

# The Indonesian Turning Point 1965-66

By: Robert Martens



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# Preface

On September 30, 1965 Indonesia stood on the brink of becoming an openly proclaimed communist country. The political atmosphere was already tense, the society was driven by a fear bordering on terror, and President Sukarno was leading the world's fifth most populous nation toward a close working alliance with what was then the most radical wing of the world communist movement. The West, and particularly the United States, was under a daily barrage of propaganda attacks while the American Embassy and other non-communist installations were the subject of recurrent hostile demonstrations. Internally, Sukarno was increasingly identifying himself with an Indonesian Communist Party whose size was only exceeded by those of the Soviet Union and China and was demanding that the country advance to a higher "socialist" stage of revolution. The tension was suddenly brought to a climax during the night of September 30-October 1 as assassination squads attacked the homes of the leading generals of the Indonesian Army and seized or killed six out of seven, the single survivor narrowly escaping by a stroke of luck. A coup apparently led by an obscure officer of the Palace Guard was underway. It was soon supported by a number of communist sympathizers including the Air Force Commander and by the Indonesian Communist Party itself. Curiously, President Sukarno himself was found to be located at the headquarters of the coup forces and voluntarily so. The so-called coup failed as the Army

rallied around a then obscure general named Suharto who moved in a swift but measured fashion to suppress the military forces arrayed with Sukarno and to isolate and then set aside the nation's first president and "Great Leader", Sukarno.

The importance of these events was recognized to some degree at the time but much still clouds the course of events at that time and afterwards in this vast archipelago that extends for a distance equivalent to that from Seattle to Bermuda. Although several times larger than the Indo-China countries put together, Indonesia seemed a side-show compared to the already heavy American involvement in Vietnam and the significance of the Indonesian upheaval has not really been understood.

This book sets forth two basic theses that, if valid, will require a significant re-evaluation of the post-World War II history not only of Indonesia but of East Asia and beyond. The first thesis holds that President Sukarno was himself the driving force behind the so-called coup and was intent on what proved to be a poorly-executed attack on the moderate Army leadership because of a long-cherished aim to transform the country into a communist-albeit a national-oriented communist-state. Much of the book is devoted to the massive evidence for this assertion. Particular emphasis is placed on the chain of events from late 1964 through the first nine months of 1965 that led to the "coup" and to Sukarno's clear commitment during the spring and summer of 1965 to forcing Indonesia into his final "socialist stage" of the revolution, a commitment that included his

reliance on the Indonesian Communist Party as the revolutionary “vanguard” and chosen instrument.

A second thesis holds that the then radically-oriented Chinese leadership was fully aware of Indonesia's imminent entry into the communist camp, which it regarded as a major step on the road to a region-wide ascendancy of Asian communism, but that the shock of unexpected failure drove China into itself and thereby contributed to the excesses of the Cultural Revolution in a fit of rage caused by the failure of its great dream of a communist Asia dominated by Peking. Paradoxically, this evaporation of the great dream created the conditions for accommodation with the United States as well as a significant shift in the focus *of* the Sino-Soviet conflict. These major changes, all flowing from the Indonesian debacle, also had a profound secondary effect on the Vietnam war and U.S. attitudes toward that war as well as peripheral effects on European and world issues. Above all, a major result has been the conversion of Southeast Asia from one of the world's most unstable regions to one of the world's most stable with obvious consequences for the economic and political impact of East Asia on the world scene that has come about during the past 25 years.

In retrospect, it is clear that September 1965 was the high-water mark of world communism, a mark that would have been far higher on October 1, 1965 if the coup had succeeded. It would be excessive to attribute the fall of communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe to the Indonesian debacle for these dramatic changes can be traced principally to indigenous causes and internal contradictions that were

apparent for many years. Nevertheless, there is an element, even in the Eastern Europe debacle, of communism's failure being ultimately the failure of an idea with world-wide pretensions. Indonesia was a major step in destroying the myth of communist momentum, the image of its supposed inevitable triumph.

These points are presented in stark form in this introduction for the sake of clarity. Nuances and reservations exist and are spelled out in the chapters that follow along with a considerable body of both direct and circumstantial evidence for the theses themselves. But, if these central theses stand up to examination, then the Indonesian upheaval of 1965 was truly a major international turning point as stated in the title of this book.

My own qualifications and reasons for devoting such a major effort to an analytical book on a subject that has been covered in several early (and valuable) descriptive works needs to be stated. I was a Foreign Service Officer in the Political Section of the American Embassy in Jakarta from September, 1963 to August, 1966 with particular responsibility for following the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), other "pro-communist" organizations and Indonesian relations with communist countries. I came to this assignment from almost 10 years of work on Soviet affairs at the Embassy in Moscow and at the Department of State in Washington and was to return again to Soviet affairs after Indonesia although I later spent as much time in East Asian assignments as in Europe. Although not as fluent as some of our Indonesian specialists who had received extensive formal language and area training (as had I in



Russian and, later, Romanian), I did manage over time to learn Indonesian rather well and to become well versed in the history, culture and politics of the country. I had already come to the conclusion by early 1964 that the Marxist content in President Sukarno's speeches should be regarded more seriously than was the accepted wisdom, particularly given the clear trend of his policies. Sukarno's proclaimed intention in early 1965 to "enter the socialist stage" in the immediate future seemed to me a clear signal that he intended Indonesia to become a communist state under his leadership and his subsequent efforts to bully the Army leadership and other non-communist elements into practical measures designed to destroy their resistance confirmed this view. I long believed that Sukarno, and no one else, was responsible for launching the ill-fated "coup" which was intended to clear the path for this final conversion of Indonesia into a full-fledged communist state and my extensive research after retirement not only reinforced this view but produced a wealth of additional information that illuminates the development of Sukarno's ideas and his final actions.

The early chapters of this book review the development of communism in Indonesia from the First World War onward and stress the powerful grip of Marxism on the early national movement, the significance of the failed communist rebellion of 1926 against the Dutch and the influence of Marxism on the young Sukarno. Sukarno's ideology is examined, including his rather original and profound intellectual contributions to Asian Marxist thought, as are the nationalist and personal reservations that caused him to oppose

the 1948 communist revolt against a republic of which he was then only a figurehead leader. These first six chapters contain some original research based largely on Sukarno's little-noted speeches of 1965 but in large part rely heavily on the well established factual material in the existing historical literature - but with a quite different analysis that re-examines the earlier conclusions on the basis of Sukarno's self-revelations of the 1965 period.

