April 15, 1970, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Vol. 20, 619-20

One cannot help speculating whether this particular arrangement was the one that Suharto used during his meetings with Sukarno.

⁶⁸ Hunter (2007) 57

⁶⁹ It needs to be noted that there was no concrete evidence for this assertion aside from circumstantial evidences and events that were unfolding in the next several days. This writer based his assertions on several points: (1) It has been established in the previous chapter that Sukarno's courting the PKI was simply based on political motives, the fact that the Communists were useful in Sukarno's desire to confront Malaysia and, as Sukarno himself admitted, his consideration that the PKI was expendable as his main enemy was Malaysia. See Intelligence Information Cable, January 8, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*, 2, 4. (2) During several months of killings, there was no mention at all from Sukarno about Aidit and his colleagues. This was hardly the behavior of someone who was completely in the Communist camp. (3) At this point, Sukarno was suspected by the Army of being involved in the kidnappings and assassinations of the generals. It was possible that the Army would move against him had Sukarno was unwilling to sacrifice the PKI. (4) The fact that both Aidit and Lukman simply disappeared later was by itself quite puzzling. One would expect Sukarno to raise the issue of Aidit's safety to the Army and to make sure that both Aidit and Lukman were unharmed. Of all the actors involved in the coup, only the two of them were summarily executed without a public trial, unlike Untung, Omar Dhani, and even Subandrio.

An explanation of Sukarno's callous attitude to Aidit's fate was put forward by Antonie Dake and Ganis Harsono. Dake quoted a source close to the President who proclaimed that Sukarno was planning to eliminate Aidit anyway, following a Communist Youth meeting on September 29, 1965. In the meeting, Aidit apparently demanded the government disband HMI (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam/Islamic Student Association). Aidit further declared to the Communist Youths that they might as well do it themselves if the government was unwilling to do so. A high official, presumably Subandrio, was later quoted on October 13, 1965 as saying that, "*Aidit is persona non grata. He signed his own death warrant, when he openly defied Sukarno on the fateful night of the 28th [sic] of September.*" (Italics from the original source) Furthermore, Ganis Harsono, a close associate of Dr. Subandrio, in his diary (which he later published as part of his memoir) claimed that Aidit by making this declaration "had recklessly thrown down the gauntlet to President Sukarno." See Antonie C.A. Dake, *In the Spirit of Red Banteng: Indonesian Communists Between Moscow and Peking* (The Hague: Moutan, 1973) 407, Dake (2006) 55, Ganis Harsono,

In the meantime, Washington mostly stood aside throughout these rapid developments in Indonesia. The coup completely caught the Embassy and Washington by surprise.⁷⁰ Even as Suharto gained control over the capital, Washington remained cautious about intervening in Indonesia since the Americans were unsure of the motivations and goals of the Army under Suharto and Nasution.⁷¹

The wily Sukarno also tried to keep the Americans neutral. On October 9, Sukarno told Ambassador Green that he would be interested to see the latter more when time was propitious. In addition, Sukarno inquired whether the Army had approached the Americans about giving Indonesia rice or other assistance, while mentioning that the Chinese would honor its offer of US\$100 million in aid to Indonesia.⁷² Apparently, Sukarno wanted to send a signal to the Americans that he was interested in re-rapprochement and of course that the Americans should try to stay on his good side by staying neutral or by approaching him.

Sukarno's suspicions were somewhat vindicated when the Army started to contact the U.S. Embassy. On October 10, Green reported that his military attaché was told by a person "who is close to Suharto and Nasution" that the Army was hoping the United

Recollection of an Indonesian Diplomat in the Sukarno Era (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977) 300

⁷⁰ Green stated to Washington that the best course for the U.S. government was to simply acknowledge that they were also caught completely by surprise. Green (1990) 63

⁷¹ Ball, the Under Secretary of State, told Dean Rusk, "This is a complex power fight that is going on and we do not know who is on top and we do not know, for instance whether the Army might resolve this by declaring war on the imperialists and we would be left on the limb by the Army moving in and exploiting anti-American feelings." Even though Dean Rusk considered this analysis to be far-fetched, Ball insisted that it was a power fight between Sukarno and the Army, not an ideological fight. Memorandum of Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State (Ball) and Secretary of State Rusk, October 12, 1965, *FRUS*, 1965-1968, Vol. 26, 319. Ball also told Senator Fulbright that any U.S. interference could be a serious mistake. Johnson Library, Ball Papers, Telephone Conversation, Indonesia, [4/12/64-11/10/65]

⁷² Green (1990) 67

States would pressure Britain to not escalate the Malaysian tension, in order to not weaken the Army's position.⁷³ On October 14, Nasution, through his contact, further asked the Embassy to provide him "with portable voice communication gear for use by guards protecting Nasution and other top army people and their families." The request was immediately approved.⁷⁴

Still, aside from walkie-talkies, the Embassy did not try to exert any influence whatsoever, considering that it was unable to ascertain the Army's attitude. Moreover, there were fears that its involvement would be misconstrued or used as a political weapon. By November 19, Green's recommendation to the Department of State was for the Americans to remain uninvolved and "our help should be contingent upon whether we believe army really intends to remain firm against Sukarno/Subandrio. There are conflicting indications as to whether army will remain firm or whether it will bow gradually to President's will."⁷⁵ In short, the Americans should stay on the sidelines until the Army officially asked them for help.

In an interesting twist, Robert J. Martens, a political officer in the Embassy, passed the names of the PKI leaders and senior cadres to the Army without any permission from Marshall Green. He, however, stressed that "the names I gave were based entirely – I repeat entirely – on the Indonesian Communist press and were available

⁷³ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 10, 1965, *FRUS*, 1965-1968, Vol. 26, 318

⁷⁴ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 14, 1965, *FRUS*, 1965-1968, Vol. 26, 322

⁷⁵ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, November 19, 1965, *FRUS*, 1965-1968, Vol. 26, 373-4

to everyone. This was a senior cadre system of the PKI – a few thousand at most out of the 3.5 million claimed party members."⁷⁶

As the Johnson Administration debated on how to respond, Colonel Sarwo Edhie arrived in Central Java with two elite RPKAD battalions and a KOSTRAD cavalry battalion to neutralize the "progressive officers" and the Communists. Within days however, he requested more troops, receiving the reply that no more troops would be available until the end of the month.⁷⁷ To make things worse, prisons had already been overflowing with suspected Communists, which was not that surprising considering that the PKI had strong support in Central Java, and he had to set up makeshift camps, which meant more soldiers were needed as guards. Having only limited numbers of troops available amid the presumably strong PKI support in Java, Sarwo Edhie was in a quandary. The area was too big while the number of troops was too few. Therefore,

We decided to encourage the anti-Communist civilians to help with the job. In Solo we gathered together the youth, the nationalist groups, the religious [Muslim] organizations. We gave them two or three days' training, then sent them out to kill the Communists.⁷⁸

After some delays, permission was finally granted by Jakarta to use that plan.⁷⁹ A final solution was needed and a final solution was conducted.

⁷⁶ Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1965-1968, Vol. 26, 386. The fact that Martens had that list should not be surprising to anyone familiar with the duties of Embassy officials. One of the traditional duties of Embassy officials was to scan newspapers and to compile a list of important people in Indonesian politics.

⁷⁷ Crouch (1978) 150-1

⁷⁸ Hughes (1967) 151

⁷⁹ Crouch (1978) 151

The Army troops swept through Central Java to get rid of the Communists once and for all. In a village which was believed to being entirely Communist, the Army and the paramilitary units massacred everyone except children younger than six. Sometimes the executions were done openly. A Japanese hotel manager in Jogjakarta was asked whether the authorities could borrow his big food truck for a few days with its hotel driver. Within 48 hours, the driver was back, shaken, and unwilling to drive anymore. He reported that the truck was being used to transport dead bodies. The manager learned his lesson: a little while later, he refused the Army's requests to borrow his refrigerator trucks.⁸⁰ Many people disappeared during the purge. A Czech correspondent stated that 80% of his contacts simply vanished.⁸¹

In East Java, which was controlled by the Brawijaya Division, the killings had started as early as October 2, even without the Army's permission. The Communists had been involved in conflicts with Ansor, the NU's youth paramilitary unit. Having heard the suspicions of the PKI's involvement in the coup, the local NU groups took over the initiative. Rumors of the PKI's imminent attack on the NU were swirling around. Yusuf Hasyim, a general chief of Ansor, declared, "For the members of Ansor, there was no other choice, to kill or to be killed. Of course we choose to kill." There were also persistent rumors that the PKI had prepared wells to bury the bodies of the religious leaders whom they would kill in the near future.⁸² In Cribb's words, "Such reports,

⁸⁰ Hughes (1967) 155, 157

⁸¹ Brackman (1969) 115

⁸² Hermawan Sulistyono, *Palu Arit Di Ladang Tebu* (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2000) 175

whether true, partly true or wholly false, helped to create the atmosphere of kill-or-be-killed."⁸³

Jombang in East Java was one of the first places where the massacre occurred. According to Hermawan Sulistyono's interviews with Rusdi Anwar, a local strongman, immediately after the news of the coup spread to the region (October 2, 1965), he waited for commands from the national NU organization in Jakarta. After waiting for several days in vain, he decided to gather 150 people at his house on October 6, 1965. Concluding that a PKI-backed coup happened on October 1, he decided to attack a barrack belonging to a sugar plantation. The main motivation of the attack was to kill another strongman, whom he claimed belonged to the PKI. Although many people were against the attack, Rusdi Anwar prevailed after assuring people that he would be responsible for the killing. The attack started on October 6 and led to the first death on October 9. The local police did not interfere, and even after the killings happened they did nothing. Rusdi Anwar then claimed that he was untouchable by law, and many people started to join him as the mass killings picked up their pace.⁸⁴

In Kediri on October 13, Ansor held the 'Vigilance Rally of Godly People,' where a group of militia openly beat and hacked eleven PKI members to death during an invasion of the PKI's regional office. The rally took place after "the leaders had ... satisfied themselves that they had sufficient backing from within locally stationed army groups."⁸⁵ Even so, the massacre was only limited to rural areas. As late as mid-October,

⁸³ Cribb (1990) 123. Cribb described a rumor of extensive killings in Central Java where two hundred and fifty PNI and NU leaders were murdered and some fifteen thousand people fled.

⁸⁴ Sulistyono (2000) 158-60

⁸⁵ Kenneth R. Young, "Local and national influences in the violence of 1965" In Cribb (1990) 79

in Pasuruan and Blitar the PKI members of district assemblies still attended sessions.⁸⁶

However, once the green light was given for the massacre in Central Java, the massacre in East Java went full force. The anti-Communist organizations were given free rein and they did the killings effectively. An army general noted:

There are about three thousand villages in East Java. Each of them had Communist Party members. I'd say each of them lost about ten to fifteen people as the Anson people swept through. That means between thirty and forty-five thousand people were killed in East Java. But it could have been as high as a hundred thousand.

Lacking time to bury the dead, the bodies were thrown into rivers. By late 1965, it was reported that so many bodies floated downstream that villagers stopped eating fish for fear some might contain human flesh.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, having escaped to Jogjakarta, Aidit decided to move to Semarang to confer with Lukman on October 2. They then decided to go to Solo, which was governed by a PKI mayor and had a strong PKI presence. Arriving in Solo, Aidit asked Lieutenant Colonel Sujoto, a commander of Panasan military airbase near Solo, for a plane to fly to Bali. The reason for his request was unclear. However, it can be speculated that he probably wanted to catch up with Sukarno. The request was summarily rejected. Probably having heard Sukarno's speech on October 3, Aidit spent the entire day reassuring his party cadres at various places until October 4, when Jakarta radio announced that there would be a plenary session of the cabinet in Bogor on October 6 to which all ministers should come.

⁸⁶ Crouch (1978) 146-7

⁸⁷ Hughes (1967) 158

In the early morning of October 5, Lukman drove to Semarang, then headed for Jakarta. He was last seen going to Bogor on October 6, though there were reports that he was present during the cabinet meeting.⁸⁸ On October 5, Aidit arrived again at the Panasan military airbase. He requested a plane to return to Jakarta so he could attend the cabinet meeting. The request again was rejected. Aidit left shortly after, dejected. He was never seen again in public.⁸⁹

Lieutenant Colonel Untung was arrested and tried. However, it was unclear whether he was executed or died of natural causes. Suharto's memoir only stated that he was executed, without much elaboration.⁹⁰

On November 20, 1965, Sukarno finally spoke out against the killings. He denounced the extremity in restoring law and order "with the result that innocent people

⁸⁸ The CIA reported that both Njoto and Lukman apparently talked in private with Sukarno and the latter told the PKI to remain calm as he would "protect the party" within a week. On October 9, there was still no word from Sukarno and when both Njoto and Lukman asked to see Sukarno, they were not allowed to see him. It was unclear what happened after that. The CIA report only stated that both Njoto and Lukman were killed by the Army shortly after November 22. Hunter (2007) 49, 59

⁸⁹ Anderson and McVey (1971) 52-3. In early 1966, *Asahi Shinbun* published an "Aidit's confession," in which Aidit confessed to the PKI's involvements in the coup and his movements after October 1 until his arrest on November 22 at 9 PM. The entire confession can be found in Hughes (1967) 162-72. Brackman, having contacts in the military, stated that Aidit was arrested on the night of November 21. He added that Aidit was held for one or two days before he was executed. Later, he placed the date of execution on November 22. Aidit's last words were "If you shoot me, you must also shoot the President!" Brackman (1969) 110-1, 115

There was a controversy whether the "confession" was authentic, as in the confession Aidit assumed "highest responsibility" for the coup and he also implicated Sukarno. In the opinion of this writer, the confession was most likely a fabrication, as it was very likely that Aidit was arrested one month earlier. In a telegram to the State Department dated on October 18, 1965, Ambassador Green reported that the police claimed that they had arrested Aidit, but they kept it a secret to obstruct the PKI from naming a new head of the party. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 18, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 327. However, in a memorandum dated on October 22, 1965, to President Johnson, Bundy put Aidit's whereabouts under the category of "important unknowns" adding a qualifier: "reportedly under arrest." Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson, October 22, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 334. The CIA report also followed the version of the story whereby November 22 was the day of the capture. Unfortunately, in his memoir, Green only mentioned Aidit was killed several weeks after the failed coup without elaborating on it. Green (1990) 57. Interestingly, Suharto, in an interview with Antonie Dake on November 23, 2005, stated that Aidit was executed immediately after his arrest on November 22. Dake (2006) 159

⁹⁰ G. Dwipayana and Ramadhan K.H. (1989) 598

are being put in jail. Not only put in jail, some even have their throats cut." On December 18, he further appealed to the Muslim student organization to behave as good Muslim and at least bury the slaughtered PKI members or their sympathizers.⁹¹ In those speeches, he never invoked Aidit's name.

The massacre of the Communists raises another question: why did the PKI collapsed so fast, considering its mass appeal and its size as the third largest Communist party in the world?

Lack of leadership was perhaps one of the most important factors leading the collapse of the PKI. Once the coup collapsed and most of the leaders of the PKI left for Central Java, no one was left to organize the party's reactions. The Cornell Papers noted that in the aftermath of the coup, Aidit went to Jogjakarta and Surakarta, trying to quell the members lest the PKI was provoked into a violent action.⁹² Aidit might also have calculated that he could rely on Sukarno to rein in the Army until he could reassure his followers. Of course, Sukarno's action was not forthcoming. On October 5, however, with Aidit missing, the PKI was leaderless. A survivor of the massacres recalled, "Why we did not resist at that time? Because we did not know anything. We never received an order from the head of the party to fight back."⁹³

⁹¹ Crouch (1978) 156-7. Brackman placed Sukarno's first speech against the killings on November 22. Brackman (1969) 115

⁹² Anderson and McVey (1971) 51-3

⁹³ Sulistyono (2000) 188. Ambassador Green also reported from Jakarta that "We have direct evidence... that PKI itself already regarded its communication to be virtually shattered a week or so ago, even before army repression had reached its peak." Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 20, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 329

In addition, many of the victims were caught unprepared by the killings.⁹⁴

Geoffrey Robinson, in his discussions on the killings among the Balinese, proposed that the Communists,

Demoralized by the repeated allegations of PKI wrongdoing, abandoned by their leaders, hopelessly overpowered, and unable to live safely even in their own communities, ordinary PKI members must have sensed that resistance would be quite pointless. The stage was finally set for wholesale massacre.⁹⁵

Furthermore, in many cases they simply feared the repercussion for those who refused to surrender quietly: their whole family would also be executed.⁹⁶ To run away from the villages was also unthinkable: for Javanese, their villages were the center of their life; the villages were their identity. Even during the social transformation caused by the Dutch and the independence, the villagers intensified their attempt to maintain village life. Thus, to leave their villages meant to abandon everything: wealth, social network, and even their identity.⁹⁷ As a result, for them to surrender was the most rational option: it ensured that their family would be spared from their fate.

Still, the most likely answer can be found in the fact that the PKI had grown too fast for its own good. Most of members of the PKI joined the party not because of their convictions about Communism. The Communists were simply good in getting their messages across. In an anecdote told to Hughes:

In Djakarta a leading anti-Communist politician got a message one day that his father in Central Java had joined the Communist Party. As soon as he could get

⁹⁴ Crouch (1978) 155-6

⁹⁵ Geoffrey Robinson, *The Dark Side of Paradise: Political Violence in Bali* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 295. His opinion on the PKI's inability to resist the bloody purge was quite similar to Crouch's argument that the PKI's supporters were so unprepared and outgunned that the only thing they could do was to accept their fate. Crouch (1978) 154

⁹⁶ Jean Contenay, "Another Bloodbath?" In *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 23, 1967

⁹⁷ A good discussion of the role of village in Javanese society is Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Village" In William Skinner, *Local, Ethnic, and National Loyalties in Village Indonesia: A Symposium* (Yale University Press, 1959) 34-41

away, he sped home to his father's fields to find out what had happened. This is the story his father told him:

"I was in my fields when a man stopped and started chatting about my problems. The problems are always the same at this time of year – how to get money for seed and planting. Usually I have to borrow, and by the time the moneylenders are through, it costs me fifty percent interest.

A few days later my visitor returned. He lent me all I needed at five percent interest. He was the representative of the Communist Party, and the party lent me the money.

All my life I have been in debt, and my father and grandfather before me. Now for the first time I am free, and the Communists have made it so. And you ask me why I have decided to support them?"⁹⁸

In one interesting interrogation, an old widow working with a certain foreign Embassy was accused of being involved in G30S (abbreviation of the coup – Gerakan 30 September – September 30 Movement). The widow replied, "No Sir. In that embassy I only make five, ten, fifteen ice – not even thirty!"⁹⁹ Elkana Tobing, a political adviser of Adam Malik who would later be Suharto's Foreign Minister, Head of Parliament, and future Vice President, noted:

They did not have the time in which to develop convictions among their rank and file.... The PKI's mass base was superficially contrived.... The PKI engaged more in a psychological exercise than in education.... They had no firm foundation.

Leimena, Sukarno's third Deputy Prime Minister, summed it up when he declared, "Essentially the PKI was show business."¹⁰⁰

Therefore, even though the PKI expanded rapidly, the tradeoff was the quality and the commitments of the cadres were suspect. In fact, during party briefings in August and September in preparation for the coup, leaders of the PKI were concerned about the

⁹⁸ Hughes (1967) 85-6

⁹⁹ In Indonesian, ice is translated and pronounced as "es," which was the pronunciation of letter "S." Baskara T. Wardaya, *Bung Karno Menggugat!* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Galangpress, 2006) 195

¹⁰⁰ Brackman (1969) 136-7

readiness of their cadres for the future struggle.¹⁰¹ Aidit had built a Potemkin village, impressive, but unreliable when push came to shove. Moreover, the PKI had always relied on the protection of Sukarno from the Army. As a result, when Sukarno, trying to survive this latest setback, decided to sacrifice the Communists, the days of the PKI were numbered. Without Sukarno's active protections, the house of cards simply collapsed, and the party was quickly destroyed.