The next six chapters examine Sukarno's drive to "enter the socialist stage," that is the nine months that preceded the so-called coup by the "September 30 Movement" on October 1, 1965. These chapters are the heart of the book since they are believed to establish on the basis of Sukarno's own speeches and actions that he intended to make Indonesia a communist country in 1965. They also add supplementary testimony on the behind-the-scenes plotting and planning in which Sukarno, certain left-wing generals and the PKI were all involved but over which Sukarno was the guiding and driving force. The coup and its aftermath follow including a study of the causes of Sukarno's unexpected failure including information conveyed to the author by knowledgeable sources at the time, followed by an analysis of how this "Indonesian turning-point" affected the Asian balance of power both directly and indirectly.

Most of this material has either not been developed in previous publications or has not been adequately treated in my view. The final chapters deal with the international ramifications of the communist failure. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the many colleagues from the American Embassy in Jakarta in 1965-66 who have read

and commented on this book or who have otherwise influenced my thinking. This book owes much to the encouragement of Ambassador Marshall Green who guided American policy through the difficult transition from the Sukarno to the Suharto era and who was later Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs during the opening to China. It also benefited from the advice of Deputy Chief of Mission Frank Galbraith and his successor, Jack Lydman, as well as Political Counselor Edward Masters. Galbraith and Masters were later ambassadors to Indonesia while Lydman became ambassador to Malaysia. Others who read the draft in its entirety and made useful contributions were Henry Heymann, Dick Howland, Mary Vance Trent, Hugh Tovar, Joseph Smith, Colonel George Benson, (all Jakarta colleagues of 1963-66), Edward Ingraham (then the Indonesian desk officer), Abdul Rony (Library of Congress), Dr. Guy Pauker (Rand Corporation), Professor Robert Scalapino (University of California) and journalist John Hughes (who received the Pulitzer Prize for his Indonesian Upheaval and was later Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs). During the year before his death, I also discussed the book in three long telephone conversations with William Bundy, the Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs at the time of the coup. He was strongly supportive and, indeed, I had sent him the manuscript after reading his own unpublished work on Southeast Asia during the sixties. I would especially acknowledge the contributions of Dick Howland and Henry Heymann not only for helpful commentary on the book but for contributing much to my knowledge of Indonesian affairs

over the years. I would add two points regarding these substantive contributions. First, I am also indebted to a number of other American colleagues from the 1963-66 years who were not available to review the text because of distance and other responsibilities and to numerous Indonesian friends. I regard a few among the latter as some of the best friends of my life as well as persons who provided special insights into the events described. Second, I should note that, while all offered encouragement and agreed with the basic thrust of my analysis, this does not imply total agreement with every point, of course. I am ultimately solely responsible for the content and presentation as well as for any failings, both major and minor. I do believe they deserve consideration from all serious students of Indonesia and of international affairs. Finally, I wish to express appreciation for the original typing and other clerical support of Mrs. Susu Toth and for the support over many years of my wife, Pat, for this and all my endeavors.

A word on names. The Indonesian orthography of 1963-66 has undergone certain changes in the interim and I decided to cope with those changes in a somewhat inconsistent way. Geographical names and other phrases that remain in common use are spelled in the modern way while words or phrases that were unique to the Sukarno era retain their old spellings in this text on the ground that they continue to be better known in that rendition, at least in English language works. The principal changes are "J" for the former "Dj" as in Jakarta, "C" for "Tj" as in the towns of Ceribon and Ciamis (but I have kept Tjakrabirawa for the name of Sukarno's palace guard) and

"y" for "j" as in the sports complex of Senayan (but *Harian Rakjat*, the PKI newspaper, has been left with the spelling that existed on its last day). Indonesian personal names have generally retained the old spellings anyway so there is little problem in this area. For readers unacquainted with Indonesian names, some - especially those of an Islamic or Christian cast - consist of a given name and a family name in the familiar European or American pattern. However, others - and this applies mainly to Javanese names - have the principal name first followed by a second name that is not cited by itself. And some Indonesians like Sukarno have only one name. There has also been a change in the Latin rendition of Chinese characters since the period of this book. I have retained the old spellings here, largely to avoid a loss in the flavor of the era.

A final word on the accuracy of the material presented since so much evidence is still withheld or is subject to distortion to protect individual reputations or to accomplish political purposes - including purposes of noble intention. I feel most comfortable with those chapters such as seven through nine that rely almost totally on speeches and comment published openly-in the Indonesian press and the well-publicized actions or attempted actions of Sukarno. This material in itself constitutes the clearest evidence of what the so-called coup was all about. Other material based on trial testimony, behind-the-scenes allegations by Indonesian sources to the author and to others, and the rather sensational testimony of a Sukarno aide that was leaked to a Dutch writer and published in the Netherlands are also used in a supplementary way as they shed additional light on

what happened. Some of the latter was also told to me in December 1965 by a senior aide to Adam Malik. Most of this material obviously appeared valid to the writer or it would not otherwise have been used but it is possible that some of the particular anecdotal incidents will prove to be wrong or distorted. It is even more likely that an opening of the Indonesian Government's complete record of the interrogations would shed additional light on the full extent of Sukarno's involvement and on the actions and intentions of the other players. But any such amendments would still be minor; the main thrust of what happened in the months (and even years) leading up to the momentous events of late 1965 is clear enough while the decisive nature of the failure can also be adduced from a careful and reasonable analysis of the chain of events that followed.

# I

## Marxism and Nationalism in Indonesia - The Beginning

The Indonesian archipelago was visited first by Portuguese and then by Dutch adventurers in the 16th century. Small portions of this vast region had recently fallen or were falling under the influence of Islam. Many areas were primitive although Java had assimilated the culture of India over many centuries and had developed Hindu and Buddhist Kingdoms. Both Islam and the earlier Hindic influences were absorbed into the existing local cultural traditions in ways that made the Indonesian archipelago unique. The initial European impact was on the smaller, so-called spice, islands of the Moluccas and the Lesser Sunda group but Dutch inroads into the larger islands and particularly into Java took place a century later. Although some remote areas were scarcely under complete Dutch control even at the end of the nineteenth Century, one may say that for all practical purposes the archipelago was a colony of this small European nation for some 350 years. The peoples of the archipelago were largely of Malay stock and spoke Malay or Malay-based languages but there were also pronounced social and cultural differences, many of which have lingered on and deeply influenced Indonesian political developments even to the present day. The majority of Javanese, that is the people of Central and East Java, retained their pre-Islamic and

pre-Dutch civilization long after the arrival of Europeans and have continued to be more deeply influenced by these indigenous and Hindic cultural traditions than by the thin overlay of nominal adherence to Islam.

Actually, Javanese society has been characterized by deep cleavages between a minority that became strongly Islamicized (the so-called santri class) on the one hand and, on the other, both the majority of the common people and the traditional Javanese upper class. This traditional upper class, that had its roots in the court society of the old Javanese Kingdoms, is called the "priyayi" (priyaji in the old orthography) and is steeped in the elaborate rituals and cultural forms that have evolved from the ancient Hindic kingdoms. The tales and symbols of the Ramayana, for example, are a source of almost constant allusion in public life as well as forming the central themes of contemporary culture. The third category of Javanese society, the abangan, consists of the great mass of Javanese peasantry, particularly in Central Java and in those areas of East Java not dominated by santri influence. Like the priyayi, the abangan masses are deeply moved by pre-Islamic cultural traditions with mysticism and local superstition intermixed with the more popular forms of Hindic tradition as in the great popularity of the wayang shadow plays that are based on the Ramayana. The santri class is particularly prevalent in the small island of Madura, just offshore from Surabaya on the northern coast of Java, and along the northern section of the East Java mainland. This geographic focus reflects the history of early Islamic penetration through Arab traders. Santri



individuals and santri-dominated villages may be formed in other areas, however. The religiously conservative Nahdatul Ulama (NU) or Moslem Scholars political party was largely based on the East Java santri constituency although it also sought support elsewhere.

This brief outline of Javanese sociology is perforce a generalization and indeed the subject, when explored at greater depth, is one that is debated by both foreign scholars and Indonesians but these main outlines are important as they have strongly affected Indonesian internal politics. The rise of communism and a variety of eclectic mixtures of nationalism and Marxism in Indonesia, especially in Java, in the aftermath of World War I was profoundly influenced by the susceptibility of the non-santri Javanese to secular ideologies. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), in particular, always had its strongest appeal in Central and East Java. West Java, which also had a distinct and complex language called Sundanese and a sense of past cultural and historical accomplishment, although on a lesser scale than "Java", lacked the class conflicts noted above and embraced Islam. The peoples of the "Outer Islands", of which Sumatra was by far the most populous and politically advanced, also adopted Islam as the primary component of their cultural identities except for certain pockets of Christianity such as the Karo Bataks of North Sumatra, the Minahasa of North Sulawesi and various groups in the smaller islands of East Indonesia. The Islamic peoples of West Sumatra and the Outer Islands tended to be anti-communist and suspicious of Javanese dominance. The anti-communist Masjumi

Party, as will be seen, predominated in these areas until it was banned by Sukarno.

While the divisions noted above are important to an understanding of Indonesian political developments, their existence should not be overemphasized at the expense of their opposite - a very real sense of common interests and common cause against colonialism that developed into a deep-felt sense of Indonesian national identity. Although Sukarno split the nation on several occasions to advance the cause of the continuing Indonesian revolution that he envisaged, he also contributed mightily to the mystique of unity that is expressed in the national motto "In Unity, Diversity". The phenomenal spread of a national Indonesian language at the expense of local languages and dialects has contributed to this unity as has the cumulative experience, however bitter at times, of more than five decades now as an independent nation. Resentment and a desire for independence were undoubtedly strong throughout the long colonial history, and particularly in Java and parts of Sumatra that could recall flourishing pre-Dutch empires such as Majapahit and Sriwijaya and which nourished a belief in Javanese (or Indonesian) superiority and greatness. Nevertheless, the conscious Indonesian nationalist movement dates mainly from the beginning of the Twentieth Century, first with the Budi Utomo movement (founded in 1908) and the Sarekat Dagang Islam (1909) and then with the more openly political Sarekat Islam which was founded in 1912. These essentially secular movements also took place in the company of a revitalization of Islam which flowed from

the reform and modernization efforts that arose in Cairo at the turn of the century and led to the founding in Indonesia of the Muhammadiyah in 1912. The Muhammadiyah particularly attracted those Indonesians who remained firmly attached to Islamic principles but who were conscious of modern developments and were affected by the stirrings of nationalism. Although a religious and social movement, Muhammadiyah eventually became the core of the Masjumi Party in the post-war period, a political party that opposed the communists, and eventually Sukarno, before it was banned in 1960.(1)

This trend was eclipsed for the time being by the spectacular growth of the Sarekat Islam which, despite the Islam in its title, was essentially a secular nationalist movement. Under the leadership of Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto, the Sarekat Islam grew rapidly through the rest of the decade although it was increasingly subject to diverse ideological currents. Another party, the Nationale Indische Partij (National Indonesian Party), which had a large Eurasian composition and advocated racial equality, social justice, and eventual independence, was banned after only one year. This ended, as George Kahin has noted, any potential for an Indonesian-Eurasian combination against Dutch rule.(2) It also left the political field to the Sarekat Islam as the preeminent vehicle for the expression of Indonesian nationalism, a role similar to that of the Kuomintang in China under Sun Yat-sen.