7.3. Confronting Sukarno

Sukarno might have been down, but he was not yet out, as he was still a power to be reckoned with. In spite of the blunders made during the September 30 Movement, he was still widely popular in Central and East Java and he had many supporters within the Army, the air force, and the navy - especially those who owed him their ranks and positions. Even the Siliwangi Division, which was staunchly anti-Communist, could not be relied upon if it came to a showdown with the President, as it was led by pro-Sukarno General Adjie. Furthermore, there were also politicians who remained wary toward the Army. Even though both the PNI and the NU were happy to see the collapse of the PKI (and their youth groups participated in the mass killings in Java and Bali!), they were connected to Sukarno through past political alliances, and were unwilling to let go the entire political system.¹⁰²

Therefore, to openly oppose Sukarno meant risking a civil war, something that both Suharto and Nasution were unwilling to consider. Moreover, he was the Father of the Nation, which provided him a major political asset as a symbol of unity. In its

¹⁰¹ Hunter (2007) 141

¹⁰² Crouch (1978) 159

operation to clean up the PKI, the Army had to keep propping up Sukarno as the latter still gave the Army some sort of legitimacy as the protector of national unity.¹⁰³

While both Nasution and Suharto were not anxious for a showdown, they also realized that Sukarno was not content with how things progressed and he might pull something out of his sleeve. They were not to be disappointed, as Sukarno became determined to get rid of the political baggage of the failed coup and show the Army that he was still an independent actor, free from their influences. On October 16, during the appointment of Suharto as the Commander of the Army and Chief of Staff of the KOTI (Komando Tertinggi/Supreme Command), Sukarno downplayed the importance of the September 30 Movement by stating "what has happened in our revolution... is merely, to say it in Dutch, een rimpel in een geweldige ocean (a ripple in a vast ocean)... the key to our future does not depend on small incidents."¹⁰⁴

The culmination of Sukarno's offensive drive was a three-day KOTI meeting on December 16-18, where Sukarno refused to meet the Army's demands to ban the PKI and reorganize the government, get rid of the PKI sympathizers and most importantly the

¹⁰³ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 17, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 324

¹⁰⁴ Brackman (1969) 91-2, Crouch (1978) 161-2. Sukarno's remarks could also be seen in the context of Suharto's elevation to the Army Chief of Staff. Apparently there was a mutual dislike between Suharto and Subandrio which led the latter to block the former's rise. However, Nasution prevailed in pressuring Sukarno to appoint Suharto in spite of Subandrio's objection. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 18, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 327. This interpretation, however, is in contrast to Pender and Sundhaussen's interpretation of Suharto's elevation. Both Pender and Sundhaussen believed that Sukarno appointed Suharto in order to split Suharto from Nasution. C.L.M Penders, and Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: A Political Biography* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1985) 193. Crouch also noted that Suharto was known to be on bad terms with Nasution since his dismissal as Diponegoro commander in 1959 (reportedly due to Suharto's involvements in smuggling operations). Crouch (1978) 124-5. If Sukarno's intent was to drive a wedge between Nasution and Suharto, it was apparently not working. Ambassador Green informed Washington that Suharto was close with Nasution and Nasution advised him. Furthermore, between both of them "there is general understanding that they will not permit wedge to be driven between them as happened in case of Nasution and Yani." Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, November 4, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 354

hated Dr. Subandrio, whom the Army believed to be involved in the September 30 coup.¹⁰⁵ On December 21, he declared that the Communists' sacrifices during the Revolutionary period "were greater than the sacrifices of other parties and other groups."¹⁰⁶ For many in the Army, Sukarno had rubbed their wounds with salt, especially Nasution, who had lost his colleagues and his daughter in the coup.

Another question is why Sukarno was unwilling to completely denounce Communism and ban the PKI, which he had sold out earlier anyway. The reason was political. Aside from the fact that "Communism" was one of his three pillars of ideology (Nasakom – Nasionalisme-Agama-Komunis/Nationalism-Religion-Communism), it was a useful card to play. The PKI could rise to the top because he allowed it to, and he could create another PKI with his blessings, possibly under Njoto, who was known for his skill in organizing unions.¹⁰⁷ With the Communists not yet quelled, this was a potent political bluff. On November 9, the CIA reported that even though the Army had an overwhelming military superiority, there was still a sizeable potential for resistance by the Communists in Central Java, from which the Communists would "have the ideal bases from which to mount campaigns of harassment, subversion and sabotage as the emergent non-Communist government attempts to grapple with responsibilities already close to overpowering."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 2, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 396

¹⁰⁶ Crouch (1978) 164

¹⁰⁷ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 17, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 325-6. Green in his telegram number 1098 also noted that should Sukarno decided to throw his weight to the PKI, the Army's difficulties in rooting out the PKI would be greatly increased. Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, October 20, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 330

¹⁰⁸ Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency, November 9, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 361-2

Facing Sukarno's direct assault, Suharto surprisingly did nothing. He apparently had realized the extent of the weakness in the Army's position, and unfamiliar with Jakarta's politics, Suharto did not know what to do. To make the situation worse, the Army's destruction of the PKI had brought in criticism from both Moscow and Beijing, and in light of the fact that the Army was almost entirely dependent on Moscow for their armaments, one cannot help asking whether the Soviet Union was willing to keep supplying the Army with weapons that the Army would obviously use to eliminate the Communists.¹⁰⁹ This further encouraged Sukarno.

Realizing his fragile position, Suharto decided to do something that could be politically dangerous. He decided to bring the Americans into the power struggle. On November 1, Ambassador Green reported a "first instance of a senior Indonesian Army official asking us specifically for assistance." That senior official was General Sukendro,¹¹⁰ who had been used by Yani to keep in contact with both the British and American Embassies.¹¹¹ Sukendro asked the Americans to provide the Army with medical supplies, tactical communications equipment, rice, and possibly small arms. Washington demurred, but Ambassador Green informed Washington that he was satisfied with Sukendro's credentials and pushed for the delivery of the medical supplies. The State Department informed Green on November 4 that he could tell Sukendro that

¹⁰⁹ Telegram From Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, October 29, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 342. In fact, the Soviet did withhold shipments of military supplies after the coup. Green (1990) 71

¹¹⁰ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, November 1, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 345

¹¹¹ During an "interrogation session" following the Gilchrist letter on May 26, Yani admitted to Sukarno that the contact was made by both Sukendro and Parman (who was murdered in the coup). R.E. Elson, *Suharto: A Political Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 97

Washington was prepared to furnish medical supplies.¹¹² By November 17, after heavy prodding by Ambassador Green, Washington also agreed to provide the Army with communications equipment, which was seen as an especially urgent need.¹¹³

Even so, Washington remained cautious. Unlike in 1957, Washington was moving very slowly in trying to influence Indonesia's politics. In fact, it seemed that Washington was very hesitant in involving itself in Indonesia even though the requests in a sense were very limited. On December 4, in a meeting between Samuel Berger, Deputy Assistance Secretary of State for Far Eastern and William Colby, the CIA Directorate of Plans of Far Eastern Division, the former raised the question of whether the CIA "had been 'conned'" into involving itself in the project of supplying medicine and medical equipment to the Indonesian army. The former also openly speculated whether it was not a Sukarno plot to drag the Americans into the conflict, who then would be used as a way to break the Army,¹¹⁴ considering the fact that Nasution knew nothing about financial arrangements "that were to be made as cover for project."¹¹⁵

¹¹² Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand, November 4, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 357n2, Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State, November 5, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 358n2

¹¹³ Memorandum Prepared for the 303 Committee, November 17, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 370-1. Many lines from this memorandum are blacked out, however from the fragments, it was implied that the request for the communications equipment was approved and Washington even agreed to train "a qualified and senior Army communication officer designated by Sukendro." The communication equipment itself had been promised to General Yani before he was murdered and was part of a long unfulfilled commitment from the United States to the Army. See Report From Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker to President Johnson, undated, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 259. The cover page stated that the date of transmission of this report was on April 21, 1965.

¹¹⁴ This fear of Sukarno's using the Americans as a way to defeat the Army was not without basis. In a palace function on November 9, 1965, Sukarno blasted certain Embassies in Jakarta, especially the American Embassy, which he claimed engaged in subversive activities against his regime. Sukarno was so worked out over this that one participant stated that "we are dealing with a madman." Green (1990) 73

¹¹⁵ Memorandum From the Deputy Director for Coordination, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Koren) to the Director (Hughes), December 4, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 381. In his memoir, Green stated that General Sukendro said he was speaking for General Suharto. Green also noted that after that contact, Adam Malik told him that General Suharto did not want any other assistance as it might only serve to strengthen Sukarno's hand, without elaborating further. Green (1990) 69. It was highly possible, considering

On December 9, Washington further informed Ambassador Green, when the latter asked for emergency rice shipment, that the State Department "did not believe covert assistance to be practicable, that the political situation in Indonesia is still fluid that such assistance could benefit Sukarno-Subandrio rather than the Army."¹¹⁶ As late as January 19, 1966, the State Department was still reluctant to exploit the situation in Indonesia even though Green recommended that "he be allowed to tell the Army we would join in providing emergency aid if really needed."¹¹⁷

While both the Army and Sukarno were busy maneuvering around each other, the economy finally collapsed.¹¹⁸ Between 1964 and 1965, currency circulation had increased five-fold. On November 23, 1965, Chaerul Saleh, Sukarno's Third Deputy Prime Minister, announced an increase in the price of petrol from Rp. 4 per liter to Rp. 250, followed by a four-fold increase in the price of petrol and kerosene for cooking on January 3, 1966. At the same time, postal and telecommunication charges were increased ten-fold, train fares four-fold, and bus fares five-fold, and the Rupiah was further

Nasution's ignorance over the financial arrangement, that Sukendro's requests were only approved by Suharto and if Nasution got wind of it, he might vehemently disapprove such contact with the Americans, for the fear of giving Sukarno additional ammunition to beat the Army. Of course, one cannot discount Nasution's own wariness toward the Americans, considering the fact that the Washington was backing PRRI/Permesta in 1958.

¹¹⁶ Memorandum From Director of the Far East Region (Blouin) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Friedman), December 13, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 383. Interestingly, Blouin in the memorandum also mentioned Vietnam, that the United States' assistance should not be separated from Indonesian policy on Vietnam.

¹¹⁷ Memorandum From the Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Komer) to Chester L. Cooper and James C. Thompson, Jr., of the National Security Council Staff, January 19, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 393

¹¹⁸ It was unclear on what caused the economy to finally collapse after tottering on the brink for the past several years. Hughes implicitly blamed the Army for increasing the wages of all armed forces personnel by 500% in order to maintain their morale, starting a cycle. He also noted that the purge on the PKI also affected those of Chinese descent, many of whom were robbed of their possessions, imprisoned, or expelled to China. As they were mainly trader by profession, their purge affected the economy significantly. Hughes (1967) 199-201, 203

devalued on December 13, 1965 so that Rp. 1,000 old Rupiah became one new Rupiah in addition to 10% exchange tax.¹¹⁹

The economic collapse brought new actors to the political scene. Students under the banner of KAMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia/Indonesian Student Action Front) went to the street, protesting the price increases and in turn, Sukarno's mismanagement of the economy. The protest was backed by the Army.¹²⁰ KAMI was not the first student organization that went against Sukarno. On the evening of October 1, activists from the HMI (Muslim University Students' Association), the PII (Muslim High School Students), the Gasbiindo (Indonesian Muslim Trade Union Association) and the Muhammadiyah contacted the Army leadership and received permission to create KAP-Gestapu (Action Front for the Crushing of Gestapu [Gestapu was the abbreviation for the September 30 Coup movement]). On October 4, several formerly Masjumi-affiliated politicians and the Catholic Party backed KAP-Gestapu.¹²¹ Among the advisers and promoters of KAP-Gestapu was Adam Malik, who was also responsible for finding funds to finance its activities.

Adam Malik, who was in Sukarno's cabinet as minister without portfolio, had long been identified as a Nationalist-Marxist who opposed and criticized the PKI.¹²² Even though he used to be Indonesia's ambassador in Moscow, he apparently was not impressed with the Soviet Union and told Ambassador Jones after he finished his

¹¹⁹ Crouch (1978) 165, Sundhaussen (1982) 229

¹²⁰ Crouch (1978) 165-6

¹²¹ Donald Hindley, "Alirans and the Fall of the Old Order," *Indonesia*, Vol. 9. (April 1970) 40-1. This would also mark the rise of Harry Tjan, an ethnic Chinese head of the Catholic Party. He was the Secretary General of KAP-Gestapu. He would later be prominent during the New Order era as the head of CSIS (Center of Strategic Independent Studies), an Army-backed think tank.

¹²² Howard Palfrey Jones, *Indonesia: the Possible Dream* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971) 353

assignment, "If I had ever been inclined toward communism, my service in the Soviet Union would have convinced me that this was not the path that Indonesia should follow."¹²³ He impressed the Americans enough that on December 2, Ambassador Green concurred with the State Department's decision to provide Adam Malik with Rp. 50 million for the activities of the KAP-Gestapu in order to further enhance his position in the movement.¹²⁴

The students' demonstration drove Sukarno to fury, especially when on January 15, thousands of students gathered outside the Bogor Palace, where Sukarno was holding a cabinet meeting at that moment. After some students attempted to climb into the palace ground, leading to warning shots from the Cakrabirawa troops, Sukarno completely criticized the students' actions and called for his supporters to create a countermovement.¹²⁵ The following evening, Subandrio went on air to appeal for the formation of a *Barisan Sukarno* (Sukarno's rank) to defend Sukarno, leading to various organizations and individuals throwing their support behind him, including Ali Sastroamidjojo, who declared on January 17, 1966, that the PNI "stands fully and without reserve behind Bung Karno."¹²⁶ On the fortieth anniversary celebration of the NU on January 30, 1966, Sukarno declared his love of the NU. Idham Chalid, the NU Chairman, replied "NU will live and die together with Bung Karno for God."¹²⁷

Against such offensive, Suharto demurred. He instead immediately issued a statement on January 16, declaring that the Army stands behind the President. Nasution,

¹²³ Green (1990) 24

¹²⁴ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, December 2, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 379-80

¹²⁵ Crouch (1978) 167

¹²⁶ Angus McIntyre, "Divisions and Power in the Indonesian National Party 1965-1966," *Indonesia*, Vol. 13 (April 1972) 201

¹²⁷ Crouch (1978) 171

however, was dissatisfied with Suharto's willingness to declare unreserved support for the president. Nasution managed to add into the statement that the Army would be loyal to the President "in facing all challenges to the Revolution in accordance with the *Saptamarga* and the Soldiers' Oath." To cap Sukarno's victory, the Army-backed student demonstrations stopped.¹²⁸ The Army decided that backing student movements might be too risky. On February 2, Green reported to Washington that:

Bogor Palace episode seems to have shocked the Army, as much as Sukarno, re serious consequences which army would face were these disorders to get out of hand as they almost did. Thereafter army and President were genuinely united in a resolve to prevent further disorders and to crackdown on students, Muslims, and others who might go extremes.¹²⁹

By early February 1966, it seemed that Sukarno had regained his initiative. The Army was put on the defensive, student demonstrations were halted, and the memory of the failed coup was fading. The Army was so demoralized with Sukarno's gains that it specifically asked the American Embassy not to do anything that could be identified as U.S. aid.¹³⁰

Still, Sukarno realized that even though the January 15 fiasco ended with his victory, the war was not yet won. Nasution was still a thorn in his side and he needed to break the Army's will to resist. Moreover, *Barisan Sukarno* did not work as well as he hoped. General Adjie, believing that *Barisan Sukarno* would be used to prop up the Communists, banned the group in West Java. Suharto followed suit by ordering all organizations that were set up in response to Sukarno's calls to report to the Political

¹²⁸ Ibid. 168, 171

¹²⁹ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, February 2, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 396

¹³⁰ Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand, February 15, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 407

Section of KOTI.¹³¹ These actions essentially broke *Barisan Sukarno*. In spite of that setback, Sukarno was still confident that Suharto would be pliable, and he also believed that things were finally going his way. As Suharto was hesitant to directly challenge Sukarno, fearing a civil war, Sukarno kept trying to reassert his full powers.¹³² On February 21, Sukarno finally felt confident enough that he decided to break Nasution's power once and for all. He reshuffled the cabinet, added several leftists to the cabinet, and sacked General Nasution.¹³³

However, Sukarno overplayed his hand. Even though he had informed Suharto about Nasution dismissal and the latter seemed to have acquiesced, others in the Army were outraged.¹³⁴ Reacting to Sukarno's move, the Army hinted to the students that a new wave of demonstrations would be welcome and students went to the streets in greater force than before.¹³⁵ Adam Malik noted that the impact of students' protests could not be underestimated, as it also had the effect of demoralizing Sukarno's supporters, citing an example in which a police officer who pointed a gun at a student found out that he was

¹³¹ Sundhaussen (1982) 231

¹³² Briefing Notes for President Johnson, February 15, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 403

¹³³ Crouch (1978) 174. Interestingly, Sukarno added into his cabinet Lieutenant Colonel Imam Sjaf'e'i, who was discussed in Chapter 4, and who may have had some influence in organizing the demonstration during the October 17, 1952 Affairs. Apparently Sukarno believed that he would need some underworld criminal connections to control the anti-government demonstrations.

¹³⁴ The CIA reported that Nasution himself did not react much on hearing the news of his dismissal. He later confided "All I could think about that time was my daughter and the sadness of my wife." Hunter (2007) 61. In contrast, Penders and Sundhaussen's biography of Nasution stated that at this point, Nasution was convinced that Sukarno needed to be deposed and he allied himself with the radicals. Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 196. This assertion was supported by Adam Malik. In his conversation with Ambassador Green, Adam Malik stated that Nasution operated more effectively behind the screen after his dismissal. Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 10, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 415

¹³⁵ Crouch (1978) 181

aiming at the son of his superior officer. The officer became so shocked that he quickly disappeared from the scene.¹³⁶

Moreover, the students themselves realized that they alone could not topple Sukarno. They needed active Army participation and they decided that they had to force the Army to act by continuing to go to the streets.¹³⁷ The students decided to become more radical. On February 23, students broke into the State Secretariat building, wrecking it. The following day, during the installation of the ministers, when a group of students attacked the palace, the Cakrabirawa soldiers opened fire, killing two students.¹³⁸ On March 8, students ransacked Subandrio's Foreign Office, leading to Sukarno's outrage the next day.¹³⁹

On March 9, Adam Malik was conversing with Ambassador Green, and the former was apparently in high spirits. Adam Malik stated bluntly that the Army was planning to move at any time using its 22 battalions around Jakarta. However, the Army would not attack first. Instead, it would wait while allowing the students to continue their demonstrations, until Sukarno was provoked into taking actions that would justify the Army's countermoves. He also stated that Sukarno was planning to dismiss Suharto and he was hoping Sukarno would do it because it would galvanize the Army further.¹⁴⁰

Apparently Sukarno had started to consider dismissing Suharto, especially as the former got wind of Suharto's acquiescence on the plan to kidnap Subandrio, though

¹³⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 10, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 415

¹³⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 4, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 412

¹³⁸ Crouch (1978) 181-2

¹³⁹ Green (1990) 82

¹⁴⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 10, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 414-5

Suharto would deny any knowledge of the plot after the event took place.¹⁴¹ On March 10, Sukarno received a report that the Army was about to attack the palace in Jakarta, forcing Sukarno to leave for Bogor, which was under the control of Cakrabirawa. On March 11, he went back to Jakarta by helicopter to preside over a cabinet meeting.¹⁴²

During the meetings, RPKAD troops under now-General Sarwo Edhie surrounded the palace, having first removed their insignia. Their plan was to abduct Subandrio.¹⁴³ The Presidential aide, however, noticed the troops and informed General Amir Machmud, Jakarta Commander, who said "It's nothing."¹⁴⁴ Conveniently, Suharto was not at the meeting, owing to a mild throat ailment. Sukarno panicked and, bringing both Chaerul Saleh and Subandrio, left for Bogor by helicopter.

By nightfall, the panicked Sukarno had been visited by General Amir Machmud, General Mohamad Jusuf, and General Basuki Rachmat, who had consulted with Suharto beforehand. After some discussion, Sukarno agreed to hand over power to Suharto under what would later be called the *Supersemar* (Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret/the 11 March Order). He might have realized that the situation at that time was precarious, and by handing over power to Suharto, he could buy time to fight for another day, since he remained the President.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Crouch (1978) 186

¹⁴² Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 197

¹⁴³ Crouch (1978) 189-90

¹⁴⁴ Crouch noted a source saying that Amir Machmud was not informed of the RPKAD's movement. However, Adam Malik claimed to Ambassador Green that Amir Machmud was completely with Suharto. See Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, March 10, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 414-5

¹⁴⁵ Crouch (1978) 191

7.4. Sukarno's Last Stand

Having received power from Sukarno, Suharto immediately dissolved the PKI (even though by this time, the party itself had already collapsed due to the bloody purge),¹⁴⁶ and revamped the cabinet. He also arrested Subandrio on March 15. Still, even though Sukarno had given up his power, he had not lost all of it. He could still count on the support from the PNI and the Brawijaya Division in East Java. Moreover, free from day-to-day responsibilities, he could take back his role as the Head of State and as evident in the 1950s, that role was not without any power. Of course, Nasution was well aware of Sukarno's capability to wreck havoc from his position as he had experienced firsthand in the 1950s, and he demanded that Suharto push Sukarno out, but again Suharto demurred.¹⁴⁷ Suharto's unwillingness to directly attack Sukarno might be based on two factors: the fact that Sukarno still had many supporters in the armed forces, and that Supersemar itself in principle could be revoked anytime as Sukarno had his legitimacy through his hand-picked Parliament.¹⁴⁸

Meanwhile, the United States remained cautious about the developments in Indonesia. On March 12, the State Department stated its belief that Suharto "would not welcome overt western support at this point."¹⁴⁹ On March 17, in a cable to Ambassador Green, the State Department instructed that if the Indonesians approached him for aid to state that Washington's willingness to help would be based on "a constructive Indonesian government is establishing itself firmly in power desiring to pull country out of its

¹⁴⁶ Apparently Sukarno was furious enough that he sent Leimena to meet Suharto. Suharto replied, "Pak (Mr.) Leimena, don't intervene. I am now the one in power." Elson (2001) 138

¹⁴⁷ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 198-9

¹⁴⁸ Sundhaussen (1982) 238-9

¹⁴⁹ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, Vol. 26, 418n5

present economic shambles." The State Department also emphasized that concealment of the aid would be impossible and it must be public knowledge.¹⁵⁰ In short, Suharto needed to show that he was in control of the situation in Indonesia. Still, Washington decided to throw some carrots. On March 31, President Johnson approved a one-shot emergency shipment of rice to Indonesia.¹⁵¹ On June 17, it was further reported that Washington agreed to provide more communication equipment that would allow fully reliable communication between Jakarta and all 17 Military Areas in Indonesia.¹⁵²

In the meantime, there was still the ruinous Confrontation with Malaysia that needed to be brought to a conclusion. Adam Malik, who had replaced Subandrio as the Indonesian Foreign Minister, immediately recognized Singapore in April. To make this action palatable to Sukarno, the *Indonesian Herald* described it as "a plan to isolate Malaysia internationally." Not surprisingly, Tunku Abdul Rahman was outraged. However, Suharto sweetened the declaration on April 12 when he stated that Indonesia would accept Malaysia if the people of North Borneo wanted it. By May, the relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia had thawed enough that at the end of May, Adam Malik met Tun Razak, his counterpart from Malaysia, in Bangkok. They managed to formulate what would be known as the "Bangkok Accord," giving the people of Sabah and Serawak opportunity to reaffirm their status as a part of Malaysia.¹⁵³

The peace talks were received badly by both Sukarno and Nasution. Sukarno, of course was adamantly obsessed with the destruction of Malaysia, still smarting from what

¹⁵⁰ Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Indonesia, March 17, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 423

¹⁵¹ Memorandum From James C. Thompson, Jr. of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Moyers). *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 425

¹⁵² Memorandum Prepared for 303 Committee, June 17, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 441

¹⁵³ J.A.C. Mackie, *Konfrontasi: The Indonesia-Malaysia Dispute 1963-1966* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1974) 319-20

he saw as insults during the formation of Malaysia. Nasution saw Adam Malik's concessions as a serious loss of face for Indonesia.¹⁵⁴ Sensing a split, Sukarno refused to endorse the settlement.¹⁵⁵ Suharto at this point decided to postpone the ratification of the Bangkok Accord. The formal end of the Confrontation would have to wait until August.

However, Suharto, by this point, must have realized that without ending the ruinous Confrontation, the economy would not recover and the divisiveness of Indonesian government would not be seen favorably by Washington. As a result, he decided to dismantle Sukarno's power.

Suharto's first action was to clean up the PNI. In April 1966, the PNI held a "unity congress" in Bandung under the watchful eyes of the Siliwangi Division. Not surprisingly, the congress ended with a purge of pro-Sukarno elements from the leadership.¹⁵⁶ The next showdown was in the Parliament, where Suharto had been clearing out the PKI supporters and sympathizers. Seeing the purge, around late April Sukarno threatened to dissolve the Parliament and to call for elections. Suharto, however, refused to buckle and decided to have the Parliament reconvene in June.¹⁵⁷

Sukarno had calculated that he had enough supporters in the Parliament. He was to be disappointed. On June 20, the Upper Chamber of Parliament (MPRS) elected General Nasution as its chairman, which irritated Sukarno so much that his opening speech and also his report called "Nawaksara" challenged the right of the unelected Parliament to debate his term of office. Sundhaussen attributed the Parliament's "revolt" to its disenchantment with Sukarno's economic and policy of Confrontation. In addition,

¹⁵⁴ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 199

¹⁵⁵ Crouch (1978) 205

¹⁵⁶ Sundhaussen (1982) 238

¹⁵⁷ Elson (2001) 142

Sukarno's "Nawaksara" speech angered many in the Parliament, and they would later retaliate by elevating *Supersemar* into Parliamentary decision, which gave Suharto a constitutional legitimacy. The Parliament would also ratify the dissolution of the PKI, ban Marxism, and revoke Sukarno's life term Presidency. More importantly, Parliament rejected Sukarno's speech.¹⁵⁸

However, Sundhaussen's explanation of the parliamentary revolt disregards the nature of the Parliament itself. It should be noted that the last time Indonesia had had a national election was in 1955, and since then the Parliament was essentially appointed by Sukarno. As noted in the previous chapter, with the advent of the Guided Democracy, political parties found themselves to be out of touch with the masses as they did not rely on the elections for their power and instead relied on Sukarno as their source of authority. Learning of Sukarno's gambit to hold an early election must have horrified many of the members of Parliament, considering that the President who appointed them was no longer popular and was instead besieged by students and the Army. Moreover, they must have realized by then that Suharto had started to gain ground, and the purge of the PNI in Bandung must have convinced them that the wind had blown to the other side. Therefore, to risk Suharto's displeasure would mean ruining their future political career. In short, Sukarno was becoming a liability and they needed to abandon the sinking ship.

Suharto's almost simultaneous step was to dismantle Sukarno's support in the military. He achieved this by purging the officer corps of pro-Sukarno officers. Both General Adjie and General Surjosumpeno (the commander of Central Java Division) were ordered to take a "special upgrading course" at the Army Staff and Command

¹⁵⁸ Sundhaussen (1982) 239-40

College in Bandung and they were replaced "temporarily" by strongly anti-Sukarno generals. Adjie was later exiled into an ambassadorship post in London and Surjosumpeno joined the President's staff.¹⁵⁹

On August 17, 1966, Sukarno struck his last blow with his speech commemorating Independence Day. Famously known as "Jasmerah" (Jangan Meninggalkan Sejarah/Never Leave History – Jasmerah itself means "Red Jacket"), in this speech he tried to implicate the military for the economic mess, and pushed for an election.¹⁶⁰ Sukarno's assertion that the military was partly responsible for the entire economic mess was not at all incorrect. The military did receive a significant part of Indonesia's budget and it was also partly responsible for the massive Indonesia foreign debt, thanks to its arms-buying spree in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.¹⁶¹

In pushing for a showdown in an election, Sukarno might have gambled that his shrinking popularity would still enable whomever he backed to garner enough vote to challenge the military. Moreover, by holding an election, he directly challenged the legitimacy of the military rule. Once the election was held and the new Parliament was elected, Suharto had to give back his power to the new Parliament. Of course, Sukarno, having toyed with the Parliamentary system in the 1950s, would be right at home where he could manipulate the political developments behind the screen.

¹⁵⁹ Crouch (1978) 208

¹⁶⁰ Sundhaussen (1982) 242

¹⁶¹ In 1965, Indonesia had to pay US\$ 530 million in debt payment and service charges, a Herculean task indeed, as Indonesia's foreign-exchange earnings from exports barely reached US\$ 400 million. Hughes (1967) 203. By 1965, Sukarno regime was responsible for about US\$ 3 billion in bad debts. This record, however, was shattered in the 1970s, when Ibnu Sutowo's Pertamina, the state's oil company, received the dubious distinction of achieving a US\$ 10 billion in bad debt in five years (during the oil boom of all times!) mainly due to corruption and other irregularities. Willard A. Hanna, "The Pertamina Perplexity," *American Universities Field Staff Reports* (Hanover: The American Universities Field Staff, 1976) 1

Suharto decided for the final push. He directly challenged Sukarno by bringing many of Sukarno's associates to trial. Yusuf Muda Dalam, a former Minister of Central Bank, was tried in September 1966. He was found guilty of corruption, extortion, subversion, illegal import of arms, and having two more wives than the four permitted under Islamic law (probably a jab to Sukarno's womanizing habit). The trial also revealed that both Yusuf and Sukarno were allocating the scarce foreign currencies to their friends, wives, and relatives. Sukarno himself had given US\$ 2 million directly to an "importer" who incidentally was also a beautiful actress. Yusuf was sentenced to death, though he died before the execution. Both Subandrio and Omar Dhani were also tried and their trials implicated Sukarno in the September 30 Affair. Not surprisingly, these revelations caused a great deal of outrage and put Sukarno's remaining supporters both in parties and in the military in a very tight spot.¹⁶²

On January, Sukarno was forced to resubmit his "Nawaksara" report. This time, Sukarno did concede on several grounds, such as an acknowledgement of the PKI's involvement in the September 30 Affair. However, he also blamed a neo-colonialism plot and stressed that the Army, especially Nasution, should also be held responsible.¹⁶³ Not surprisingly, anti-Sukarno forces were not appeased and they pushed harder for Sukarno's trial and removal.

In the meantime, on January 15, 1967, Brigadier General Suparjo, who had escaped after the failed coup, was finally arrested. His arrest and trial would potentially

¹⁶² Crouch (1978) 211-2, Elson (2001) 153, Sundhaussen (1982) 245-6

¹⁶³ Crouch and Sundhaussen had different interpretations of Sukarno's speech. Crouch found Sukarno "had made a humiliating concession" even though his condemnation of the PKI was still ambivalent and reluctant, while Sundhaussen stated it to be "defiant" and "insulting" in brevity. Crouch (1978) 213, Sundhaussen (1982) 248

shed light on the connection between Sukarno and the September 30 Affair, which would cause irreparable damage to the President.¹⁶⁴ The pressure on Sukarno escalated sharply after this arrest.

Finally, on February 19, Sukarno received a major blow. He was briefed by the commanders of the four armed services that he could no longer rely on their support in case of a showdown with Suharto. Moreover, the PNI, which was supposed to be his vehicle for the election, had been reduced to impotency by the repeated purges by the Army and Sukarno's own actions in the 1960s when he gave green the light to the PKI. The game was up.

The next day, Sukarno finally agreed to surrender his power to Suharto. The MPRS session which began on March 7 formalized the transfer of power, and on March 12, Suharto was appointed as Acting President. While Sukarno retained the position of the President, it was an empty title as he had no authority or power.¹⁶⁵ The takeover was complete. Thus began the "New Order" regime that would last until May 1998.

¹⁶⁴ Dake (2006) 169-71

¹⁶⁵ There were also different interpretations between Crouch and Sundhaussen about what caused Sukarno to suddenly throw in the towel. Crouch noted that both Sukarno and Suharto were anxious to avoid a showdown and thus the agreeable outcome was to declare Sukarno to be "incapacitated" thus allowing Sukarno to resign with dignity. It should be emphasized that in Crouch's interpretation, Sukarno was still holding some cards, notably support from the Brawijaya and Diponegoro Divisions. Crouch (1978) 214-9 Sundhaussen, however, argued that by this time Sukarno realized that the game was up and he had been abandoned by his allies. Sundhaussen (1982) 249-50. Elson also backed Sundhaussen's interpretation. Elson (2001) 156-7. This argument is supported by a recently declassified CIA telegram on February 10, 1967:

[Less than 1 paragraph was not declassified] Sukarno has decided to go into permanent retirement provided he is not brought to trial. Sukarno reached this decision after becoming convinced that he no longer has broad support from Central and East Java and after realizing that the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) has been reduced to impotency.... The Army leadership may decide to isolate Sukarno permanently in one of his palaces to which only his wives shall be permitted entrance. Intelligence Information Cable, February 10, 1967, *Central Intelligence Agency*.

7.5. The United States' Role in Overthrowing Sukarno

Since the collapse of Suharto's regime in 1998 and the declassification of the State Department's documents from the years of 1964-1968, there has been a renewed interest in the United States' role in overthrowing Sukarno. Some of the literature points to Green's agreement to supply materials as a smoking gun for the United States' active involvement in deposing Sukarno and massacring the Communists. On May 21, 1990, the *Washington Post* published an article linking the United States to the massacres of the PKI sympathizers in Java and Bali as mentioned above.¹⁶⁶ John Roosa in 2006 also published a book reexamining the September 30 Coup and stated that the United States had staged covert operations since March 1965 with the purpose of painting the PKI as "an increasingly ambitious, dangerous opponent of Sukarno and legitimate nationalism."¹⁶⁷

The reality, however, as stated throughout this chapter, was that the United States did almost nothing during this period. Even as the United States tried to present its views in Indonesia, the efforts failed miserably, as Ambassador Green lamented on August 8, 1965:

U.S. efforts to refute hostile propaganda are largely ignored. While many Indonesians say privately that they see merit in our side of story, they are submerged in mass of anti-U.S. rhetoric and distorted news from *Antara* or from Peiping, Pyongyang, Hanoi, and Moscow. No one has the guts to print objective view and this is understandable in Indonesia's political environment.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Green surprisingly only devoted a few pages in his memoir to address this issue. See Green (1990) 67-9, 153-5.

¹⁶⁷ Roosa (2006) 191

¹⁶⁸ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, August 8, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 278

As the Americans were mostly isolated, cut off from primary information sources, especially during the first several days after the coup, Washington was left in the dark. Even by late October, its mobility was limited. For instance, in reporting about the bloodshed in Central and East Java, the Embassy could not determine until much later whether it was perpetrated by the PKI or by the Army.¹⁶⁹

Moreover, as stated above, Washington could not determine the intent of the Army. Suharto was practically an unknown¹⁷⁰ and Nasution was known as an anti-Communist but also for his wariness of the United States. As a result, Washington simply did nothing as it pondered whether its intervention in Indonesia would only backfire. Even when the Army asked for assistance, Washington only allowed for limited aid and it even started to question whether this was a sound policy. It was not until much later, in late 1966, that the United States decided to openly assist Suharto in order to prevent the reemergence of Sukarno.¹⁷¹

Therefore, compared to the PRRI/Permesta situation, the American involvement in Indonesia in 1965-67 was marked by its absence. Howland, writing for a CIA internal publication, summed it up: "Washington could only watch and wait, and hope that when

¹⁶⁹ Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 338

¹⁷⁰ In fact, during early October, Washington actually believed that the countercoup was led by Nasution. In an intelligence memorandum dated on October 6, 1965, Suharto was described as "long regarded as apolitical and possibly an opportunist, emerges in the present situation as a strong military leader and apparently a firm anti-Communist." Intelligence Memorandum, October 6, 1965, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 312

¹⁷¹ In a telegram dated on December 7, 1966, the Secretary of State in conversation with Japanese Prime Minister Sato expressed his concern that the opposition forces were hoping that Suharto's government would fail to fix the economy to "facilitate return of Sukarno to power." Prime Minister Sato replied that the Japanese Government had implemented a U.S. \$ 30 million dollar emergency credit to Indonesia to help support the Suharto government. Telegram From Embassy in Japan to the Department of State, December 7, 1966, LBJ NSF Country File "Japan," Vol. 5, Box. 251, 1

the situation jelled, a new and more constructive relationship could be established with whatever regime survived."¹⁷²

Others view the American influence on Indonesia's politics through U.S. actions in Vietnam. As early as 1967, Eisenhower in an interview with the *New York Times* asked the reporter what caused the overthrow of President Sukarno before he answered it himself, "Well, I could tell you one thing: The presence of 450,000 American troops in South Vietnam... had a hell of a lot to do with it."¹⁷³ In 2006, Mark Moyer published a book on the United States' involvement in Vietnam. In that book, he devoted two pages to stating the impact of the United States' policy in Vietnam on Indonesia. He essentially argued that the United States' willingness to stand in Vietnam helped stiffening the spines of the Army to throw the Communists out. Nasution was reported to have remarked that the Army would not have resisted had the United States abandoned Vietnam. In addition, Moyer also noted: "An Indonesian general later told Brig. Gen. Theodore Mataxis that the Indonesian military would not have tried to throw out the Communist had the United States not intervened in Vietnam."¹⁷⁴

The problem with these assertions is the lack of evidence or rather, the smoking gun, and this was admitted even by the Johnson Administration, which escalated the United States' involvement in Vietnam. On May 13, 1966, President Johnson asked Richard Helms, the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, for a study to analyze the relationship between the Indonesian crisis and Vietnam. The CIA could not find any direct evidence confirming that there was a relationship, and concluded that the coup

¹⁷² Howland (1970) 28

¹⁷³ Brackman (1969) 192

¹⁷⁴ Mark Moyer, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 381-2, 493-4

"appears to have evolved purely from a complex and long-standing domestic political situation" though it added the qualifier that in strategic sense, the United States' stand on Vietnam could have influenced Indonesia as it prevented the Chinese to increase its influence in the region.¹⁷⁵ Howland put it bluntly:

The tendency to blame everything bad that happens in the world on Peking or Moscow is matched by the tendency to credit ourselves for all the good things. Both tendencies have clearly been at work in some interpretations of the September 30 affair and its outcome. Some people believe that the Indonesian Army would have been inclined to compromise with Sukarno and the PKI if its leaders were not aware that US forces had tied down the Chinese in South Vietnam by bombing the north and sending in the Marines. In fact, the Army did compromise with Sukarno for almost two years, though not with the PKI.

What options would have been available to the Chinese if the US presence was absent from South Vietnam? They could not have launched an invasion of Java since they lacked transportation and logistical support. They could have mounted an air strike on Djakarta, refueling at Hanoi, but the outcome would have been disastrous. The main victims would have been the predominantly urban ethnic Chinese in Indonesia. As it was, Peking's constant vituperation of the "rightwing forces," and its incitement of the Indonesian Chinese to rebel against them only aggravated the latter's troubles and reinforced Army propaganda that the PKI had been a Chinese tool. Whether the US stood firm in Vietnam or not, there was nothing that Peking could do-except take it on the chin in Indonesia as we had during the Sukarno years.

It has been argued, however, that while in objective terms the Chinese were clearly powerless to affect the situation by physical means, in psychological terms China was viewed as a potential threat after the purge attempt because of its great size and historical meddling in the area. Thus, the US barrier in Vietnam was said to be a meaningful integer in Indonesian calculations.

I would question whether many Indonesians were troubled by China's size. They believe Indonesia is the most important country in the world, and boast that the last time China invaded Java-in the thirteenth century-it was repulsed. In addition, I suspect that the whole effort to impute to Indonesian decision-makers any profound or strategic thoughts during those days of crisis is a great mistake.

Perhaps it would be useful in this connection to discuss in detail the turning-point in the events of October 1 itself-the juncture at which the keynote was sounded

¹⁷⁵ Editorial Note, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 430

for the campaign against Sukarno and the eradication of the PKI-to determine whether thoughts of Vietnam or China were on anybody's mind.¹⁷⁶

Of course, the Indonesians bristled when they were asked about this question. The Army believed that it was thanks to their own determination that the Communists were stopped in their tracks. A telling example was General Simatupang, when asked by General Maxwell Taylor, the former chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, whether the American presence in Vietnam gave Indonesian the courage to resist the PKI, retorted that perhaps Indonesia's action had given the Americans the courage to resist the Communists in Vietnam.¹⁷⁷

However, there were also indications that Vietnam and, China by implication, were on everybody's mind in this period, even among Indonesians. Regardless of the rhetoric, the perceived threat from the Communist bloc was not something to be brushed aside easily. On September 25, 1966, in a conversation with Vice President Herbert Humphrey, Adam Malik was reported to state that "General Suharto's success in defeating the Indonesian Communist forces was directly influenced by the U.S. determination in South Vietnam.... He made it clear that a U.S. withdrawal and a Communist victory in Vietnam would be a direct threat to his country."¹⁷⁸ To further illustrate the hostility of the Army toward the Communists, years later, on March 26, 1969, during a meeting with Henry Kissinger, Suharto bluntly stated that "a resumption of bombing of North Vietnam might increase Hanoi's interest in a negotiated

¹⁷⁶ Howland (1970) 18-19. Compare this assertion to a general's assertion to Ambassador Jones that the United States was allowing Malaysia to be a bridgehead for Chinese dominance in Southeast Asia as noted in the previous chapter. It needs to be stressed that the Indonesians were concerned about the possibility of Chinese dominance in Southeast Asia. However, as long as Malaysia remained non-Communist, the threat of the Chinese dominance would not be very high, as reflected in Howland's report.

¹⁷⁷ Brackman (1969) 192

¹⁷⁸ Memorandum From Vice President Humphrey to President Johnson, September 25, 1966, *FRUS*, 1964-1968, 470

settlement."¹⁷⁹ On July 27, 1969, General Sumitro, General Tjakradipura, and General Sutopo Juwono, in a meeting with Kissinger at Suharto's request, stated that the United States should stay in Vietnam:

long enough to provide Indonesia – and other Southeast Asian nations – with time to strengthen themselves against Communism. The generals were concerned by press reports that the U.S. intend to withdraw by the end of 1970, and showed great relief when Mr. Kissinger said that the U.S. has no intention of withdrawing without regard for the circumstances.¹⁸⁰

Adam Malik reiterated this view again during a conversation with Kissinger two days later, though he also stated that he could not make that position a matter of public record.¹⁸¹

The PKI also seemed to have Vietnam on its mind. Vietnam was seen as a blow to the United States, and it inspired the Communists in Indonesia. In his trial, Sjam believed that "the United States supported the Council of Generals to neutralize the "repeated defeats" the Communists were inflicting on the Americans in Vietnam in 1965."¹⁸²

Even Sukarno was not immune from the Vietnam effect. He apparently believed that the United States and the Communist China would go to war with each other within several years, either through American escalation in Vietnam or through an American direct attack on China. It became the cornerstone of his strategy and explained why he allowed the PKI to expand in Indonesia. With the United States worried about a Communist Indonesia:

¹⁷⁹ Kissinger noted that Ambassador Green commented that he had never heard Suharto come out so openly for bombing North Vietnam. Next to the paragraph, Nixon scribbled "*K! Note! He may be right (on psychology)*" Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, March 26, 1969, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Vol. 20, 566

¹⁸⁰ Memorandum for the Record, July 27, 1969, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Vol. 20, 574

¹⁸¹ Telegram From the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, July 29, 1969, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Vol. 20, 582

¹⁸² Brackman (1969) 196-7

[The United States] would go to any lengths to bring Indonesia back to neutral camp. Sukarno said he believes that the United States may even turn its back on Malaysia and withdraw support to that country in return for an Indonesian commitment to pull away from Communist China.¹⁸³

It killed two birds with one stone: Sukarno could get rid of the troublesome Communists, while at the same time be rewarded with the destruction of Malaysia, which had offended him.