The first avowedly Marxist organization, the Indies Social Democratic Association (known by its Dutch language initials as the

ISDV) was founded in 1914 by a recently arrived Dutch social democrat, Henrik Sneevliet. The ISDV was initially a grouping of Dutch socialists with a fairly wide range of political attitudes although the movement's activist core quickly moved in a radical direction. This trend towards radicalism was subsequently reinforced by the attraction of the Russian revolution to most of its membership. Partly through the impact of the Dutch language ISDV newspaper, the Free Word (Het Vrije Woord), the new Marxist party began to have an impact on radical nationalist Indonesians by 1916. Both Sneevliet and another Dutch Marxist, Adolf Baars, were strongly committed to influencing the native Indonesian nationalist movement in a radical and Marxist direction - the beginning of the "Bloc Within" strategy that Sneevliet was to employ with great initial success in Indonesia and later in China. After a short-lived flirtation with infiltration of "Insulinde", a Eurasian organization allied to the banned National Indies Party, the ISDV quickly succeeded in recruiting into its own ranks many of the more radical local leaders of the Sarekat Islam. This success was particularly great in the large Central Java city of Semarang, whose radical leadership became not only the left wing of the Sarekat Islam but simultaneously the nucleus of the Indonesian Communist Party. (3) This radical left wing of the Sarekat Islam became sufficiently powerful that the entire Sarekat Islam was impelled towards a more radical posture, both as a nationalist force striving for independence and increasingly as a receptacle for the fusion of Marxist and nationalist thought in a variety of forms. Indeed, it may be said that nowhere else in the

world outside of Russia did Marxism become so deeply imbedded so early in the consciousness of a national movement. Even Tjokroaminoto was to denounce "sinful capitalism" although he later limited that concept more specifically to foreign ownership.(4) It is important to realize that this strong Marxist implantation in Indonesia substantially preceded that in China and was in many ways a model for China (second only to that of the Russian Revolution itself), not the other way around. (5)

In spite of growing Marxist influence on the national movement, the Marxist faction was unable to gain control of the Fourth Congress of the Sarekat Islam in 1919, causing this group to found the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) on May 23, 1920 in the Semarang office of the Sarekat Islam. The first (PKI) chairman was Semaun, the young leader of the Semarang branch of the Sarekat Islam (SI). His deputy was Darsono. Both remained members of the Sarekat Islam for the moment but the growing struggle between them and the Sarekat Islam national leadership headed by Tjokroaminoto and his active assistant, Hadji Agus Salim, made a rupture inevitable. This occurred at the Sixth Congress of the Sarekat Islam in October, 1921 when Salim pushed through a resolution stating that no member of the Sarekat Islam could be a member of another political party. The communists present in the Congress then resigned and the Semarang and some other branches shortly seceded. The new PKI quickly established a "Red Sarekat Islam" which later became the "Sarekat Rakjat" (People's Association - the current spelling would be rakyat) and succeeded in wresting away a probable majority of the

Sarekat Islam branches. This new association was a PKI controlled mass organization designed to mobilize a wider "front" of supporters than the PKI proper. It was relatively successful although the PKI had made a mistake in allowing the conservative opposition to make religion versus atheism a central aspect of the debate, a mistake that the PKI tried to overcome by denying any opposition to religion on its part. The Indonesian communists have sought thereafter to deemphasize or even deny traditional European communism's hostility toward religion. It is also noteworthy that the young Sukarno placed great emphasis on the need for an alliance of nationalism, religion and communism after his emergence as an important political figure in 1927 and that this "Nasakom" idea was supported in later years by both Sukarno and the PKI as a necessity for the "national democratic" or pre-socialist stage of what was viewed as a continuing revolution.

The progress of the PKI in Indonesia was being carried out, of course, against the background of Bolshevik ability to hold on to power in Russia, however precariously, and on the institutionalization of the Third International or Comintern with its headquarters in Moscow. The Second Congress of the Comintern took place in July-August, 1920 and, under the driving force of Lenin's leadership, decided that all communist parties should actively support the "revolutionary movements of liberation" in the colonial areas. They should also "establish temporary relations and even unions with the revolutionary movements in the colonies and backward countries without, however, amalgamating with them".

Alliances should be forged not only with the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie but with bourgeois nationalists in spite of the fact that divergence with the latter could be expected further down the revolutionary road. Although the hoped for revolution in these areas would be national and not communist in the early stages, leadership should be "in the hands of the communist vanguard".(6) Lenin had already made plain that he saw great value in supporting revolutionary nationalism in the colonial world and especially in Asia against Western capitalism on opportunistic grounds, whatever the level of revolutionary consciousness among the Asians in traditional Marxist terms.

The above passages reflected the experiences of the Russian revolution itself, of course, and were only a minor extension of the alterations to traditional Marxist theory that Trotsky and Lenin had evolved in order to act forcefully in a Russia that was obviously ready for revolution in 1917 even though it was the most backward of the major European countries and therefore lacking the sizable proletariat that traditional Marxist theory regarded as the cornerstone of a socialist revolution. The Comintern - and Lenin in particular - were also greatly influenced by the apparent revolutionary advances in Indonesia and by the effective arguments of Sneevliet who had arrived from Holland after his expulsion from Indonesia in 1918 and was present at the Second Comintern Congress as a semi-official PKI representative. Not surprisingly, there were arguments at the Congress between those, like the Indian communist, M. N. Roy, who favored a more narrow approach to revolution in Asia with emphasis

on retention of control by the communist party and a lesser degree of reliance on cooperation with "bourgeois nationalist" elements on the one hand, and those like Lenin and Sneevliet (now already known by the pseudonym of Maring) who wanted to take advantage of the national awakenings as a weapon against the capitalist European powers, whatever their ideological orientation in Marxist terms.(7) Sneevliet also argued, in the Indonesian case, for better understanding that the Sarekat Islam, despite its name, was a strong anti-Dutch national movement (and even "proletarian", he said on one occasion) and should not be regarded as a bourgeois or reactionary religious rival to communism that would be anathema to communist atheism. (8)

The debate between those who favored party supremacy and doctrinal purity versus those who favored a more opportunistic and open approach in order to mobilize fellow travelling elements for short term objectives has been continuous in all communist parties and, indeed, within the individual minds of communist leaders who have shifted from one emphasis to another as the external environment or internal power struggles required (some of course had personalities inclined to be chronically more rigid or more flexible than others). The PKI had such a history in these early years, since it became increasingly elitist and skeptical of national front tactics in the 1923-26 period and was then reluctant to cooperate with the national bourgeoisie to the extent that it might have. The PKI did establish the Sarekat Rakjat as a broad national front but, according to Van der Kroef, lost interest in it until leverage was



applied from Moscow to be "less sectarian", the stock communist phrase for attacking a party or party faction deemed to be insufficiently willing to make tactical alliances with non-party elements.(9) Even Aidit, the PKI leader of the late Sukarno era, subsequently criticized the early PKI for having been "overly sectarian". (10) One could argue, however, that this criticism from both Aidit and Western observers is too glib; that the rupture of the Sarekat Islam was a necessity given an incompatibility of goals that could not be papered over indefinitely and that there were definite limits to what the PKI could do thereafter to build a strong national front. Even Sukarno, the great synthesizer and architect of his version of unity on the basis of the Sukarnoist doctrines of Panca Sila (Pantja Sila) and Nasakom, ultimately failed because he could not proceed from a unity developed on the basis of compromise to a unity that was pegged to a Marxist view of the revolution that had limited acceptance in the broader society. In 1926 the chances for overthrowing Dutch power were virtually nil, whatever the tactics, and the primary mistake of the PKI was not its very real faults of "sectarianism" but its launching of an armed rebellion that was bound to fail miserably.