At the end of the day, however, how much influence Vietnam brought to Indonesian politics remains a huge question mark. It is unlikely that the demonstrating students on the street that had so much impact on Sukarno's ability to retain his power were inspired by the American stance on Vietnam, rather than what they saw as a collapsed economy. It was also very unlikely that the killings of the Communists in Java and Bali were inspired by American determination in Vietnam. In fact, the power play that happened in the two years between October 1, 1965 and Sukarno's abdication in March 1967 took place independently from the Vietnam issue.

What mattered were the domestic power calculations, like a game of chess where two grandmasters are looking at the board, trying to predict what other might or might not do. Vietnam was outside the board. Ambassador Green probably got the answer right when he diplomatically stated:

The United States military presence in Southeast Asia emboldened the [Indonesian] Army, but it had no decisive effect on the outcome. It is perhaps better to look at the issue in negative terms. If we hadn't stood firm in Southeast Asia, if we hadn't maintained a military presence, then the outcome might have been different.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Intelligence Information Cable, January 13, 1965, *Central Intelligence Agency*

¹⁸⁴ Green (1990) 152

7.6. Twilight

After the fall of Sukarno, the Masjumi expected to be vindicated and rehabilitated. It argued forcefully that its action in opposing both the Communists and Sukarno was justified, and it deserved recognition as the earliest champion of anti-Communism and anti-Guided Democracy. However the Masjumi would soon be disappointed. In fact, there were still fears among the Army about political Islam. The specters of the Darul Islam and an Islamic state worked against the Masjumi. The Army decided to take no chances. The ban on the Masjumi was never lifted. Even though many members of the Masjumi decided to create a new Partai Muslimin (Muslim's Party), Suharto insisted that its leadership must not include leaders of the Masjumi.¹⁸⁵

The Nahdlatul Ulama had been loyal to Sukarno throughout the entirety of Guided Democracy. However, the September 30 Affair and the resulting purge of the Communists caused a split within the NU. Even though the NU's youth group was involved in the killings of the Communists, the NU's leadership remained wary of detaching itself from Sukarno, issuing a very interesting instruction to all members of the NU on October 14 (in the middle of the massacres of the Communists) "to preserve good relations with the PKI, with Sukarno, and not to offend the Air Force, and the Armed Forces in General."

By 1966, however, the NU leadership was split with the pro-Army faction under Subchan gaining influence while the rest of the leadership remained paralyzed with

¹⁸⁵ An excellent discussion on the relationships among Masjumi, Partai Muslimin, and Suharto's government can be found in K.E. Ward, *The Foundation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970)

confusion as events moved too quickly with student demonstrations and Suharto-Sukarno struggle for power in Jakarta. After the fall of Sukarno, a schism grew between the Army and the NU, especially on the question of the "Jakarta Charter," whereas the NU wanted the Indonesian constitution to add a qualifier of "with the duty of all Muslims to follow Islamic Law."¹⁸⁶ The NU was strong enough that in the election of 1971, it received slightly better result than in 1955.¹⁸⁷

In 1972, in order to weaken both Partai Muslimin and the NU, Suharto decided to fuse both parties into the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan/United Development Party). Not surprisingly, racked by internal dissents between two old foes of the 1950s, the PPP was unable to achieve the same awe (or threat) generated by the Masjumi in the early years of Constitutional Democracy period.

The PNI had been weakened greatly by Sukarno in the 1960s. Even though it tried to regain some initiative after the collapse of the PKI in 1965, the fact that it was never able to create its own appeal aside from its identification with Sukarno made the party's fortune closely intertwine with Sukarno's. Of course, the purges of its leadership by Sukarno and later Suharto exacerbated its problems. Therefore, it was not surprising that by the time Suharto held an election in 1971, it was merely a shadow of its former glory.

¹⁸⁶ An interesting discussion on the role of the NU in the formation of the New Order and the split of the NU from the Army can be found in Andree Feillard, "Traditionalist Islam and the Army in Indonesia's New Order: the Awkward Relationship" In Greg Barton and Greg Fealy, *Nahdlatul Ulama, Traditional Islam and Modernity in Indonesia* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1996)

¹⁸⁷ Dwight Y. King, *Half-Hearted Reform: Electoral Institutions and the Struggle for Democracy in Indonesia* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003) 35

Nasution remained in his position as the Chairman of the MPRS until the election of 1971. However, Suharto started to chip away at Nasution's power. First, he got rid of many generals that had been in Nasution's camp, and streamlined the Armed Forces' command structure. The final blow came in 1971, when a law specifically targeting Nasution was passed, that required military officers to retire from active service at the age of fifty-three. Moreover, Suharto also abolished the position of the Chairman of the MPRS, fusing it with the office of the Chairman of the Lower Chamber of the Parliament (DPR). Ali Murtopo, Suharto's closest advisor who had a reputation of being Machiavellian, quipped to the press, "We just did not fill the job. Isn't it funny?"¹⁸⁸

As Suharto consolidated his power, Sukarno languished under permanent house arrest in Jakarta. As agreed, he was never brought to trial. In his imprisonment, Sukarno was practically alone, powerless, and abandoned by his friends. Even his wives, Dewi, Hariati, and Fatmawati had divorced him.¹⁸⁹ In June 1970, he fell ill and was admitted to a military hospital.

In an interesting twist, on June 19, Hatta visited him. After brief greetings, Hatta sat quietly holding Sukarno's hand. Meutia, Hatta's daughter, recalled:

Although there was no further conversation it seemed as if they were speaking to each other with their hearts, as if the two of them were remembering their ups and downs in the struggle together in the past years, in the period when they worked with one another, possibly asking each other for forgiveness.¹⁹⁰

Sukarno died two days later. He had requested a burial in the garden of his Batu Tulis home. However, the request was flatly rejected. The location was too close to

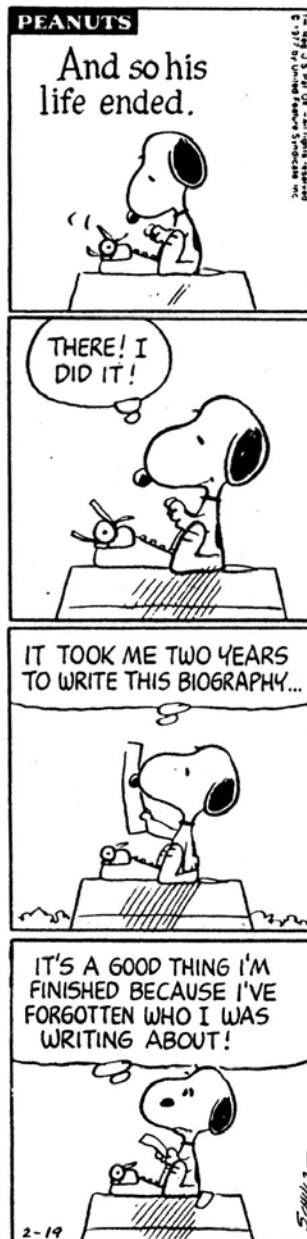
¹⁸⁸ Penders and Sundhaussen (1985) 219-21

¹⁸⁹ Legge (2003) 456

¹⁹⁰ Rose (1987) 218

Jakarta. He was eventually interred at Blitar, East Java, next to his mother.

Conspicuously absent from the state burial was Suharto. Even in death Sukarno remained a threat for the New Order.



CHAPTER 8

WHAT IF...?

In the stories that one hears there may be much that is false.

Nagarakrtagama, 39, III, 2¹

I do not share the conviction of many that Sukarno was always a Communist and forever plotting to make his nation so. He was one of the most pragmatic of men in the choice of ways and means; but he was also often a victim of his emotional biases.

Howard Palfrey Jones²

Sukarno is an individualist. A vain man with a burning ego who admits he loves himself could never be a satellite. Sukarno has never submitted to domination by any power. He could not be a puppet.

Sukarno³

¹ Benedict R. Anderson and Ruth T. McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971) 18

² Howard Palfrey Jones, *Indonesia: the Possible Dream* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971) 340

³ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 293

8.1. Introduction: Counterfactual Analysis

Among all the tools available for historians and political scientists to analyze historical events, the counterfactual is probably one of the most difficult. As Tetlock and Parker stated in their excellent discussion of the perils of using counterfactuals, there are many pitfalls. There are concerns regarding arbitrary selection of cases, pointless speculation, and mostly self-serving intent for those who use it.

Regardless of its difficulties, however, the counterfactual is a very useful tool to understand and illuminate the connection and the interaction between leadership and the structure around it, as it forces a thorough analysis of possible outcomes other than the ones that actually unfolded in history. In that context, I will closely follow Tetlock and Parker's guidelines for counterfactuals: to be explicit in the selection of cases; to follow the "minimal-rewrite" rule, stressing a very little tweaking of actual historical records; to be consistent with the well-established historical facts and regularities; and finally, to be explicit on how the insights from counterfactuals affect the exploration of the question of leadership.⁴

In order to follow the Tetlock and Parker guidelines, I focus on choices a leader makes rather than major events. The latter would include such events as the premature death of a decision-maker or a major change in structure in which the decision-makers operate, such as if the United States suddenly decided to change its policy and throw zillions of dollars at Indonesia. While these changes can make for a very interesting discussion, unfortunately they complicate the counterfactual far too much and sometimes

⁴ Philip E. Tetlock and Geoffrey Parker, "Counterfactual Thought Experiments: Why We Can't Live Without Them & How We Must Learn To Live With Them" In Philip E. Tetlock, Richard Ned Lebow, and Geoffrey Parker, *Unmaking the West: "What If?" Scenarios That Rewrite World History* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006) 33-6

bring it to the realm of implausibility, giving us nothing to understand the insights behind the decision-makers. Even the death of a leader would cause unnecessary complications. There would be questions of succession struggles, divided loyalties among the followers of the deceased leader, and various other aspects that would further muddy the analysis. Changing the structure would create either a very unrealistic situation or a complete change in the calculation of the decision-maker and create too many options, making analysis redundant. It is much better to simply focus on possible choices that a leader might have made and tweak those choices in order to create a stronger counterfactual study.

In selecting cases to include in this counterfactual chapter, I developed five general criteria to follow Tetlock and Parker's "minimal-rewrite" rule. The first is that the main decision maker was Sukarno, both for the sake of consistency and to provide reliability for the cases. The second criterion is the possibility for Sukarno to have made a different choice, such that he was not so completely constrained or pressured that he could not choose any other choice than he did historically. In other words, Sukarno must still have been independent within his own powerbase, even though he might find himself in a very tight situation.

The third criterion is directly linked to the second; while Sukarno, as the main decision maker, remained independent, he was put in a situation where he only had one other significant choice instead of the choice he made in history. The reason for this is to create a sharp analysis, not to become bogged down in various other options, and also to limit the possible cases. The fourth criterion is that the events were important watershed moments in Indonesia's history, that a different outcome might have caused a very

different Indonesia than we currently know. Finally, all cases must have had impacts on Indonesia's foreign policy decision-making process.

Following these criteria, I chose four cases based on the level of difficulty for agents to make choices. The first two cases are the easiest tests for a leader. As the leader has lots of power and the structural constraints are not that strong, the leader is allowed to be independent. In other words, a leader could have significantly altered the course of history simply by choosing a different option. In choosing these two cases, I added one more condition that does not contradict the five criteria mentioned above: Sukarno himself must have found the choices possible and palatable. This condition strengthens the analysis and shows that such an option was possible.

The other two cases are cases where, even though a leader still has political power and may want to make a different choice, the power of the structure would have constrained the choice so much so that the leader simply could not choose a different option. As a result, these cases will show that even though the unfolding events might have been different from the recorded events, the outcome would be similar to historical reality.

The structure of this chapter will be as follows: first I will briefly summarize each case. What were Sukarno's choices as decision-maker? Second, I will establish whether it was feasible for Sukarno to pursue the alternate option: who was his audience domestically and internationally? Did he have enough political base or capital? Did he believe it was possible to pursue the alternate option, successfully considering both domestic and international structure that he faced? We then look at how the

counterfactual unfolds and the impact of the alternate option on the development of Indonesian foreign policy and also its impact domestically.

The first (and the easiest) of the two cases that shows the independence of leaders is Sukarno's choice on February 28, 1946, when he received Sjahrir's resignation and had to decide whether to reappoint him as Prime Minister and, therefore, continue the path of diplomacy or whether he would appoint Tan Malaka, placing Indonesia on a path of open warfare against the Dutch and possibly the United States.

The second case is the possible invasion of Irian Barat. It was possible during the heightened tension over Irian Barat that Sukarno would decide to order a full-scale invasion, especially after the sinking of Indonesia's Motor Torpedo Boat on January 15, 1962. While Nasution was reluctant to invade Irian, in an atmosphere of huge nationalistic euphoria, with the Communists agitating for a war, the Army would have no choice but to commit its resources should Sukarno forgo the negotiating table. Even pressure from the United States, on both Indonesia and the Dutch, against going to all-out war would not have been that much of a barrier, as the Soviet Union was openly supporting Indonesia's position. Emboldened by Soviet support, it was possible for Sukarno to choose to invade Irian.

The other two cases deal with situations where the structural constraints were so great it is highly possible that regardless of what Sukarno chose, the situation would have ended up as it did historically. The first case is the September 30 Affair. As events unfolded and Suharto decided to assault the plotters at Halim, Sukarno decided to follow Aidit's advice and fly to Jogjakarta or Bali to set up resistance. Therefore, the question is whether the New Order was inevitable following the collapse of the September 30 Coup.

While this case seems to have nothing to do with foreign policy decision-making, one cannot help but ask whether the United States would have been more involved in Indonesia had it seen civil war as imminent.

The second case, and the hardest one of all four, is the confrontation against Malaysia that fully erupted after the British-rigged United Nations referendum on Sabah and Sarawak. While it could be argued that it was still possible for Sukarno to backtrack after the referendum in both Sabah and Sarawak, the very fragile balance of power in Indonesian domestic politics made the choice to withdraw from the conflict a very bitter pill to swallow. Too much prestige had been placed on this affair. With the Communists and the Army locked in a struggle for power, Sukarno did not have much room to maneuver.

Finally, this chapter concludes with findings from the cases and their impact on the study of leadership. Previous chapters serve as a point of reference to these counterfactuals and I will only briefly summarize events that preceded these cases before delving straight into the cases.

8.2. A Disunited Indonesia: February 28, 1946 (Chapter 3)

On February 28, 1946, the Temporary Indonesian Parliament (KNIP) sessions opened in Surakarta. Sukarno announced he had accepted the resignation of Sjahrir, who had been under fire for his policy of negotiation (*diplomasi*) with both the British and the Dutch. At this point, Sukarno faced a choice: either he would reappoint Sjahrir as the Prime Minister and continue Sjahrir's policy of negotiation or he would appoint Tan Malaka and commit Indonesia to the path of armed struggle (*perjuangan*).

Sukarno actually decided to support Sjahrir and put Indonesia on the path of negotiation with the Dutch. In turn, Indonesia's willingness to negotiate brought goodwill from many states, including the United States, which in the end helped pressure the Dutch to negotiate with the beleaguered Republic. This counterfactual, however, asks what would have happened had Sukarno decided to throw his lot with Tan Malaka, pushing Indonesia toward armed struggle.

First, it needs to be established that it was possible for Sukarno to pick the path of armed struggle. By February 28, the path to complete armed struggle was still open. Had Sukarno decided to choose the latter, he would not have found much difficulty in garnering support from many segments of Indonesian nationalism. General Sudirman, the head of the Indonesian army and a critic of the policy of negotiation, on February 17, praised the Indonesian fighting spirit in opposing the Dutch even though the Republicans were short of weapons.⁵ Sukarno himself during the KNIP session read about 250 telegrams from local Indonesian leaders and declared that "all... demanded ... a war against the Dutch be declared. Further, all these men and women ask that the conferences [with the foreigners in Jakarta] be stopped." On March 2, 1946, he further declared:

We are in war, the Indonesian Republican Army must be strengthened. Its strength shall be brought up to 1,000,000 men.... A course is already embarked upon to develop an "Indonesian atom bomb" filled with nitrogen.... No Dutchman shall be admitted into our offices and into our public enterprise. Eurasians may be appointed only when this is especially approved by the President.⁶

Such bold declarations were not without any basis. At this point, the Indonesians were aware that the Dutch would be hard pressed to regain Indonesia and the British were reluctant to aid the Dutch. On February 17, 1946, Walter A. Foote, the United States

⁵ Benedict R.O'G Anderson., *Java in a Time of Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972) 310

⁶ Rudolf Mrazek, *Sjahrir: Politics and Exile in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, 1994) 314-5

Consul General at Batavia, reported to Washington of his conversation with Haji Agus Salim, Sjahrir's political adviser. The latter stated:

Indonesians interpret presence Britain's junior diplomats indicating desperate attempt to solve problem without use of force and consequent unfavorable reactions of world opinion while in fact Clark Kerr's arrival stiffened opposition to proposals and intellectuals of Java are flooding Sharir with telegrams urging him not to accept Dutch proposals. He stated frankly opinion growing that British will not fight Indos, that Dutch too weak to enforce their aims alone and that they have only to stand firm in demand for independence.⁷

Regardless of whether Sukarno, Sudirman, and Haji Salim were only boasting about the capability of the ragtag Indonesian army and laskars to fight the well armed and disciplined Dutch troops, it is clear that for the leaders of the Republic, the option of armed struggle was on the table and not something that they simply viewed as impossible.

Of course there are questions as to whether Sukarno was willing to empower Tan Malaka, considering that he had his own ambition to replace Sukarno as the President of the nascent republic. At this point however, many of the people within Tan Malaka's own bloc preferred Sukarno to Tan Malaka as president. In fact, Persatuan Perjuangan (PP – United Struggle), the power bloc that Tan Malaka used to bring down the Sjahrir government only existed thanks to their common dislike of Sjahrir's diplomatic policy. Once they saw that Sukarno was willing to push for armed struggle, they would have solidly lined up behind Sukarno. Therefore, regardless of how much Sukarno felt threatened by Tan Malaka, with the enthusiastic support from the majority of both the population and the political elite, Sukarno would have been able to hold Tan Malaka at bay. Moreover, considering that cabinets dropped like flies in this period, even if Tan

⁷ Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, February 17, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 811

Malaka had become Prime Minister, he might not have survived long in the face of setbacks, unlike Sukarno, whose charisma and sway over the people enabled him to remain in power.

Moreover, Sukarno could have also expected backing from the armed forces if he had chosen this option. The bellicose General Sudirman, with other army leaders, while they would not have shed any tears for the collapse of the Sjahrir government, were not enthusiastic over the prospect of Tan Malaka as the next Prime Minister. Sudirman would not have been able to achieve his position had he been so blind as not to recognize Sukarno's mass appeal. As a result, for Tan Malaka, Sukarno's support was critical. Tan Malaka himself was well aware of this fact. In 1947, he admitted that he could not replace Sjahrir at that time because he could not get the necessary support from Sukarno and Hatta.⁸ Therefore, Sukarno held all the cards and thus the counterfactual: what would have happened had Sukarno picked the "armed struggle" option?

The immediate result of this option would have been a split between Sukarno on the one hand and Hatta-Sjahrir on the other, as the latter were supporters of the diplomatic path. In exchange, Sukarno would have gained support from the majority of Persatuan Perjuangan politicians and most likely the majority of the Indonesian army officers under Sudirman, who had no loyalty to either Sjahrir or Tan Malaka. Popular in Java, Sukarno would not have had much problem persuading the population that it was the time to push for a total war. Having cast his lot with the armed struggle movement, Sukarno would have formed a leftist-nationalist coalition, the Indonesian attacks on both

⁸ George McT. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952) 176

the Dutch and the British positions in Java and Sumatra would have intensified and the diplomatic approaches would have stopped.