One must pause at this point to note the movements of the various early communist leaders. Sneevliet, Baars and most of the other early European Marxist leaders had been expelled from Indonesia by the Dutch authorities around 1918-1919. Sneevliet, under his newly assumed name of "Maring", was then sent to China in 1920-21 as the Comintern's first representative there with the task

of promoting his patented "Bloc Within" strategy. He was present at the formal founding meeting of the Chinese Communist Party in the summer of 1921. It is worth underlining that in these early years, Indonesian Marxism was clearly a more successful movement than that in China and that the latter was significantly influenced by the early Indonesian model. This reliance eroded as the Chinese movement gained strength and the limitations of the Bloc Within strategy were manifested. Nevertheless, the stature of Indonesian communism probably remained greater in the eyes of the Chinese communists than that of smaller and more late-blooming communist movements elsewhere. Meanwhile, Adolf Baars and others went to Moscow where Baars eventually became disillusioned. He left Russia and finally returned to Indonesia many years later as an opponent of communism, a road also followed by the first deputy PKI chairman, Darsono. The first PKI chairman, Semaun, who was forced out of Indonesia in 1923, remained in the Soviet Union as an obscure figure until December 1956, however, when he returned with his Russian family and eventually became a little known figure on Sukarno's forty-six member Supreme Advisory Council. (11) Tan Malaka, another early PKI leader, was ousted from Indonesia in 1922 and later became the Comintern representative for Southeast Asia with headquarters in the Philippines. The Communist Party within Indonesia thereafter came under the sway of Musso and Alimin, two radical young leaders who pressed the PKI into a course of armed revolution in 1926 against the strong opposition of Tan Malaka from abroad.

The pathetically ill-prepared 1926-27 PKI revolt was soon crushed. The Dutch banned the Party, and exiled those among its cadres who could be found and captured to a remote prison camp in New Guinea called Boven Digul (Tanah Merah or Red Earth). Alimin and Musso managed to flee from Singapore to the Soviet Union where they remained until 1948 (Musso made a secret trip to Indonesia in 1935 to lay out a Soviet approved program for the underground PKI). (12) The vacuum left by the failure and suppression of the 1926 PKI was soon to be filled by new nationalist leaders, above all by Sukarno who came to national prominence in 1927 as leader of the new Indonesian Nationalist Party or PNI. Most of the traditional literature on Sukarno and Indonesian nationalism admits a strong Marxist strain in Sukarno's thought but tends to downplay Sukarno's Marxism as exotic, romantic and subsumed into his nationalism.(13) I believe, however, that Sukarno was deeply committed to the basic principles and ideology of authoritarian Marxism and indeed was more linked to communism itself than this traditional view would hold. I further believe that Sukarno never lost sight of his personal commitment to an independent Indonesia that would eventually be "socialist" in the communist sense. Sukarno in fact exhibited remarkable intellectual consistency over the years in his basic beliefs despite a tactical need to obscure his ultimate program - an approach not foreign to other communist movements. Sukarno's fundamental commitment became ever more clear in the days leading to the September 30/October 1, 1965 "coup". By this

time, Sukarno was openly identifying himself almost totally with the PKI.

Sukarno was undeniably also, and perhaps primarily, an Indonesian nationalist. However, this was also largely true of the early PKI and again, after the mid-1950s, of the later PKI. Indeed, Marxism and nationalism were intricately intertwined in the early history of the Indonesian independence movement and Marxism-Leninism's adoption of anti-colonial and anti-imperialist themes was the central element in attracting not only Sukarno but the overt members of the PKI such as Semaun, Darsono, Tan Malaka, Musso and, in later years, men like Aidit, Njoto and Lukman. Other Indonesians had a similar commitment to independence and were attracted to many of the tenets of Marxism. However, they never became committed to an essentially Leninist vision of the Revolution and the society which that revolution was intended to establish. Or in some other cases, they began with a Marxist view as young men but shrugged it off later. Men like Hatta, Sjahrir and later Adam Malik were Marxists in their youth and retained a strong social consciousness later while rejecting communism. This was not true of Sukarno, in my view, and that case will emerge in the course of this book. Before continuing to develop and refine the analysis of how Sukarno, the PKI and the Indonesian revolution fit together, one should first describe the salient points in Sukarno's early career. He was born in a small town in East Java on June 6, 1901 of middle class Indonesian parents, attended high school in the large Javanese seaport city of Surabaya and eventually continued his studies at the

Technical College in Bandung where he graduated as an engineer in 1926. He had already become acquainted with Marxism as a teenager, first from a relatively moderate Dutch Marxist teacher named Hartogh at the Surabaya Hogere Burger School and later from the fiery Dutch communist, Adolf Baars. Sukarno was not sympathetic years later, incidentally, when Baars left the Soviet Union, broke with communism and returned to Indonesia to warn against that doctrine. The young Sukarno was also absorbing the romance of Indonesian nationalism, the Hindu mysticism of East and Central Java and the politics of the national movement. To a greater or lesser degree, this could also be said of other budding Indonesian politicians whether connected with the Sarekat Islam, the new Communist Party or the various nationalist groupings that were to follow the suppression of the PKI after 1926.

With such future communist leaders as Musso and Alimin, Sukarno boarded for a time in the house of the Sarekat Islam leader, Tjokroaminoto, which was also visited frequently by Sneevliet, Baars and other Marxists as well as by non-Marxist nationalists. Sukarno's ideological development continued in the same general direction of blending Marxism and nationalism. Such a blending was not seen as contradictory except by the anti-Marxist nationalists. Sukarno's views then, as in subsequent decades, were similar to those of the early PKI including those leaders such as Tan Malaka and Musso who later could be considered as threats to his leadership in the early post-war era. Sukarno's identification with the radical left wing of the Sarekat Islam was probably tempered for a time by his

courtship and brief marriage to Tjokroaminoto's daughter, a factor that probably explains his spirited defense of his father-in-law at the Second PKI Party Congress at Bandung in 1923. His very attendance at this PKI congress is a remarkable indication of his political leanings even before his break with the Sarekat Islam moderates. It has been known but also largely ignored by analysts of Sukarno's career. While Sukarno was undoubtedly close to the Sarekat Islam leader as a young man in his late teens and very early twenties, he was also writing already on nationalist themes that advocated elimination of capitalism in Indonesia as well as evincing a beginning of his insight into the need to join the themes of socialism, nationalism and Islam to achieve independence.

After enrolling at the Bandung Technical College, Sukarno broke with Tjokroaminoto and divorced Tjokroaminoto's young daughter, while gradually becoming more deeply committed to the left wing of the nationalist movement that was dominated by the PKI. According to the traditional literature, he is said to have been under the influence of the nationalistic and radical but non-communist National-Indische Party of Douwes Dekker, Tjipto Mangunkusumo, and Suwardi Surjaningrat in this period but in 1965 Sukarno identified himself as having been "a member" of the forces that led the 1926 revolt, notably the PKI and its Sarekat Rakjat front.(14). He was, of course, still a student at Bandung through much of this period and continued to be visible primarily as a leader of the Bandung Study Group during the period of early PKI ascendancy. It is interesting to note that the PKI had already been

forced underground by the Dutch and had reestablished its headquarters in Bandung on an illegal basis some months before the 1926 revolt broke out. Although speculative, Sukarno's allusions to an association by himself with the 1926 PKI combined with the presence of the national PKI headquarters in Bandung certainly makes plausible a line of conjecture that Sukarno already had strong secret ties with the PKI. (15) Sukarno's graduation and sudden emergence as a national leader in 1927 coincided with the failure of the 1926 PKI revolt and the suppression of the PKI as a legal organization. The vacuum was filled by establishment of the Indonesian Nationalist Party or PNI in 1927 at the initiative of the Bandung Study Group headed by Sukarno. On the eve of the September 30 affair of 1965 - the communist "coup" launched by Sukarno - the latter proclaimed in a little publicized speech that he had "always" been a member of the 1926 PKI "generation" and emphasized that his loyalties had been to the PKI, not to the Bandung Study Group. He added that the word had been passed by imprisoned PKI leaders to carry on the work of the revolution by other means. In other words, Sukarno was virtually saying in 1965 that he had been a secret member of the PKI who had felt compelled to adopt the pose of a non-PKI nationalist leader in order to operate politically under the conditions of PKI illegality between 1927 and the establishment of Indonesian independence almost two decades later. It may be noted that other well known Indonesian political figures had revealed over the years that they had been secret communists while ostensibly acting as leading figures in other

organizations. These included a one-time Premier from the Socialist Party (PSI), Amir Sjarifuddin, and several leaders of the Netherlands based student organization, Perhimpunan Indonesia, such as Maruto Darusman, Setiadjit (later head of the Labor Party) and Abdulmadjid.

The year 1927 also saw the first enunciation of Sukarno's doctrine of "Nasikom", an alliance of the forces of nationalism (nas), Islam(i), and communism(kom) to achieve liberation from Dutch imperialism. When this doctrine re-emerged many years later under Sukarno's Guided Democracy, it was refined as Nasakom, with the middle "a" standing for agama, the Indonesian word for religion, in place of the "i" for Islam in the early version. The refinement did not signify a policy change since

Sukarno had long advanced the tactical argument that Islam was not a good basis for revolution in Indonesia because Christian minorities should not be excluded from the revolutionary ranks. Sukarno's linking of nationalism, religion and communism has, in the conventional wisdom (and especially among his Western apologists), been taken as evidence that his primary motivation was simply to balance forces in order to enhance his own position and maintain unity at all costs.

This portrayal of Sukarno as a kind of non-ideological opportunist, reinforced by a playboy image, has been fundamentally incorrect in my opinion. Whether one admires the man and is sympathetic toward his policies and goals or not, Sukarno deserves respect as a serious, far-sighted thinker who was committed toward a particular set of values and beliefs. Sukarno's outlook was dominated



not only by the hatred of imperialism and colonialism that attracted him to Marxism in the first place but by the core ideas of the Marxist system of thought. These embraced, in particular, the concept of the historical dialectic including the inevitability of ultimate socialist triumph and the division of the revolution into historical "stages" which required different tactics and different constellations of allies in each. Marxism, in this connection, also provided the tactical doctrine of the united front or national front and the need for a vanguard to infiltrate and gradually take over broad based coalitions. In this regard, the real meaning of Nasakom was from its inception a national front tactic for uniting a wide grouping of forces to pursue the initial objectives of, first, national independence and, later, of completing the "national democratic stage" of the revolution, both of which were pre-requisites under classical communist theory (and certainly that of the PKI), to a later shift of objectives, that is to the final advance to the higher "socialist stage" of the revolution.(16) Understandably this was not so clear in the late 1940s and 1950s but Sukarno's actions as well as his rhetoric substantiate this view as he achieved greater and greater power and became more and more confident of victory in the 1960s. As this occurred, both Sukarno and the PKI shifted from an emphasis on "unity" to an ever more narrowly defined unity of the "progressive revolutionary forces" alone - a formulation designed to accommodate what Rakosi of Hungary so aptly phrased as "slicing the salami".