To the advantage of the newly radical Republic, the Dutch may have found themselves alone in responding to the renewed attacks from the Indonesians. At this point, the British were simply fed up and anxious to leave Indonesia, especially in light of the belligerence of the Dutch and the Indonesians toward each other. There were also tensions between the Dutch and the British, as the latter were horrified of the brutality of the ill-disciplined and trigger-happy Dutch troops.⁹ Furthermore, the British found that its intervention in Indonesia had created other problems, especially in regards to India, as the British employed several Indian divisions to impose order in Indonesia. On April 12, the British stressed to the Dutch that they would start withdrawing their troops by early May and they would completely withdraw from Indonesia before the end of 1946.¹⁰

More importantly in the minds of the British decision-makers, the intervention had dented the British treasury during a very difficult time after the trying years of the Second World War. On December 17, 1946, Hugh Dalton, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, admitted to the British Parliament that the British intervention in Indonesia cost the Exchequer £15 million without any prospect of it being reimbursed by the Dutch Government.¹¹ Bankrupted by the mounting cost of occupation and burdened with combat casualties from incessant guerillas attacks, the British, having troubles already in their other colonies, such as in India, were more than happy to leave Indonesia as they

⁹ Richard McMillan, *The British Occupation of Indonesia 1945-1946: Britain, the Netherlands and the Indonesian Revolution* (London: Routledge, 2005) 167

¹⁰ Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: the United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945-49* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981) 125

¹¹ McMillan (2005) 168

had become fed up with the increasing belligerence of both the Dutch and the Indonesians. Finally, in a July 1 letter from British Prime Minister Attlee to Australian Prime Minister Joseph B. Chifley, the former told the latter that the British had decided to evacuate British and Indian troops by November 30, 1946, regardless of any developments in Indonesia.¹²

With the British leaving, there would have been no power to mediate between the Indonesians and the Dutch. Of course, the Dutch themselves were only willing to negotiate with Sjahrir, not with what they called "avowed collaborators and certain very shady characters." Van Mook, the Lieutenant Governor General of Indonesia, implicitly acknowledged in his memoir that the Dutch were willing to begin real negotiations only after Sjahrir survived the March crisis.¹³ Still, facing constant Indonesian harassment without any letup as the Indonesians were not willing to rein themselves in, and lacking enough manpower to maintain its authority, the Dutch might have found their position in Java untenable. Without time to prepare their troops or consolidate their control over the captured territories, by late 1946 the Dutch would have found themselves in a much worse position than they had found after their attack on the Republic in December 1948. Then, they were isolated in major cities and regions outside Java while the Republic controlled the interior of Java. This time, the Dutch might have lost Java entirely, except some coastal urban strongholds such as Jakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya.¹⁴

¹² McMahan (1982) 130

¹³ Hubertus J. van Mook, *The Stakes of Democracy in Southeast Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton, Inc, 1950) 211-3

¹⁴ In a memorandum dated December 6, 1945, Lieutenant Colonel Kennedy, observing the situation in Indonesia, was quoted:

He felt that a fully equipped Dutch division could probably penetrate Java and proceed wherever it wished to go, but that immediately after the Army had passed a given point the revolution would close in behind it. He confirmed previous information that the morale and physical condition of

The critical difference, however, would have been the United States' role in Indonesia. With the unfolding of the Cold War, the recovery of the Netherlands from the economic collapse of the Second World War became a priority and Washington started to revitalize the Dutch economy with the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan also made the United States vulnerable to the accusation of assisting the Dutch to regain their colony. A State Department memorandum bluntly stated that should the United States put itself on the side of the colonial powers, "There can be expected from native peoples increasing bitterness and antagonism. The United States, as the close associate and ally of the colonial powers, will share with the latter that enmity."¹⁵ As the United States was wary of being openly associated with any attempt to bring Western rule back to Asia especially when the Soviet Union was drumming the beat of anti-colonialism, it had to tread a very fine line.

With the United States' perceiving the Republic to be leaning to the left and refusing to enter negotiations with the Dutch, there would be fewer incentives for the United States to look at the nascent Republic kindly. Sukarno taking the path of armed struggle would not necessarily mean United States intervention on behalf of the Dutch, but it would have meant that the United States would not use its economic leverage over the Hague to restrain the Dutch and push them to the negotiating table, as it did historically after the Dutch invasion of the Republic on December, 1948. In fact, fearing Indonesia's complete shift into the Communists' camp, the United States would have been

Dutch soldiers now in military training at Saigon and Singapore were exceedingly low. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Chief of the Division of Southeast Asian Affairs (Moffat), December 6, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Vol. 6, 1179

¹⁵ McMahan (1981) 69

more enthusiastic in supporting the Dutch attempt to create a federal state without the Republic's participation.

In the meantime, both Hatta and Sjahrir might have decided to leave Jogjakarta as the Republican government forsook the path of negotiation. With both Hatta and Sjahrir's departure, other moderate members of the intelligentsia such as Natsir, who, incidentally, also belonged to the same Sumatran ethnic group as Hatta and Sjahrir, might have decided to leave. While both Hatta and Sjahrir were willing to negotiate and probably would have agreed to some sort of federation with the Dutch, such a decision would not have been due to their lack of patriotism or willingness to become puppet rulers. Rather, they understood that they needed international support, especially from the United States, to realize the idea of independent Indonesia. Furthermore, they knew that they would need United States' aid to rebuild Indonesia, devastated from years of mismanagement by the Japanese and the destruction caused by the independence war. On the other hand, both Hatta and Sjahrir might have been able to convince the United States, by stressing that they were the only option left, should the United States wish to avoid Indonesia falling into the Communist camp. The United States itself would have been more than willing to bolster Hatta and Sjahrir, fearing that Indonesia and its wealth would be lost for good.¹⁶

As a result, both Hatta and Sjahrir might have entered into a United States-brokered negotiation with the Dutch. The Dutch, battered by incessant attacks in Java and

¹⁶ The United States Consul General Walter A. Foote, who arrived in Indonesia with an opinion that the Indonesians were not ready for independence, wrote in a telegram to the Secretary of State dated on March 8, 1946, stating that while talking with Sjahrir, he was "impressed by Sjahrir's earnestness and insight into difficulties and left him more optimistic re efforts solve problems and provide raw materials needed by our industries." Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Foote) to the Secretary of State, March 10, 1946, *FRUS*, 1946, Vol. 8, 814

pressured by the United States to negotiate with the moderate Republicans in order to avoid losing entirely resource-rich Indonesia, would be more than willing to negotiate with Hatta and Sjahrir.¹⁷ Both Hatta and Sjahrir might have been able to extract some concessions from the Dutch, notably the Dutch recognition of their authority over the Republic of Indonesia, comprised of Java and Sumatra or even more islands. As Java was under the control of the radical Republican government, Hatta and Sjahrir's authority would have been limited solely to Sumatra where they could garner enough support from their fellow Sumatrans.

The Indonesia produced by this scenario would have been an ethnically fragmented Indonesia, comprised of a very radical Republic of Indonesia in Java backed by the Communist bloc, a moderate member of the Federal Republic of Indonesia in Sumatra backed and heavily aided by the United States, and within the Federal Republic the various Dutch-organized federal states such as Republic of East Indonesia. This Indonesia would not have been unlike Vietnam, which was split between North and South. The difference however would have been that the Federal Republic of Indonesia might have had a much longer life than South Vietnam, as it would have been governed by the strong technocratic government of Hatta-Sjahrir.¹⁸ Such an Indonesia would have

¹⁷ Charles Wolf noted that Sjahrir not only managed to earn the admiration of the Dutch government, but also the friendship of Australia, India, the Arab League, Great Britain, and the United States. Charles Wolf, Jr., *The Indonesian Story: the Birth, Growth and Structure of the Indonesian Republic* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977) 93. On February 20, 1948, Livengood reported that Neher, the Netherlands Minister of Reconstruction, indicated that the Dutch would welcome Hatta, Sjahrir, and Leimena (a Christian leader within the Republic) to be part of cabinet in the Dutch-created United States of Indonesia and he even indicated the Dutch willingness to have Sjahrir as its Foreign Minister. This remark was significant as at this point, the Dutch believed that they had the upper hand in Indonesia and would be able to crush the Republic easily. Telegram From the Consul General at Batavia (Livengood) to the Secretary of State, February 20, 1948, *FRUS*, Vol. 6, 103

¹⁸ Of course, it is a question whether Hatta and Sjahrir could create an Indonesian identity from their powerbase in Minang, not to mention that they were open to the accusation of being the puppets of imperialist power. So, here we are talking of one of the most optimistic scenarios that emerged from

come into being had Sukarno decided to choose the armed struggle path on that fateful day of February 28, 1946.

8.3. Invasion of Irian Barat: Early 1962 (Chapter 6)

On January 15, 1962, one of three Indonesian Motor Torpedo Boats on a mission to infiltrate Irian Barat was sunk by the Dutch. On January 16, 1962, Ambassador Howard Jones reported to Washington that Subandrio, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, told him that the Dutch attack "means war" and he "could do no more."¹⁹ Still, pressured by the United States, Sukarno finally agreed to enter into negotiations with the Dutch. However, the Dutch were stalling, unwilling to commit themselves. By March 28, Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff was so fed up with the unwillingness of both Indonesia and the Dutch to negotiate that he bluntly recommended that the Kennedy Administration tell both the Dutch and the Indonesians that the United States "[has] no choice but to withdraw and let them fight."²⁰

Historically, Sukarno then agreed to return to the negotiations, allowing the United States to mediate and pressure the Dutch to compromise and therefore end the Irian Barat problem peacefully. The question is whether at that time Sukarno could have been so fed up with what he saw as the Dutch stalling tactic that he decided to militarily invade Irian Barat. If that was the case, what would have happened?

Sukarno's choice. The worst case scenario would be a complete collapse of Indonesia and new Indonesian states based on ethnic loyalty.

¹⁹ Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs (Wallner) to Secretary of State Rusk, January 17, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 508 n. 2

²⁰ Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), March 28, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 565

Of course, in answering this counterfactual, first we need to establish that Sukarno had the option to pursue military action against the Dutch. To do that, we need to establish whether domestically, taking an aggressive stance against the Dutch on the issue of Irian Barat was very popular. The answer is yes. Irian Barat had always been considered a part of Indonesia so that the Dutch presence meant that the independence revolution was not complete. Moreover, many Indonesians also saw the Dutch presence in Irian Barat as an attempt to create a military stronghold in order to restore their dominance in Indonesia.²¹

Of all political actors in Indonesia, Sukarno and the Communists had most exploited the Irian Barat question, leading Hatta to warn:

To permit West Irian to continue indefinitely as a bone of contention between Indonesia and the Netherlands is to afford Communism an opportunity to spread in Indonesia. The claim to West Irian is a national claim backed by every Indonesian party without exception; but the most demanding voice, apart from that of President Sukarno himself, is that of the Communist Party of Indonesia.²²

Using the issue of Irian Barat, Sukarno and the Communists were able to stoke nationalist feelings and to gain politically, commanding the frontline of the Indonesian struggle for complete independence. Other political actors had no choice but to follow suit, regardless of their misgivings about using the nationalist euphoria, lest they fail to catch the nationalistic train.

Another question that needs to be addressed is whether Indonesians themselves believed they could take this option. While Nasution had some misgivings concerning Indonesian preparedness to attack Irian Barat, it seemed that others were less doubtful. Indonesians in fact were willing to go to war. Even historically, on March 25, 1962, there

²¹ Arend Lijphart, "The Indonesian Image of West Irian" *Asian Survey*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (July 1961) 12

²² Muhammad Hatta, "Indonesia Between the Power Blocs" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 36:3 (April 1958) 486-7

were clashes between the Indonesian air force and the Dutch naval forces in the vicinity of the Island of Gag, Irian Barat.²³ On May 22, 1962, the CIA reported that the Indonesians were planning a large scale attack on the Dutch in Irian Barat, estimating that without foreign intervention the Indonesian military would overwhelm the Dutch.²⁴ On July 19, Subandrio bluntly stated to Dean Rusk that the Indonesians had 2-3,000 paratroopers already in Irian Barat.²⁵ In fact, Washington was convinced that the Indonesians would go to war if the Dutch kept stalling and refusing to negotiate.²⁶ While these operations could be seen in the context of ratcheting up the international tension to pressure the United States to in turn press the Dutch to negotiate, these actions also constrained Sukarno's action further. Sukarno would have had no other choice but to go to war if negotiations had failed lest he would experience a huge loss of prestige.

Moreover, the Indonesians also believed that international opinion was on their side even if they decided to use force against Irian Barat. Apparently, India's seizure of Goa from Portugal acted as inspiration for this belief among Indonesian elites, as both Goa and Irian Barat were seen as the last bastions of European colonialism. In a revealing conversation between Howard Jones and Sukarno on December 11, 1961, when the former stated that world opinion would be against Indonesia should Indonesia decide to invade Irian Barat, Sukarno retorted, "even peaceful India is about to use force in Goa."²⁷

²³ Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), March 28, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 564 n1

²⁴ Memorandum From the Director of Central Intelligence's Assistant (Knoche) to Director of Central Intelligence McCone, May 22, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 595

²⁵ Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to President Kennedy, July 20, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 607

²⁶ Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to President Kennedy, February 28, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 545

²⁷ Telegram From Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, December 11, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 481

A National Security Council memorandum on December 18, 1961, bluntly stated that "The Indian attack upon Goa may be a new stimulus to Indonesian military action."²⁸

Furthermore, Indonesians believed that they could also count on support from the Communist bloc. As noted by Hatta in his *Asian Survey* article in November 1961, "Indonesia's claim to West Irian is supported by public opinion in most of Asia and Africa, which have similar problems. It goes without saying that communist countries as well back Indonesia."²⁹ Hatta's assertion was not without any basis. On April 1, 1961, Zhou En-Lai, the Chinese Premier, had signed an agreement backing the Indonesian claims.³⁰ A year later, on March 7, 1962, a report from the CIA bluntly stated that Indonesia would have been drawn closer to the Soviet Union as it relied heavily on both the Soviet's arms and political support.³¹

The White House was sufficiently alarmed over the possibility that Indonesia would turn to the Communist bloc. On April 24, Komer stressed that in contrast to the Dutch claim that the Indonesians were playing on the United States' fear of the Communists, the United States believed that "the strength of PKI and massive Soviet military aid are *facts* with which we must contend."³² A year before, on January 25, 1961, Ambassador Howard Jones had warned that were war to break out, support from the

²⁸ Memorandum From Robert H. Johnson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), December 18, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 493

²⁹ Mohammad Hatta, "Colonialism and the Danger of War," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 1, No. 9 (Nov. 1961) 14

³⁰ Roger Hilsman, *To Move A Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967) 373

³¹ National Intelligence Estimate, March 7, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 555

³² Memorandum From Robert W. Komer of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy), April 24, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 582

Sino-Soviet bloc to Indonesia would be certain, the Australians would support the Dutch, and the United States would be left in a bind.³³

Had war broken out between the Dutch and Indonesia, the United States would have faced a very unpalatable choice. The Dutch were its ally in NATO. Failure to aid the Dutch might have hurt NATO and its interests in Europe, especially as the Soviet Union was renewing its threats on Berlin.³⁴ On the other hand, the United States had started to get involved in Vietnam as the situation there had grown worse. On February 2, 1962, it was reported that the strength of the Vietcong in South Vietnam had grown to 12,000 regular forces, 13,300 irregular forces, and 100,000 supporters and sympathizers.³⁵ The room for maneuver for the United States was indeed very small: as a result, it kept pressuring for diplomatic solutions to this problem.

In this context, it is clear that Sukarno did have a choice to invade Irian Barat after he grew frustrated with the Dutch stalling tactics. Both domestically and internationally, such an option was wide open and possibly attractive from Sukarno's point of view. Had Sukarno decided to go to war, the most likely date would have been between April and June 1962, when the United States had grown frustrated with Dutch unwillingness to negotiate with Indonesia. By this time, the Indonesians could have already declared that the Dutch were unwilling to negotiate and the only solution to the Irian Barat problem was through war.

³³ Telegram From Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, January 25, 1961, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 302

³⁴ Hilsman (1967) 375

³⁵ Paper Prepared by the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Hilsman), February 2, 1962, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 2

From this point, however, everything would have hinged on whether the United States had jumped into the fray by supporting the Dutch or whether it had simply stood aside as it had threatened to do. It was highly doubtful that the United States would jump into the fray, considering the frustration of the Kennedy administration on the Dutch stalling tactic, the fear that its involvement on the Dutch side would damage the United States' reputation in the Third World, and more importantly, the fact that the Kennedy administration had started to become preoccupied with events in Vietnam.

The most likely result of the United States' neutrality would have been the defeat of the Dutch.³⁶ However, the Indonesian military would not have emerged unscathed as the war would have taxed the Army to its limit. It needs to be emphasized that the staging point for the Indonesians to attack Irian Barat was in Maluku Island, far from Irian Barat, leading to the problems of logistics.³⁷ Amphibious landing is always a costly and messy affair. The reason that the Indonesian army under Colonel Ahmad Yani was able to land successfully on the coast of Padang during the PRRI/Permesta rebellion was the unwillingness of the rebels to strongly contest the landings, though we can also argue that

³⁶ Shortly after Prime Minister De Quay agreed to transfer Irian Barat to UN jurisdiction and then to Indonesia on August 15, 1962, he publicly stated that the only reason the Dutch signed was because it "could not count on the support of its allies." Hilsman (1967) 379-80. In addition, it is questionable whether public opinion in the Netherlands would have supported war in Irian Barat. As noted in Chapter 6, in response to the Netherlands' government decision to build up its defenses in Irian Barat, on July 13, 1961, the youth of Rotterdam demonstrated against the dispatch of fresh Dutch troops to the island, followed by a call for peaceful settlement by twenty-two Dutch professors of the Catholic University of Nijmegen on August 3. Ganis Harsono, *Recollection of an Indonesian Diplomat in the Sukarno Era* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1977) 232. Moreover, the Dutch military was worried over the prospect of war. In a report from the Joint Chief of Staff of the Dutch army to the Cabinet, it was stated that Indonesia had prepared for a major attack since March and the military authorities believed that the Netherlands would be militarily outclassed and requested permission to evacuate from the threatened areas. The request was rejected by the Cabinet. C.L.M Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle: Dutch Decolonization and Indonesia 1945-1962* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002) 371

³⁷ As noted by Sundhaussen, earlier attempts by the Indonesians to infiltrate Irian Barat ended up in disaster due to lack of planning, training, coordination, and inadequate supply and forces. See Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics; 1945-1967* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1982) 156

the Indonesian army had improved since then through the influx of arms supplies from both the United States and the Communist bloc.

Still, the Dutch would have been far more determined to defend their last colony in Southeast Asia and probably the only way that the Indonesian Army could have prevailed was to overwhelm the small Dutch force with landings all over Irian Barat. This would also have created a major logistical nightmare. In the long run, however, with the distance between the Dutch and Irian Barat and the sheer numbers of Indonesian troops, it can be assumed that Indonesia in the end would prevail, even though it would have been a very costly affair. A deadlock was also possible.

As both Indonesia and the Dutch were exhausted, the United States then could have entered into the scene as a broker to mediate the end of the war, not unlike the role it played during the six-day war between Israel and the Arab states in 1967.

The result would have changed both the power balance calculation in Southeast Asia and probably in Europe as well. In Indonesia, the Army, though battered, could have claimed credit for victory and have gained ascendancy at the expense of the PKI. While the Army benefited from Soviet military aid, it was still concerned with the PKI's position in Indonesia. The PKI on the other hand, was in a quandary. While it was one of the staunch supporters of taking a strong stance on the issue of Irian Barat, as Mortimer argued, it never wanted the crisis to be solved militarily. Military victory would mean a huge boost in the Army's prestige while military defeat would provide an excuse for the Army leadership to impose martial law.³⁸

³⁸ Rex Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism Under Sukarno: Ideology and Politics, 1959-1965* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974) 195

As the Army gained more prestige and power, it would have pushed for the removal of the Communists from the political arena once and for all. Sukarno might have tried to maneuver to block the Army, but he could not do much. However, instead of the PKI, Sukarno might have decided to create a new counterbalance to the Army similar to his historic action in 1966, when he revived the Parliament and pushed for a parliamentary election. At this point, with Sukarno also popular from the glory from the Irian Barat campaign, he still had strong cards to play. He could sacrifice the troublesome PKI on the altar of rapprochement with the Army by limiting its influence or power while bolstering other political parties. The leaders of the Army might not have liked Sukarno's plan, but given Sukarno's popularity among the population and within the Army itself, they had no choice but to play along. At this point, there were no September killings that would push the Army over the edge and unite the Army against the Communists.

The impact of Indonesia's shift to the right would have been very dramatic in Southeast Asia. The entire problem with Malaysia might not have happened with the Communists squelched by the Army and the Parliament revived. The United States might still have been embroiled in Vietnam. However the stakes would have been much lower than before as the last domino in the mind of Washington would have held and the risk of the entire Southeast Asia falling into the Communists' bloc would have been reduced.

In Europe, however, the entire political situation might have been problematic for the United States. The Dutch, wounded by the United States' refusal to aid it in Irian Barat, would probably have done nothing. However, other states might have started to question the United States' commitment. France, perceiving the United States to have abandoned the Dutch, not to mention the injury from the Suez Crisis, would have been

much more apprehensive of NATO and would have probably withdrawn much earlier. Khrushchev, while losing Indonesia, might have taken more belligerent actions regarding the Berlin Crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1963, seeing that the United States was willing to abandon the Netherlands under duress. In other words, the United States, while able to save Asia, would probably have found the crisis in Europe and in Cuba much harder to settle as it would have faced a very belligerent Soviet Union.

Of course, the problem with counterfactuals is that we can only imagine. It is also possible that the change in Sukarno's decision to go to war would not have created this mess in Europe. Both the French and the Russians could have been persuaded that they were comparing apples to oranges: that the United States would act differently had Irian Barat been in East Germany or in Cuba. As a result, the changes in Southeast Asian politics would have completely benefited the United States, as it gained Southeast Asia while keeping the Soviet Union at bay in Europe. Khrushchev, losing Indonesia, would be heavily attacked in the Politburo for the lavish and costly military aid to Indonesia, and would have been more careful in respect to Cuba. Unfortunately, it remains a matter of speculation and is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Still, this counterfactual shows that, in the situation where Sukarno had the initiative and the constraining structure was flexible, his influence was dominant. It mattered in shaping Indonesian foreign policy and surprisingly had a massive impact on world politics.

8.4. Civil War of October 1, 1965 (Chapter 7)

On October 1, 1965, six army generals were kidnapped and murdered in a preemptive plot to prevent an army coup, triggering a backlash from the Army toward the plotters, who included the Communists. By the night of October 1, army units under General Suharto and Colonel Sarwo Edhie were preparing to assault Halim, the headquarters of the plotters. Regardless of whether Sukarno was informed of the kidnappings beforehand or not, at that time it was clear that he was present at Halim and had been briefed about what had transpired during that day. As a result, the ball was in Sukarno's hands: whether he would accept General Suharto's entreaties to leave Halim or join the plotters and probably escape to Jogjakarta or Bali as requested by Aidit and other plotters.

It can be argued that Sukarno's decision to abandon Halim was a decision to sidestep the entire problem, basically do nothing, and let events progress outside his control. However, I will argue that by sidestepping the entire problem, Sukarno basically acquiesced, siding with General Suharto, eliminating the choice to join the Communists in Central Java or Bali to continue the struggle. Even if one argues that with his charisma, Sukarno could have left Bogor the next day to join Aidit unhindered, it is clear from the subsequent events that Sukarno did nothing even as the reports of the killings of the Communists filtered into Jakarta. As I pointed out in Chapter 7, Sukarno basically had agreed to let Suharto liquidate the Communists. In short, I argued that historically, Sukarno decided to accept General Suharto's entreaties and to leave Halim for his palace in Bogor, leaving the Army to take care of the rest of the plotters and the Communists.

Sukarno's decision to side with Suharto led to a massive purge of the plotters and the Communists in Java and Bali. In the aftermath of the coup, Sukarno in his subsequent statements constantly emphasized his "freedom of action" in Halim. While the Cornell Paper attributed Sukarno's statements to an attempt to prevent the Army from exploiting him in order to destroy the Communists,³⁹ as noted in Chapter 7, it was clear that Sukarno did have a choice that fateful day. The question of what would have happened had Sukarno decided to join the plotters, leave for Jogjakarta or Bali, and denounce General Suharto, leading to a civil war remains unanswered. Could Suharto's New Order regime have failed to come about?

This counterfactual is another exercise in exploring the connection between Sukarno as an agent within the political structure in Indonesia. The choice Sukarno had may have been illusionary, in the sense that, regardless of his choice, the end result would have been the same. The Army would strike and replace his authoritarianism with Suharto's New Order authoritarianism.

In this case, the structure that Sukarno faced was very hard to manipulate: the Army was outraged over the death of its generals. The rumor spread in the next several days of torture inflicted on these generals further caused outrage both inside and outside the Army. The Communists were basically a problem for Sukarno: on one hand he needed their support, but on the other hand the PKI caused a split within Sukarno's own supporters in the Army, whose loyalty was mostly to him. In general, they were hostile to the Communists. Being implicated in the murders, the Communists had become more and more of a liability instead of an asset. In addition, Sukarno himself was not at all

³⁹ Anderson and McVey (1971) 43, 45

committed to protect the PKI. As a result, during that brief period on the evening of October 1, 1965, when Sukarno had a choice to either abandon the Communists or to defy General Suharto and the outraged army, he chose the first option.

For the sake of this counterfactual, let us assume that Sukarno chose the latter option. The immediate result would have been a split within the pro-Sukarno units in the Army. While Sukarno had been replacing many commanders with people on whose loyalty he could count, many in the rank and file would have been unwilling to work together with the Communists to fight their fellow comrade-in-arms, as actually occurred in the PRRI/Permesta rebellion in 1958. As a result, some of the units might have chosen to be neutral. The staunch anti-Communist units might have joined General Suharto in opposing what they saw as the Communists' brutality and treachery against the Army. By this time, Sukarno could count on the loyalty of army units in Bali, Central and East Java. General Suharto on the other hand, could rely on army units outside Java. Other units such as West Java's Siliwangi Division, led by staunch anti-Communist yet pro-Sukarno General Adjie, would have remained neutral, at least initially. However, as time progressed, the restless rank and file might have forced their commanders to pick the Army's side for the sake of solidarity and out of revulsion of the Communists.

In addition, the Communists would have been far more prepared than they were historically. Rallying under Sukarno and under Aidit's leadership, the Communists would have resisted, though many of their cadres in the villages who had very cursory knowledge of communist ideology would have been confused. Moreover, as the story of the mutilations and murders of the six generals spread and was repeated all over Indonesia, people would have been less likely to support the Communists. Even so, with

Sukarno backing the Communists, a few of them might well have supported the Communists for the sake of Sukarno.

Still, the Communists might not have been a decisive factor in this civil war as their influence would have been negated by the Ansor, the staunch anti-Communist NU youth paramilitary group. In fact, the Communists might have faced a massive setback in East Java, traditionally a stronghold of the NU. As the Army would have started training and arming the Ansor, it would have proven to be effective in decimating the Communists' ranks. Most likely by the end of 1965, East Java would have been split. The Army and Ansor would have occupied the area where, traditionally, support for NU was high such as Jombang, while the Communists and pro-Sukarno Brawijaya division would have occupied Surabaya and pro-Communist area such as Madiun. Moreover, the distrust between the pro-Sukarno army units and Sukarno himself toward the PKI would have ensured a complete breakdown in unity sooner or later.

The more important role would have been played by the Indonesian Air Force under the pro-Sukarno Air Marshall Omar Dhani. Armed with 26 TU-16 long-range bombers, 25 IL-20 medium-range turbo-prop bombers, 27 MIG-16's, 50 MIG-17's, 13 MIG-19's and 17 MIG-21's, the Indonesian Air Force was a formidable force with which to be reckoned, especially if these planes managed to leave Halim for other airbases guarded by troops loyal to Sukarno. With the air force harassing the pro-Suharto troops, it would have been very difficult for General Suharto to achieve a decisive victory even though he might have enjoyed support from the majority in the Army.

One notable difference between history and this counterfactual is the role of the United States. Historically, the United States' role in Indonesia in the aftermath of the

coup was minimal, as Washington was as confused as everyone else about what had transpired. The assistance that the United States provided to the Army under Suharto was very limited. It was not until early 1966 when Adam Malik rose to the forefront that the United States began to provide substantial support to the anti-Sukarno protesters in Jakarta. The reason was simple: General Suharto was an unknown and unproven figure and the United States was unwilling to provide assistance lest it play into the hands of Sukarno.

When the open civil war emerged between Sukarno and Suharto's supporters, however, the United States would have been less hesitant to help General Suharto to defeat Sukarno and his supporters. While the United States would not have been able to immediately help Suharto, should the civil war have dragged on longer, the United States' support might have been decisive especially in countering the air force. Moreover, the United States' position in Vietnam would actually have been helpful in this situation, as it would have prevented the Chinese or the Soviet Union from sending military aid to Indonesia lest they risk the possibility of war against the United States.

By 1967, Indonesia would have been split into two, between the pro-Suharto units holding Jakarta, part of West and East Java, and areas outside Java, and pro-Sukarno units supported by the Communists holding Central and part of East Java and Bali. As time progressed and with the assistance of the United States, however, the air superiority that pro-Sukarno factions enjoyed would have been diminished and the tables turned against Sukarno. By this time, Sukarno's power would have been diminished because the initiative would have gone both to the Communists and to the Divisional Commanders of

Diponegoro and Brawijaya units, as the struggle had become explicitly military.

Sukarno's position would have been more that of a figurehead without much power.

Furthermore, isolated in Central Java without any foreign assistance, the pro-Sukarno units would have been increasingly cornered and forced to turn to guerilla warfare. In the meantime, General Suharto would have proclaimed his New Order authoritarianism in Jakarta to legitimate the Army's takeover of the government.

This counterfactual started as an intellectual exercise to consider whether Sukarno would have had much impact in a situation where structure is dominant. At the time of the decision, Sukarno was forced to pick one particular course, which was to submit to General Suharto's demands to leave Halim for Bogor and to abandon the PKI to its fate. This counterfactual shows that by choosing to go to Jogjakarta (or Bali), Sukarno would have surrendered his initiative and would have been relegated to irrelevance as events would have occurred beyond his control. Even though the New Order would have come into being, the path that General Suharto took to create this version of the New Order would have been bloodier as Indonesia would have been plunged into a civil war.

However, the possibility of this scenario was very low, considering the distrust that Sukarno had toward the PKI. Also, the fact that Sukarno was aware that by throwing his lot to the PKI, he might have lost the loyalty of many of his supporters in the Army, who were against the Communists.

8.5. Embracing Malaysia: December 12, 1962 - September 14, 1963 (Chapter 6)

The diplomatic quarrel that led to the declaration of confrontation against Malaysia was started after Tunku Abdul Rahman blamed some Indonesians for aiding the rebels during the Brunei Revolt of December 8, 1962. Since then, there were hostile diplomatic exchanges between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur which culminated in the middle of September with attacks on the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur and on the Malayan and British embassies in Jakarta. After this attack, there were some diplomatic rapprochements but the confrontation itself did not officially cease until 1967 when Sukarno was deposed.

The question remains: why was Indonesia suddenly dragged into a conflict against Malaysia even though earlier in 1961 Subandrio had expressed "no opposition and no active support" when the idea of Malaysia was first broached by the British? Could Sukarno have reacted differently during this period and stopped the policy of confrontation from happening? This counterfactual questions whether confrontation was avoidable and examines whether Sukarno was actually able to stop the confrontation as early as December 1962.

The domestic political situation in Indonesia forced Sukarno at the beginning of Confrontation to take a very strong stance against Malaysia. The Communists had started to agitate against Malaya on December 13, 1962.⁴⁰ Nasution responded in a public statement in early January 1963, declaring that Indonesia sympathized with the Brunei

⁴⁰ Justus M. van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1965) 275

uprising, to prevent the Communists from monopolizing the nationalistic issue.⁴¹ Even though neither the PKI nor the Army was interested in going to all-out war against the British and Malaya, both pushed the nationalistic fervor to a fever pitch for the sake of not giving up ground on the issue of nationalism. At this point, even though Sukarno was not interested in conflict against Malaya, the domestic pressures would make any reconciliation difficult.

It is clear that Sukarno himself was very interested in finding a way out from this quandary. During the period between the Brunei uprising and the Manila meeting, Sukarno practically did nothing, aside from engaging in a war of words between Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur. He finally agreed to the conference in Manila as a way to escape with his honor intact. George McT. Kahin, who was with Sukarno during the negotiation in Manila to settle this dispute, observed that Sukarno's main goal was to be able to return and to tell the Indonesians that:

Not only had [Sukarno and Philippine President Diosdado Macapagal] been consulted in the process of Malaysia's establishment, but that – and this was the essential ingredient – the establishment of Malaysia came only after it had been ascertained that the people of North Borneo and Sarawak had been consulted and had agreed to this. The Philippine and Indonesian presidents were further protected from nationalist criticism at home by virtue of it being agreed that the UN teams in these two Borneo territories would be accompanied by several observers from both Indonesia and the Philippines.... As Howard Jones... correctly observed: "Whether or not Sukarno thought the survey would show support for Malaysia, on balance it appeared that prior to the August 29th announcement [by the Tunku and Sandys] he was willing to accept the UN verdict." On the basis of my talks with him and with Subandrio and other members of the Indonesian delegation returning from the Manila conference, I can attest to this having indeed been the case.⁴²

⁴¹ Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Southwest Pacific Affairs (Bell) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Harriman), January 4, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 655

⁴² George McT. Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) 171-3

Unfortunately for Sukarno, the British were not willing to compromise, so Indonesia had no honorable way to extricate itself from this mess. Further, as the Indonesians were obstructed in the ascertainment process in Northern Kalimantan and the British practically declared that Malaysia would go ahead regardless of the result from the ascertainment process, Sukarno was left fuming. This humiliation was further exacerbated when a mob attacked the Indonesian embassy in Kuala Lumpur and tore down Sukarno's picture and Tunku Abdul Rahman stepped on the Indonesian national emblem.⁴³ Any goodwill left on Sukarno's side simply vanished and Sukarno became obsessed with destroying Malaysia.

At this point, Sukarno simply could not have maintained the old policy of "do nothing" as the British provocations were too great. Moreover, even if Sukarno himself wanted to change course, the domestic situation was forcing his hand. He could not simply back out from the confrontation lest he lose his soapbox as the "mouthpiece of the Indonesian people" and the defender of Indonesian nationalism. While he might be able to withdraw in the short run, in the long run, the Communists would have been given ammunition to attack him, forcing him to either concede more power to the PKI or to rely more on the Army. Neither option was that appealing to him. In other words, the British, by pushing the issue of Malaysia, inadvertently hurt Sukarno's domestic political position. The only way out for him was to have another referendum, something that the British and the Malaysians were not willing to provide.

Facing a very strong structure, we inquire what would have happened had Sukarno decided to brush off this humiliation. To make it easier, the counterfactual starts

⁴³ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, September 19, 1963, *FRUS*, 1961-1963, Vol. 23, 684

a day after the result of the ascertainment process was published on September 15, 1963, before the destruction of the Indonesian and British embassies. Could Sukarno have accepted the result of the ascertainment process and therefore prevented the demonstrations from taking place?

Had Sukarno agreed to accept Malaysia, he basically would have been bucking the trend in Indonesian politics, where both sides of the spectrum, the Army and the Communists, were pushing for an aggressive stance against Malaysia, especially after the perceived humiliation of the ascertainment process.

In the short term, it could be argued that the domestic actors would have been too stunned to react to this trend. The Malaysian crisis would have been averted and the United States would have kept providing economic aid to Indonesia. The situation would have stabilized. There would not have been demonstrations that culminated in the destruction of the British embassy and Indonesia's exile from international society.

In the long run, however, Sukarno would have basically "resigned" his position as the bearer of nationalistic symbols, allowing the PKI or the Army to reclaim it. This in turn would have meant a tremendous loss of prestige and power, opening Sukarno to accusations that he had sold out the Indonesian revolution. The memory of the collapse of Sukiman's Cabinet from its closeness to the United States would be revived.

The PKI, worried that Sukarno had drawn Indonesia closer to the United States' orbit and feeling that Sukarno's protection was no longer that useful as he had lost his prestige, would have grown more aggressive and confrontational. Basking in nationalistic fervor, the PKI would have been very difficult to squelch, assuming that Sukarno was not

willing to use the Army to put the PKI down. Sukarno was also worried that he might have relied too much on the Army under Yani and Nasution.

In this imbalanced domestic situation, the PKI was aided by the major economic dislocation caused by the stabilization process. The stabilization process, advocated by both the United States and the IMF, was supposed to help Indonesia to curb runaway inflation and put the economy back on track. However, it had the adverse impact of high unemployment as the government had to curb spending by paring down the number of civil servants and demobilizing the troops. Not surprisingly, the demobilization increased the ranks of angry unemployed soldiers who felt that their sacrifice was not appreciated.

The Army itself was concerned about the growing attractiveness of the PKI to the masses and to its demobilized soldiers. As a result, it started to resist the demobilization, leading to conflict between it and Sukarno. From this point, there remained only the possibility that the Army or the PKI would a preemptive coup as Sukarno was no longer relevant to the power calculation.

This counterfactual is interesting as it shows persuasively that the result of a leader's decision against a dominant structure could still cause impact upon that structure. However, the result of such a decision would have been to relegate the leader to irrelevance, instead of having the structure push history back onto its track. Even though one may argue that the military might have launched a coup leading to the collapse of Sukarno's regime and the destruction of the PKI, the leader of the new regime would have been different: it would not have been General Suharto, but General Nasution or even possibly General Ahmad Yani.

To some degree, this counterfactual helps to shed light on the motivation of Sukarno during this period. It was not necessarily his distrust of the idea of Malaysia or the British that drove Sukarno to push for the abandonment of the Malaysia project. Rather, it was the fear of being relegated to irrelevance that drove Sukarno's foreign policy which led to Confrontation.

8.6. Conclusion

The four counterfactuals show mixed results on the relevancy of leaders for the creation of foreign policy. In the first two cases where the structure was fluid and there was much freedom of action, Sukarno was basically decisive in influencing Indonesian foreign policy. In fact, we can argue that due to the strategic importance of Indonesia, Sukarno's actions had a far-reaching impact on world politics, and impact that would have been different had he chosen differently.

In the last two cases, where the structure was strong and Sukarno had less room to maneuver, we saw that Sukarno's decision still had an impact as it would have altered Indonesian history to some degree. However, the tradeoff was to relegate Sukarno as leader to a point of irrelevance as he would no longer have been in control of the situation and other political actors would have taken over. As a result, Sukarno had no other choice but to choose those policies that he believed would keep him relevant to the situation and keep all options open.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

The crisis in Indonesia has been repeatedly analyzed by Indonesian commentators as a failure of leadership and a collapse of public confidence. From the outsider's point of view, it looks at times less like failure and more like frustration of leadership, induced by refusal of leaders to allow each other what the Indonesian Parliament regularly votes to each new Cabinet and then as regularly in effect denies it, that is, the "opportunity to act." It looks at times also less like the collapse of public confidence and more like an even more dangerous and less easily curable public political fatigue, induced by the endless and fruitless search for "the way out," a search which even a strong new government would be all too frequently to continue.

Willard A. Hanna¹

The intricate sandcastle of political institutions built for Indonesia by President Soekarno and his oratory are vanishing into the wind, the toil and trouble of years undone by a few hours of senseless bloodshed.

"Cornell Paper"²

If I have accomplished something in this world, it is because of my people. Without them I am nothing. When I die ... on a plain little stone write simply: Here lies Bung Karno, the mouthpiece of the Indonesian people.

Sukarno³

¹ Hanna defined "the way out" as:

A technique of obfuscation, whereby the presumably inescapable consequence is transmuted into the tacitly accepted anomaly. When the budget can't get past Parliament, the money is spent anyhow; then the Parliament furiously redebates but refrains from ipso post facto rejection. When Army Territorial Commanders take regional affairs into their own hands. They publicly reaffirm their loyalty to the President and to the nation and gradually – although perhaps not always – insubordination is almost forgiven if not forgotten. Willard A. Hanna, *Coups, "Smuggles," Demonstrations and Korupsi: Some Recurring Phenomena of the Year 1956 in Indonesia* (New York: American Universities Field Staff, January 18, 1957) 1, 16

² Benedict R. Anderson and Ruth T. McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971) 64

³ Cindy Adams, *Soekarno: An Autobiography As Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965) 312

It has been shown throughout this dissertation that leaders are important factors in both domestic and international politics. The decisions that leaders make in international politics cannot be understood solely in their international context. Rather, the decision that a leader takes at a particular moment of crisis is influenced by the domestic political context, how a leader weighs domestic opposition or support toward a foreign policy action. While the international system and domestic political condition create constraints on the freedom of actions of leaders, ultimately, leaders are able to influence constraints through their choices since those choices always have implications for their political resources and in turn, affect the structure in which they operate.

What are the criteria for a successful leader? From this dissertation, we can see that there are several factors that make leaders successful. The first and most important factor is the leaders' ability to harness and to solidify their political resources, enabling them to keep pushing the constraints and to increase their freedom of action. It cannot be denied that Sukarno is the most successful leader in this period due to his ability to transform his popular appeal into political capital and to be able to balance competing interests in Indonesia, even though theoretically he was constricted by his role as the figurehead president. He also managed to harness international issues from the Irian Barat question to the Cold War, transforming political constraints into his assets, and further solidifying his position as the unassailable leader of Indonesia. It is not an understatement to say that Sukarno mostly dominated Indonesian politics in this period.

The second important factor is the leader's ability to check the power of the opposing side. The entire period covered in this dissertation is marked by struggle for power among various political factions. While it cannot be denied that Hatta, Natsir, and

Wilopo were able technocrats, they were completely checked in this period thanks to Sukarno and the PNI's ability to isolate them by playing out the threat of the Masjumi (and the PSI) domination. By the end of the day, these able technocrats were unable to transform their potential power (their superior education, governing skill, integrity, etc.) into political resources.