In the years that followed the birth of the PNI in 1927, Sukarno also promoted his concept of Marhaenism which was described as

Marxism adapted to the conditions of Indonesia. The word "Marhaen" was attributed to a poor subsistence peasant whom Sukarno met in West Java in the early 1920s. It was designed to cover not only the rural poor as the basis and intended beneficiary of revolution but the urban proletariat and the poorer elements of the petty bourgeoisie as well. Much has been made of the supposed "vagueness" of this concept to distinguish Sukarno's thought from that of "true" communists but in truth these ideas became chronic to Asian communism since their essential content was a two-fold deviation from the Soviet model that the industrial proletariat was too insignificant in the underdeveloped world to be the primary instrument of social revolution and that the center of the world revolution was considered to be in Asia, not in Europe. No wonder that European-oriented Marxists and even Russian Marxists have looked askance at the purity of Sukarno's Marxism but the parallels between Sukarno's Marhaenism and the views of both the PKI and Chinese communism are clear.(17) Indeed, one may also note that Sukarno had developed a philosophical view of Marxism akin to the central idea system of Mao Tse-tung some years before Mao's ideas were crystallized in China. This is not to say that Sukarno was Mao's teacher; this trend of thought arose naturally from indigenous conditions in both places and was probably advanced independently by a good many Asian revolutionaries before it received the imprint of famous names. These points do, however, underline both the seriousness and coherence of Sukarno's Marxism and the importance

of Indonesia as a fertile early breeding ground for Marxist intellectual development in an Asian nationalist context.

It should also be noted that the deviation of such peasant-oriented concepts of Marxism from Leninism is not all that great. Leninism (and certainly the PKI) has always distinguished between the almost organic alliance between the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie that was to be preserved into the higher socialist stage beyond the victory of the national and democratic (bourgeois) revolution on the one hand and the temporary alliance with the "national bourgeoisie" in the national democratic revolution on the other. The communists say that the proletariat is the head of this organic alliance with the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie, and they disparage the alleged slackness of the latter, but they have never been loath to use them as revolutionary fuel. Nor have the Asian communist "deviationists", including Sukarno, sought to elevate the peasantry above the industrial workers in their Marxist cosmology, they have simply placed greater weight on the need to broaden both membership requirements and tactics to accommodate the communist movement with Asian reality. Lenin himself recognized that revolution was to be different under the conditions of the colonial East although his arguments were more tactical and less theoretical than those of subsequent generations of Asian Marxists. Indeed, the Bolshevik movement itself had already significantly revised classical Marxism to permit more suitable and flexible tactics in the backward, semi-feudal environment that was Tsarist Russia.

In any event, the Dutch authorities were sufficiently concerned by the revolutionary threat to their rule to arrest and incarcerate Sukarno twice. Arrested in December 1929, Sukarno was released in December, 1931 after which he joined the Indonesian Party (Partindo), one of the successors to the disbanded PNI. Rearrested in August, 1933, Sukarno was exiled first to the island of Flores in the Lesser Sunda group and later to the town of Bengkulu in southwestern Sumatra. Many other nationalist leaders of varying ideological persuasion were exiled in this period as well including the other two principal figures of the successful post-war independence movement, Mohammed Hatta and Sutan Sjahrir. Sukarno remained in exile until freed by the Japanese in 1942.

One noteworthy indication of Sukarno's continuing commitment to revolutionary Marxism was his relationship in Bengkulu with two young brothers, Asmara Hadi and A. M. Hanafi, whom Sukarno indoctrinated along Marxist lines. Asmara Hadi married Sukarno's adopted daughter (he had no children of his own at that point) and both Asmara Hadi and his brother were widely regarded as quasi-adopted children of Sukarno as well.(18) These two men eventually became the leaders in the 1960s of a new Partindo Party that was a policy clone of the PKI as well as the chosen instrument for Sukarno's close personal control over the Chinese minority through the Marxist organization known as Baperki.(19)

The Japanese occupation was a period of fairly widespread collaboration between Indonesian nationalists including Sukarno, Hatta and the ex-PKI national communist, Tan Malaka, with the

Japanese although a small pro-allied underground existed that was led by Sutan Sjarir and Amir Sjarifuddin. The two groups kept in touch with each other for a time. The web of motives among those who collaborated with the Japanese occupation has been extensively argued but there is little doubt that most of the Indonesians, including Sukarno, were trying to use what they saw as the necessary evil of the Japanese occupation to achieve long range national goals.(20) Sukarno, the most famous of the Indonesian leaders and the one with the greatest reputation for stirring oratory, gave lectures at a Japanese-organized political school. The young PKI chairman, D. N. Aidit, has said (in early 1965) that Sukarno was one of his first instructors in Marxism at this time.(21) Although the motives for such a statement can be assumed to have been self-serving or sycophantic, there is no reason to assume that Aidit was being totally disingenuous; such a well-publicized statement could, after all, have been denounced by Sukarno if regarded by the latter as totally false. It not only never was but Sukarno was increasingly warm in his praise of Aidit in the weeks and months that followed.

Sukarno emerged as President of Indonesia in August, 1945 with Mohammed Hatta as Vice-President. The fact that Sukarno was Javanese and Hatta Sumatran helped to make the duumvirate of greater appeal to the Outer Islands or at least to Sumatra. The independence proclamation was made against the initial reluctance of Sukarno and Hatta after strong pressure from a group of nationalist youth, some of whom became famous later. They included Wikana of the PKI, Chairul Saleh, Sukarni and Adam

Malik, the latter three being followers of Tan Malaka. The form of government that followed was parliamentary in nature with an appointed quasi-parliament. Sutan Sjahrir, the democratic socialist who had headed the anti-Japanese underground, became premier and the effective leader of the early republic. The socialist party he headed was infiltrated by communists, including his successor as Premier, Amir Sjarifuddin, and it eventually split; a probable majority joined the communists while Sjahrir led the rest into a new democratically-oriented Socialist Party of Indonesia or PSI. This work is not the place for a detailed description of the complex history of that period which included the abortive attempt of a national communist movement led by Tan Malaka to seize power, the disastrous PKI revolt in Central Java centered on the town of Madiun and, of course, the recurrent fighting with the Dutch who sought to reimpose their control.