This in turn brings us to several "lessons" in this dissertation. First, perception of threat matters and makes a huge impact in the decision-making process domestically and internationally. The inability of political elites in Indonesia to reach consensus on a strong, responsible government, which in the end led to the collapse of democracy and the emergence of Sukarno's soft authoritarianism, can only be explained satisfactorily when we understand the fear that gripped leaders in this period. The internal political consideration in turn influenced Indonesia's foreign policy. Since political leaders were unwilling to open their flanks to attack from their domestic opponents, Indonesia had no other choice but to pursue a non-alignment foreign policy.

Second, power matters and leaders are interested in gaining more power at the expense of political rivals. Preservation and acquisition of power were paramount in every single foreign policy decision that Indonesian leaders took in this era. As Indonesian politicians perceived that the entire domestic interaction was a zero-sum game, they tried to increase their power by pushing a very active foreign policy, which they used as political capital. In the period of 1945-1948, the goal of Sukarno, Sjahrir, Amir Sjarifuddin, and Hatta was to have international recognition that they were the legitimate government of Indonesia, thus allowing them to strengthen their position domestically. In the 1950s, Sukiman, the First Cabinet of Ali Sastroamijoyo, and

Burhanuddin Harahap all pushed for very active foreign policies, hoping that international prestige could be used to strengthen the government. In the 1960s, with Sukarno presiding over a soft authoritarian regime, he pursued a very aggressive foreign policy, hoping to bolster his position as the balancer in Indonesian politics.

On the other hand, those who believed that they operated from a position of strength did not push for an active foreign policy. In the 1950s, Natsir, who felt that Masjumi was operating from a position of strength, was unwilling to accommodate the PNI. He also refused Sukarno's request to pursue an aggressive foreign policy on the issue of Irian Barat. Wilopo, with his coalition of Masjumi, the PNI, and the PSI, also did not pay much attention to foreign policy. The Second Ali Cabinet that emerged after the election of 1955 also did not push for an aggressive foreign policy, in contrast to the First Ali Cabinet before the election. Therefore, it can be argued that international structure influences the calculations of leaders when they are making foreign policy decisions as a tool to strengthen their own domestic position.

These two lessons in turn lead to a third lesson, which is that the "great leader" is not a norm. When discussing leadership, we are always preoccupied with the idea of "great leaders" who are able to maximize their influence and to shape the system as people capable of shaping structure in a profound way. These leaders are basically the chosen ones, able to rise to the top from their hard work and sweat of blood. To put it simply, we always assume that leaders are competent people. They are chosen based on their talents.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. As this dissertation shows, sometimes leaders are chosen because they are the least offensive of all the options, while the more

competent ones are shunted aside in order to prevent them from gaining more power. Witness the experience of the highly competent Hatta, who was shunted aside lest he would outshine the rest of the leaders.⁴ Most leaders in this period in fact were chosen because they were the most acceptable ones, whose goals were to preserve the status quo or to prevent other groups from holding the reins of the government. Interestingly, those kinds of leaders were also the ones with the most staying power, since they were the least threatening and solidly backed by their political supporters, who were worried that the competent leaders, such as Hatta, might rise and curtail their power. In short, it is not the survival of the fittest: it is the survival of the least threatening. Even Sukarno's ability to dismantle Constitutional Democracy was due to the simple fact that everybody agreed that Sukarno should be on top to maintain the status quo in face of the double threats from the Army and the PKI.

This sad fact brings us to lesson number four, that even "not-so-great" leaders can have an impact on structure. While Ali Sastroamijoyo's government was racked with corruption, mismanagement, and finally was brought down by the threat of an army coup, it could not be denied that his tenure was the longest of all the Prime Ministers during this period. Part of it was thanks to Sukarno's support. However, he also managed to maintain his huge coalition, keeping them together, and was even able to pull off the Asian African Conference, which was a diplomatic triumph for Indonesia. Even though the communiqué for the conference is full of generalities without any concrete action, the Asian African Conference helped build a shared common identity among Asian and

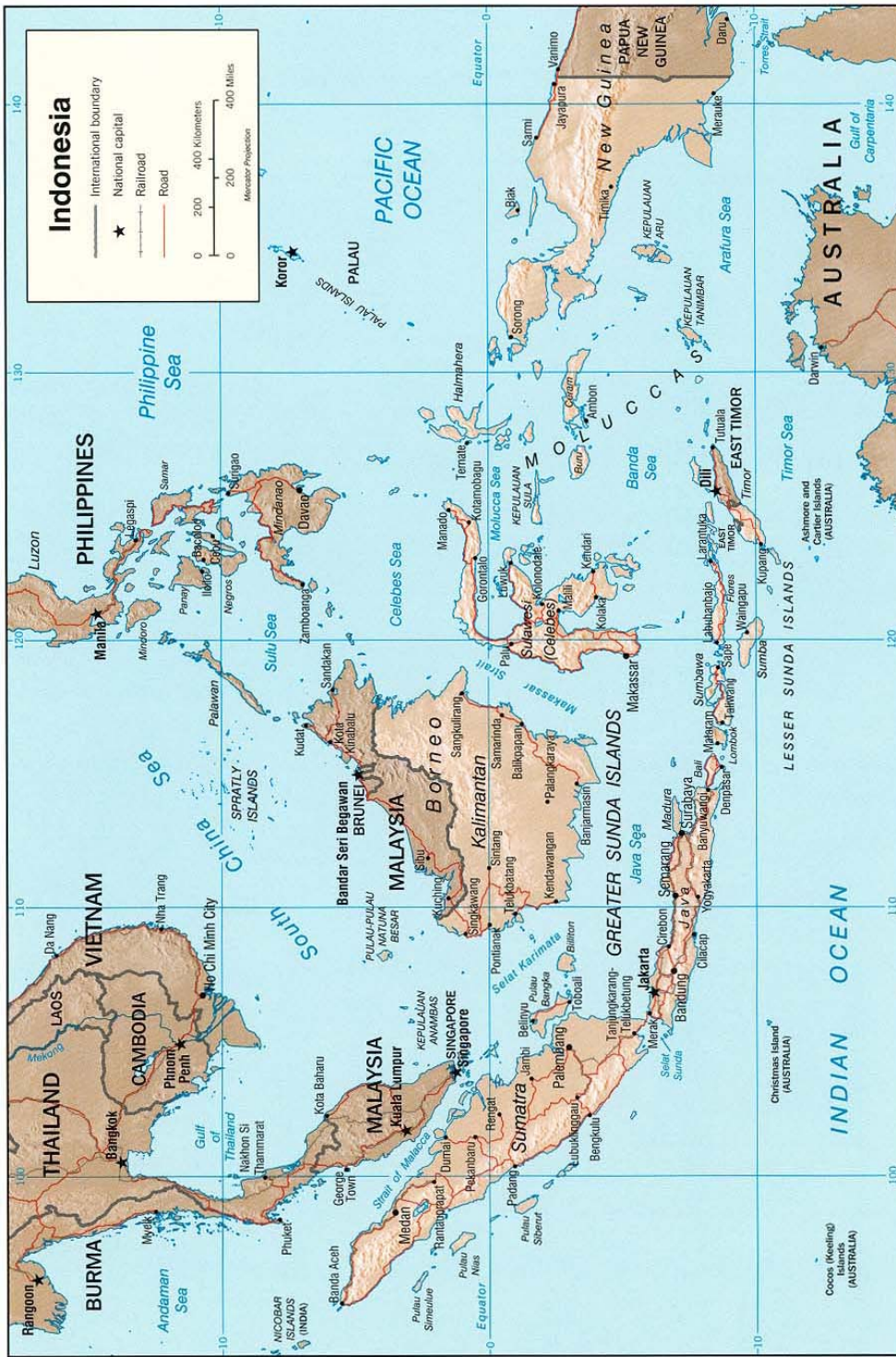
⁴ Another excellent example was the case of Theodore Roosevelt when he was pushed by Thomas Platt, New York's Republican Boss, to be the candidate for the Vice President of the United States in 1900, to get rid of Roosevelt from New York and to further limit Roosevelt's power. This action led to Mark Hanna's famous question, "Don't you realize that there's only one life between this madman and the White House?"

African states, which would be the precursor of the non-bloc movement in the Third World.

Finally, while the world is full of mediocre leaders, the impact of effective leaders is great. As the counterfactuals show, the role of effective leaders such as Sukarno could have a great impact on both domestic and international politics. Even though Sukarno was quite incompetent as an administrator, he excelled in manipulating public support, balancing competing interest groups in Indonesia in order to get what he wanted. In addition, he managed to use Indonesia's position as an important state in the United States' strategic calculation to break the constraints of the Cold War. In turn, he managed to use the Cold War for his benefit as he simply played off the Soviet Union, the PRC, and the United States against each other.

What is the lesson for the United States? United States' foreign policy makers and scholars may want to learn more about the constraints that leaders face in domestic politics in order to better understand the behavior of "rogue states" such as Iraq under Saddam Hussein, Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela. It is only from understanding what the domestic political constraints faced by these leaders that the United States can craft effective policy responses, lest United States' policy backfire in the long run.

APPENDIX:
MAPS, PHOTOS, AND EDITORIAL CARTOONS



Base 802899A (000429) 11-02

1. Map of Indonesia



2. Sukarno



3. Mohammad Hatta



4. Tan Malaka



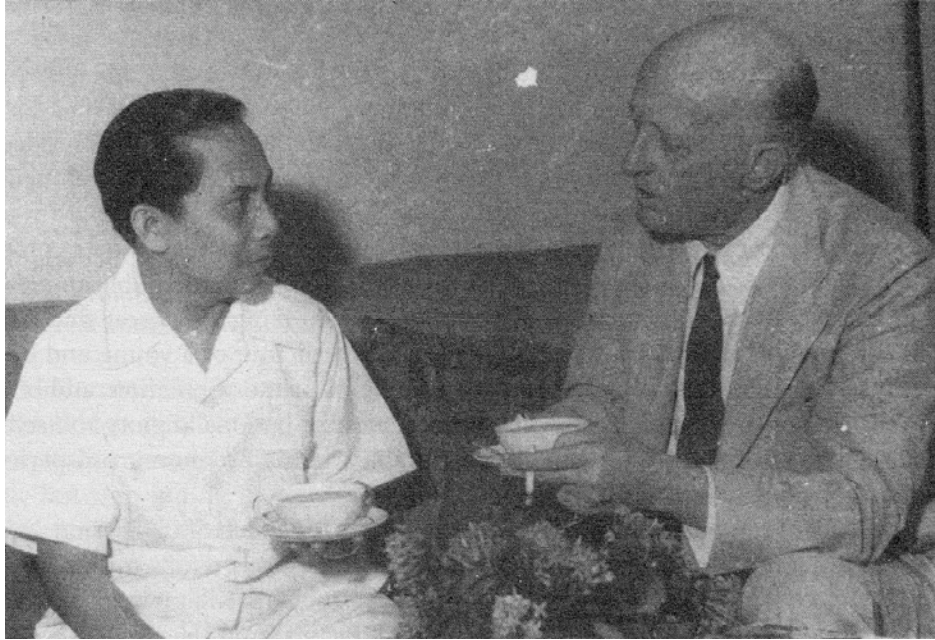
5. Soetan Sjahrir



6. Amir Sjarifuddin



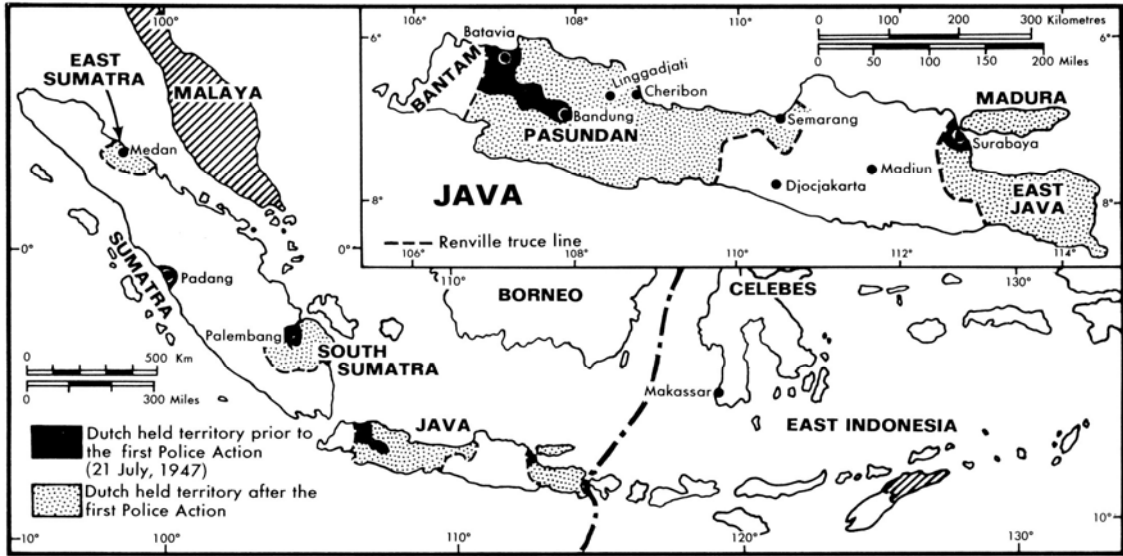
7. General Sudirman



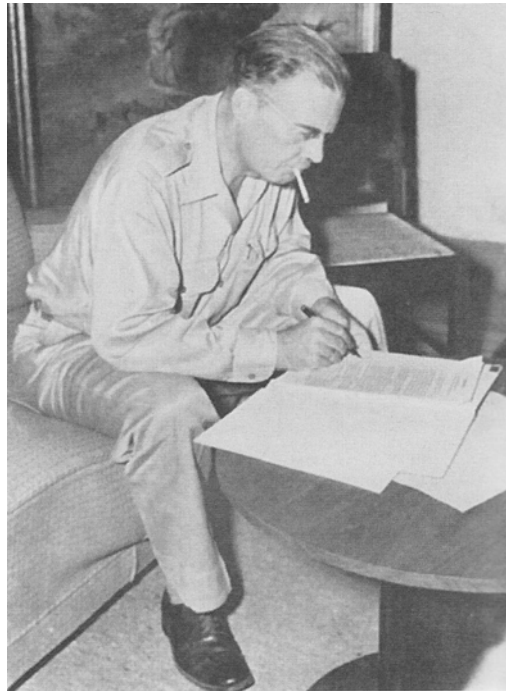
8. Soetan Sjahrir and Walter A. Foote



9. Frank Graham and Charlton Ogburn, Members of the Good Office Committee



10. Map of the Dutch held territory prior to and the aftermath of the First Police Action



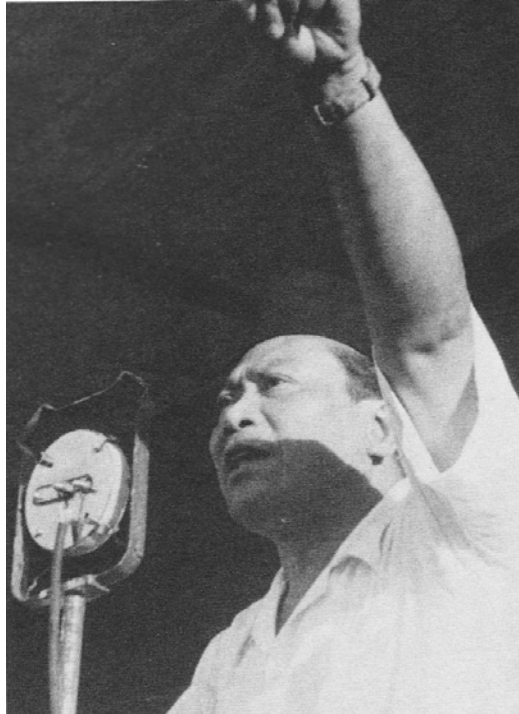
11. Hubertus J. van Mook, the Dutch Vice Governor General of Indonesia



12. Harry S. Truman and Dean Acheson



13. Coert duBois, Mohamad Roem, and Thomas Critchley



14. Musso, the leader of the PKI



15. Indonesian Foreign Minister Mohamad Roem and H. Merle Cochran, the United States' Ambassador to Indonesia



16. "Are you coming in, or have I got to rescue you?" An Australian editorial cartoon lampooning the Dutch's claim that their "Police Action" on December 1948 was taken for the purpose of "liberating" Indonesian Republican territory.



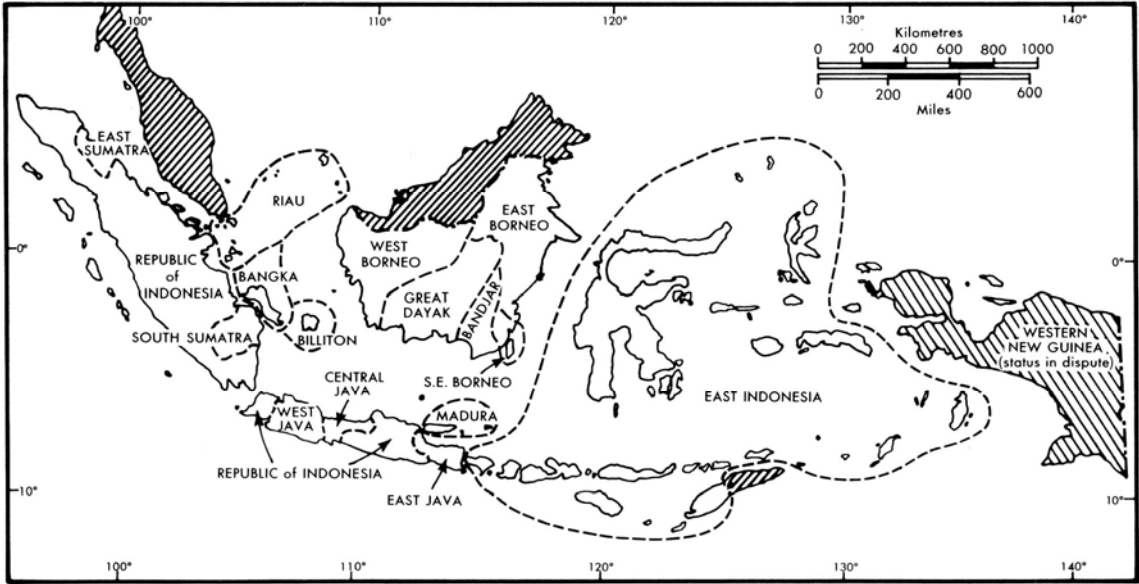
17. Emmanuel Marie Joseph Antony Sassen, the Dutch Minister of Colonies



18. Dirk U. Stikker, the Dutch Foreign Minister



19. Round Table Conference, 1949



20. Map of the United States of Indonesia



21. Raymond "Turk" Westerling, whose revolt in January 1950 started the chain of events that would lead to the collapse of the United States of Indonesia



22. Prime Minister Mohammad Natsir



23. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara



24. Prime Minister Sukiman Wirjosandjojo



25. Dipa Nusantara Aidit, the Chairman of the PKI



26. Achmad Subarjo, Indonesian Foreign Minister in Sukiman Government



27. Prime Minister Wilopo



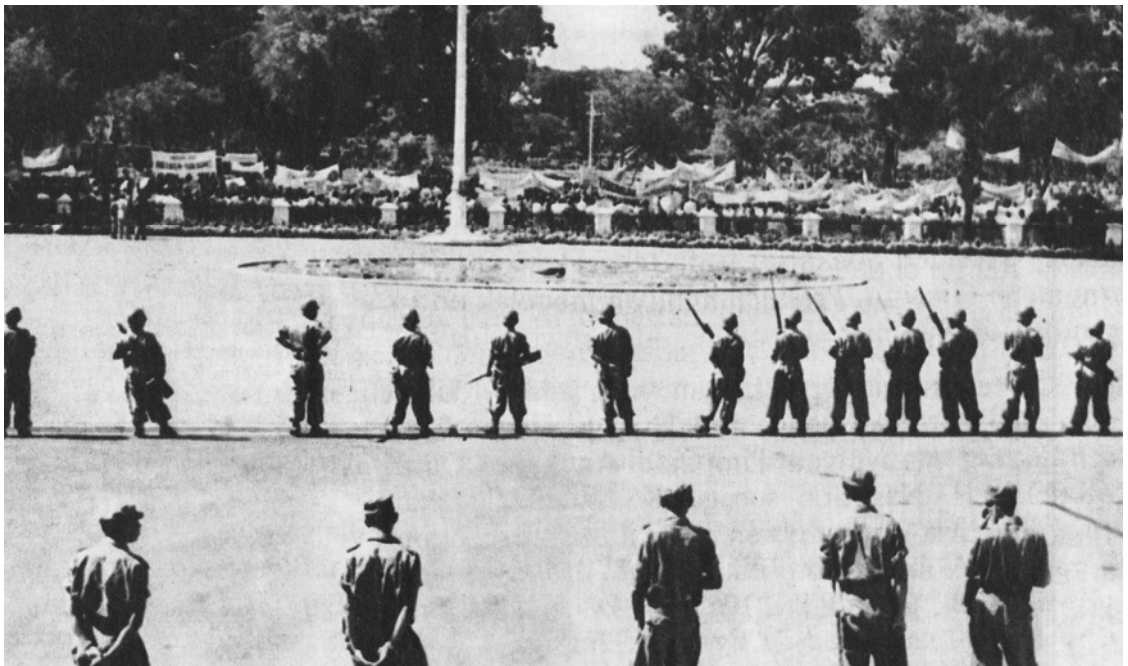
28. Abdul Haris Nasution



29. Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX



30. Demonstration during the October 17 Affair. The banners say "Disband the Parliament now! Hold the election immediately!" "People, Police, and Army Unite!"



31. Presidential Palace during the October 17 Affair



32. Prime Minister Ali Sastroamijoyo



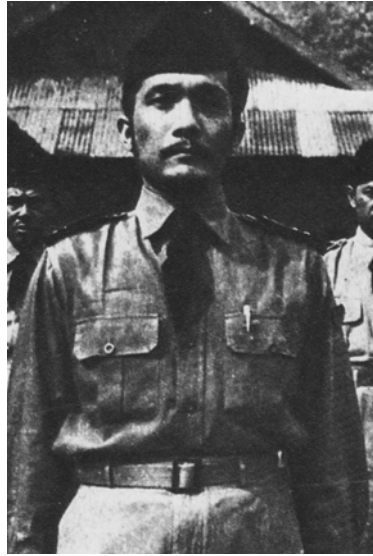
33. Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, 1955



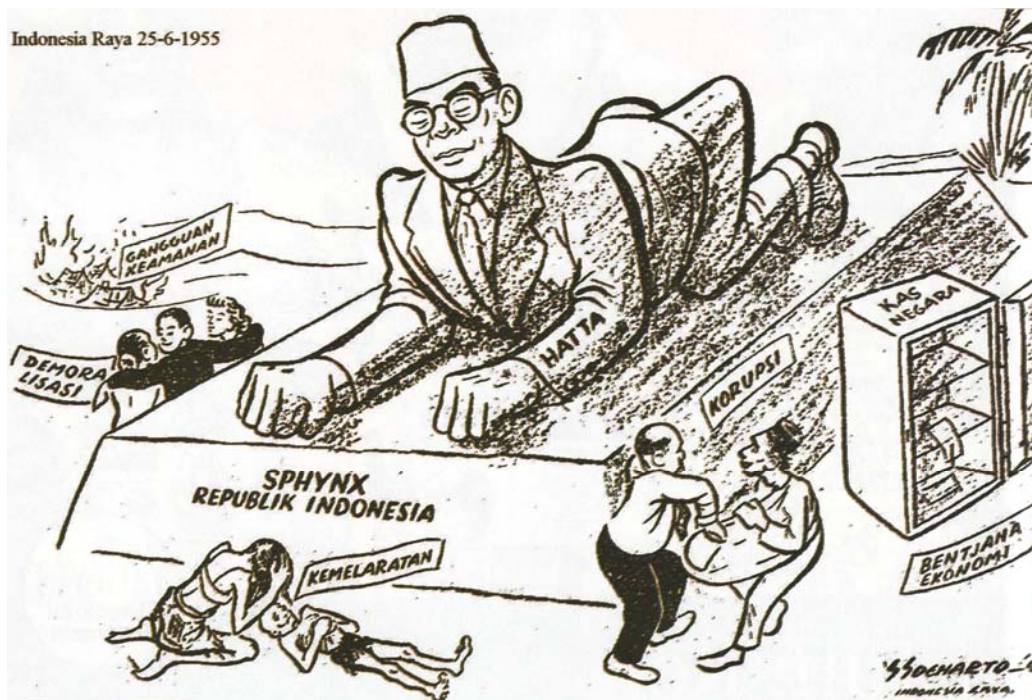
34. Zhou En Lai, Sukarno, and Gamal Abdel Nasser



35. Zhou En Lai and Jawaharlal Nehru



36. Colonel Zulkifli Lubis



37. Hatta as "the Indonesian Sphinx," published in the *Indonesia Raya*, an independent newspaper, on June 25, 1955. Hatta is criticized as silent and seemingly oblivious with brewing troubles around him such as security problem, declining morality, extreme poverty, corruption, economic disasters, and empty state's coffer.



38. Prime Minister Burhanuddin Harahap



Takut Ada, Tapi Mana Usaha/Tindakan?

39. "There is fear, but where is action?" An *Indonesia Raya* editorial cartoon published on November 29, 1956. It shows the Army as a bomb with its fuse lit, while the politicians, the government, Prime Minister Ali, Mohammad Roem, and the Parliament cowered on the corner of the wall without any plan or action to cope with it.



40. Dwight D. Eisenhower



41. John Foster Dulles



42. Allan Welsh Dulles, the Director of the CIA



43. Ambassador John M. Allison and Sukarno



44. "Year End Poker Game." An editorial cartoon published in *Abadi*, the Masjumi's newspaper, on January 8, 1957. Colonel Simbolon and Lt. Colonel Hussein have all their cards on the table, while Sukarno is playing his "conception" cards close to his chest. In the meantime, the parties are trying to peek at his hand.



45. Colonel Venje Sumual



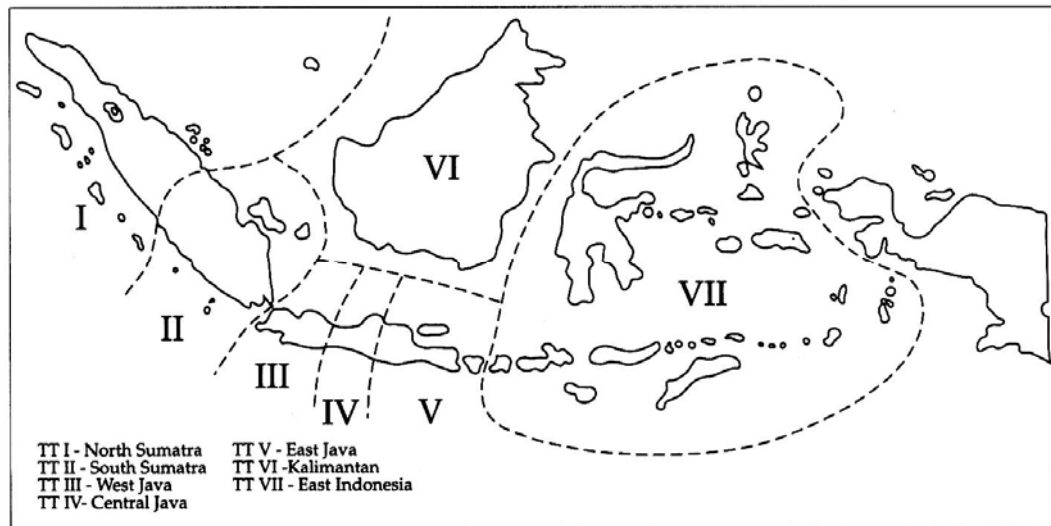
46. Colonel Simbolon



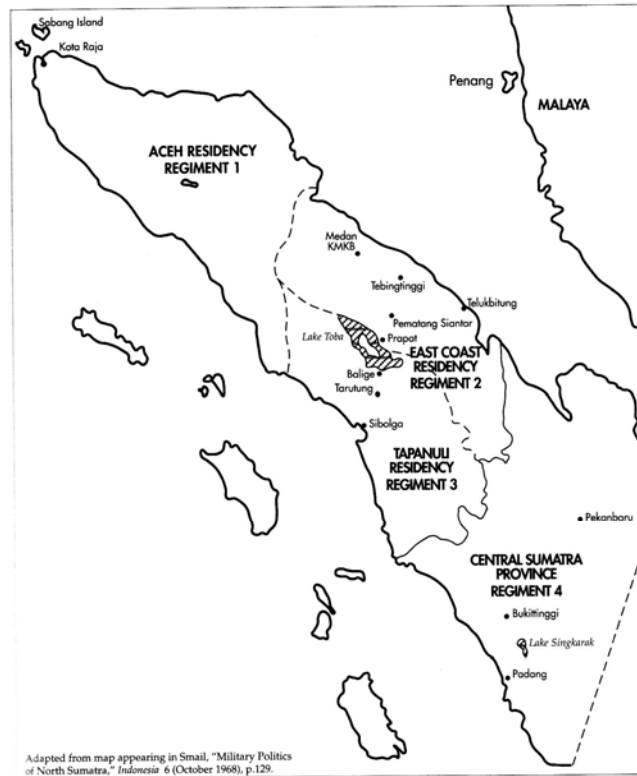
47. Colonel Alex Kawilarang



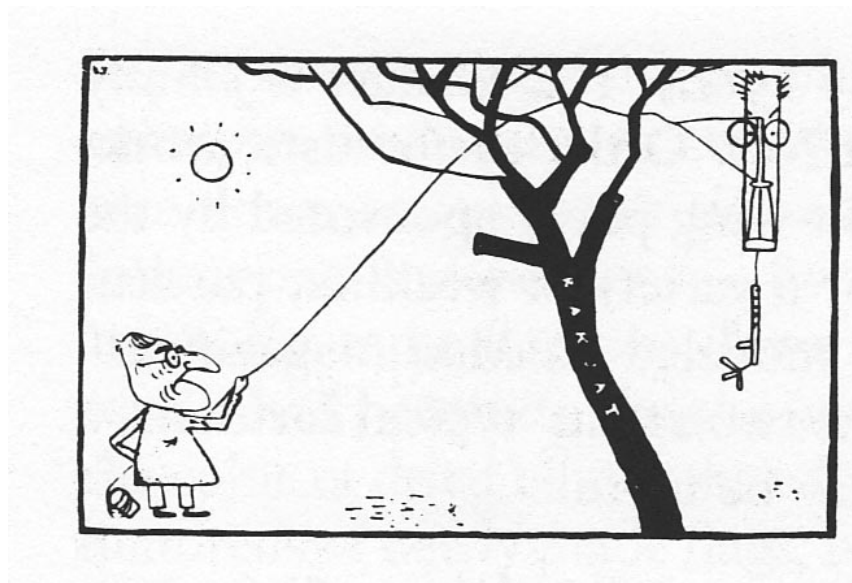
48. Prime Minister Djuanda Kartasasmita



49. Map of Indonesia's Military Divisions, 1950-1958. Simbolon was the head of Territorial Command I (TT I). Hussein was the head of Regiment 4 in TT I. Barlian was the head of TT II. Alex Kaliwarang was formerly the head of the Siliwangi Division, which was responsible for TT III (which includes Jakarta). Warouw and Sumual were the commanders of TT VII.



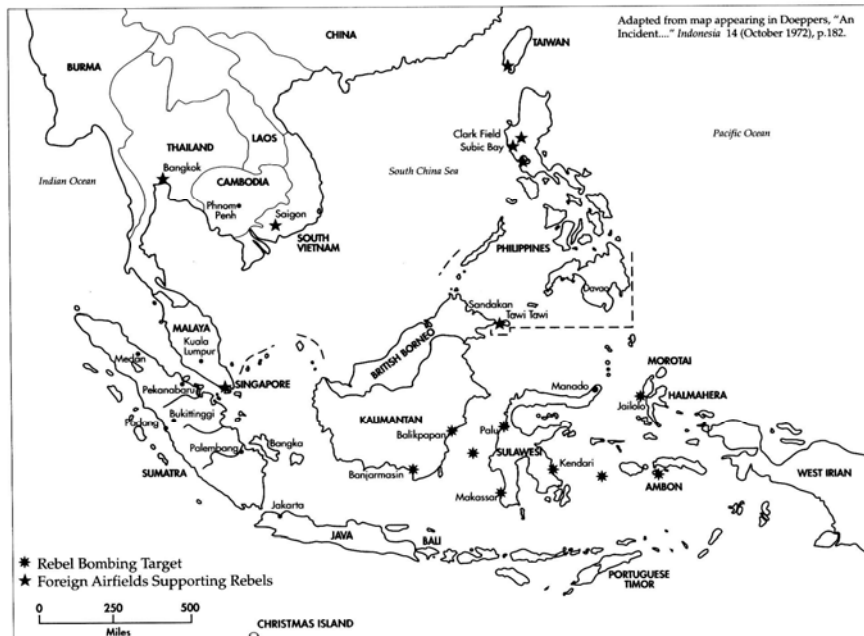
50. Map of the Territorial Command I (TT I)



51. "John Foster Dulles' Kite." An editorial cartoon in *Bintang Timur*, a left-wing daily, showing Dulles's Kite (Sjafruddin Prawiranegara/the PRRI) was entangled in people's tree. (Rakjat)



52. Map of the PRRI Campaign in North Sumatra



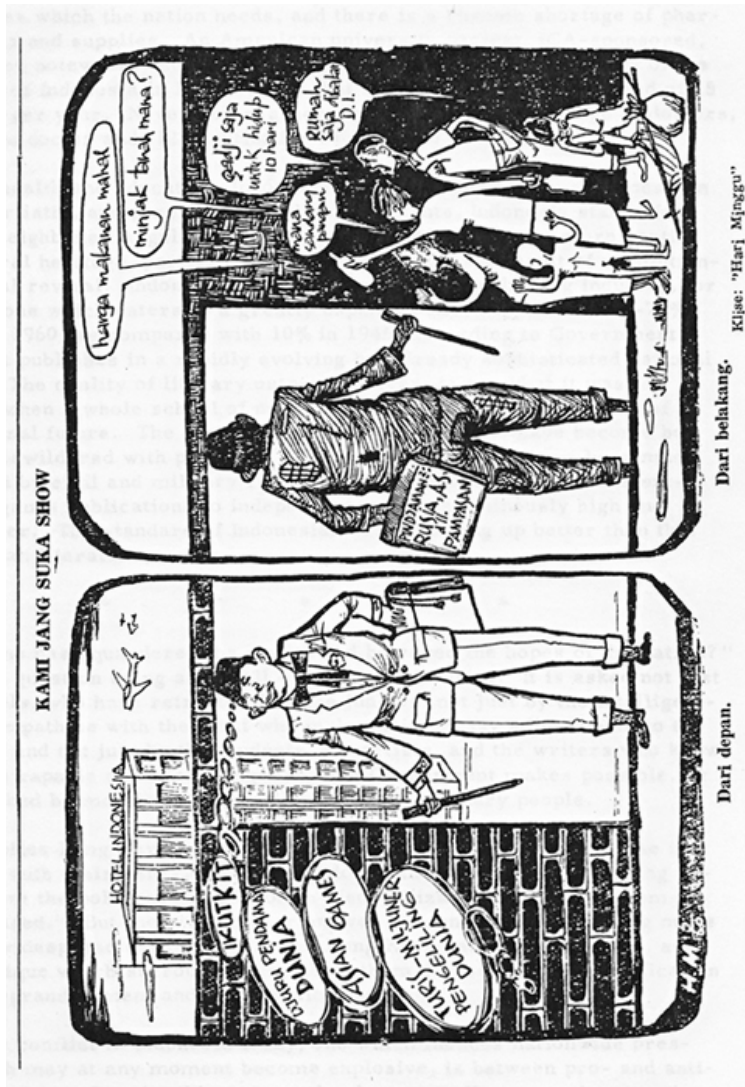
53. Map of the Peristiwa's Air War



54. Allan Lawrence Pope on trial



55. Ambassador Howard Palfrey Jones and Sukarno



56. "We like to show-off." An editorial cartoon in *Abadi*, published on June 25, 1959. The left panel (from the front side), shows a thinly disguised well-dressed President Sukarno standing in front of the new Hotel Indonesia, showing off his foreign policy accomplishments (attending a high-level world conference and Asian Games and as a global peacemaker) and as a millionaire globe-trotting tourist. The right panel (from the back side) however, shows that the brick wall on the left panel was simply a façade, made from bamboo. His suit is badly patched and his wealth comes from loans from the United States, the USSR, and the Japanese war reparations. In the meantime, people are complaining of ongoing poverty, high food prices, lack of oil, clothing, and shelter, insufficient wages, and terror from the ongoing Darul Islam rebellion. The newspaper was banned not long after this cartoon was published.



57. Joseph Luns, the Dutch Foreign Minister



58. John F. Kennedy and Sukarno



59. Tunku Abdul Rahman



60. Duncan Sandys



61. Dean Rusk and Lyndon B. Johnson



62. Foreign Minister Subandrio



63. 45th Anniversary of the PKI, May 23, 1965. Notice the pictures of Sukarno and Aidit flanked by Engels, Karl Marx, Lenin, and Stalin.



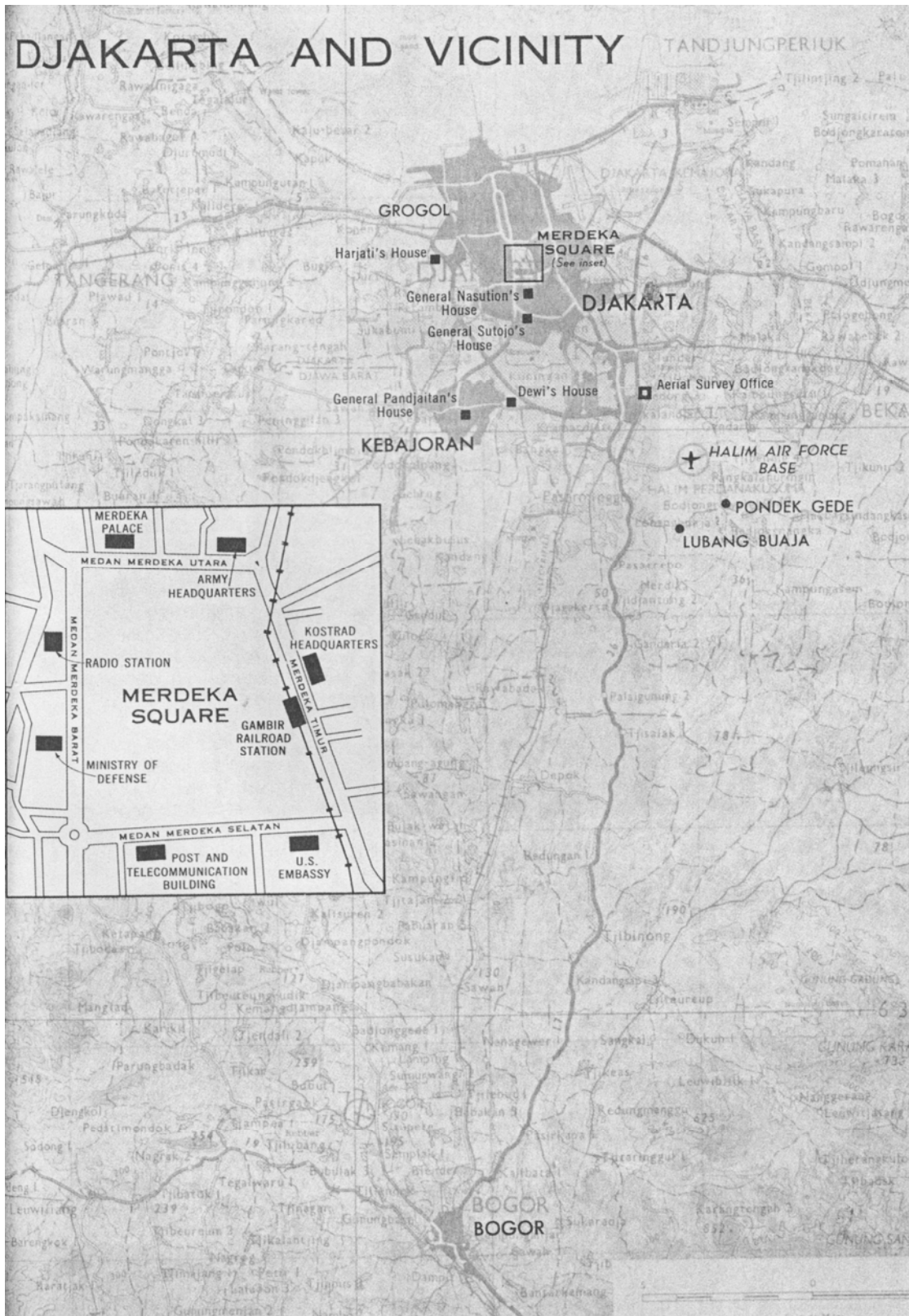
64. Inspecting the Troops. Lt. Colonel (then Major) Untung Syamsuri, Air Marshall Omar Dhani, General Suharto, and Sukarno. Untung would later be involved in the G30S/PKI.



65. Ambassador Marshall Green, Ambassador Albaran from Mexico, and Sukarno. In this photo, Ambassador Green is eating durian.



66. General Achmad Yani



67. Map of Jakarta during G30S/PKI



68. Sukarno and Suharto



69. Colonel Sarwo Edhie, who was responsible in eradicating the PKI in Central and East Java and Bali.



70. Time: The Land the Communists Lost (July 15, 1966)



71. The New Regime: Suharto, Adam Malik, Idham Chalid, Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, and Sanusi Hardjadinata

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