The PKI emerged as a legal party in 1945 under the original leadership of a Tan Malaka sympathizer named Muhammad Yusuf. Yusuf was deposed in due course by a more legitimate PKI figure named Sardjono, who then shared the spotlight with Alimin after the latter's return from China. In 1948, Musso returned from Moscow in the wake of the new world-wide hard-line associated with the name of Zhdanov. This line was a product of the emerging Cold War and called, in essence, for tactics of violent revolution and tight party control. A "front" policy was also included but on a rather narrow basis in which communist domination of front policy with little or no compromise was required. In Indonesia, Musso's "New Road"

pointed toward armed rebellion later in the year although actual fighting broke out prematurely and piecemeal on the initiative of local communist military units that felt threatened by Premier Hatta's program for improving central government control over the military in ways that would have reduced and dominated communist and other factionally-oriented units. Musso, Amir Sjarifuddin, Setiadjit and other, but not all, communist leaders flocked to the small city of Madiun, which had become the headquarters of the communist forces, once the fighting had begun. They were ultimately killed by loyalist forces spearheaded by the West Java Siliwangi Division under Colonel Nasution. Amir and Setiadjit had not been open communists until this point and Amir's declaration of solidarity with the PKI and admission that he had long been in the party came as a great surprise to most including Sjahrir. The communists subsequently claimed that "Madiun", as the revolt came to be known to all Indonesians, was a provocation initiated by Hatta and other "reactionary" elements.

Sukarno had made a famous radio appeal at the height of the rebellion for the Indonesian people to choose between Musso and himself and it is clear he did not regard either Musso or the rebellion with favor. He did appeal unsuccessfully for clemency toward Amir, the former Premier. Sukarno also made a point thereafter of condemning the "PKI-Musso" as if to imply that there was another PKI that should be absolved. Since Alimin and some others had not favored the Musso policy of armed rebellion and did not take part in the affair, there is some justification for this view. There is also a

point, although not a very good one, to Aidit's claim that Madiun was a provocation and that the fighting had not erupted as a PKI revolt. This is a chicken and egg argument since Musso's line was to split the republic leadership and form a communist-led group of sufficient strength to seize power and then lead the revolution through its bourgeois and anti-imperialist stage with an ultimate communist state in mind. The Hatta-led government (Hatta, the moderate Vice-President who was close to Sjahrir, had become Premier after the fall of the Amir Sjarifuddin coalition government) had understandably taken action to prevent a build-up of independent communist military strength which forced the hand of communist military commanders. The Hatta "provocation" then was ultimately an unwillingness to succumb without resistance to a communist power bid.

Since Sukarno had emerged as President of Indonesia in August, 1945 and remained so throughout the 1948 Madiun rebellion and during a succession of non-communist governments over the next decade, one may question his commitment to an essentially communist viewpoint in the early years of his Presidency. It should be noted, however, that Sukarno had massive liabilities as well as assets in the late 1940s. He had collaborated closely with the Japanese and both he and Indonesia generally therefore had to accommodate themselves to the pro-ally underground led by Sjahrir in order to woo those liberal, anti-colonial tendencies among the Western allies, especially the United States, that might be sympathetic to de-colonization. Secondly, while Sukarno's prestige



and charisma were used by the early leaders of Indonesian independence, he was in fact shunted to the side as the early Indonesian governments were dominated by moderate democratic socialists and Islamic modernists. Sukarno's true colors could only be revealed after the collapse of constitutional democracy in the mid-1950s. Furthermore, and most important of all, Sukarno was intent on retaining and strengthening his power as the pre-eminent leader of Indonesia, a role that would be lost if either the Moscow emissary, Musso, or the national communist, Tan Malaka, were to triumph. One may also speculate that Sukarno's Indonesia-centered Marxism was bound to reject a PKI led by recent returnees from Stalinist Russia whose desire to direct and control world communism was well known. While Sukarno probably also regarded Tan Malaka unfavorably because of his stature as a rival charismatic leader, he later gave prominent positions to Tan Malaka's leading followers such as Chairul Saleh, Sukarni and Adam Malik until they turned out to be insufficiently revolutionary for Sukarno's tastes in 1964-65. Sukarno's commitment to revolutionary Marxism had always been closely connected with his nationalism and his willingness to link himself to the PKI was accordingly contingent on the "Indonesianization" of that Party, a possibility that had seemed at least open in the early and even later 1920s before the entrenchment of Stalin and which again became feasible with the rise of the Aidit leadership in the PKI and the erosion of Soviet control over the world communist movement after the Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU.

## Footnotes - Chapter I

1. The Masjumi Party was formed during the Japanese occupation and initially comprised both the Muhammadiyah and the more traditional Nahdatul Ulama (NU) or Moslem Scholars. The NU later seceded to become a major political party in its own right.
2. George M. Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press) 1952. pp 70-71.
3. Semarang was already well known as the leading center of Javanese radicalism from the turn of the century. See Bernard H. M. Vlekke, *Nusantara, A History of Indonesia* (The Hague and Bandung, W. Van Hoeve, Ltd. and Chicago, Ill., Quadrangle Books) 1960. First published in 1943 in the Netherlands. pp 351-352.
4. Vlekke, p. 355.
5. The factual data on the ISDV and early PKI appears in various standard English language works. The most detailed and comprehensive work on the early PKI and its antecedents is Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press) 1965. Also Arnold C. Brackman, *Indonesian Communism* (New York and London, Frederick A. Praeger) 1963. pp 1-32. Also Kahin pp 64-100.
6. Justus M. Van der Kroef, *The Communist Party of Indonesia*, (Vancouver, Publications Centre, University of British Columbia) 1965. p.5.

7. M. N. Roy's early fame was based, however, on his founding of the Mexican Communist Party, the first formal declaration of a communist party outside Russia, as well as on Roy's influence on the early leaders of the Mexican Revolution. At Lenin's behest, Roy, a native of British India who had reached North America early in World War I, was then brought to Moscow by Mikhail Borodin. Borodin in turn was to become a successor to Maring/Sneevliet as Comintern representative in China. Roy's autobiography of this period is fascinating but also reflects, in my view, a rather surprising superficiality. Roy later broke with Moscow and the international communist movement although his politics remained radical. See M. N. Roy's Memoirs (Bombay and New York, Allied Publishers) 1964.
8. See McVey, pp 53-61 for a fairly detailed discussion of the Second Comintern Congress as it related to Indonesia. McVey notes that Soviet appeals to the East from 1918-20 were often directed to Moslem sentiment, being geared to holding on to Islamic portions of the Tsarist empire and currying favor with Moslem buffer states such as Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. The subject is also covered in Charles B. McLane, Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press) 1966, pp 12-23.
9. Van der Kroef, pp 12-15.
10. e.g. D. N. Aidit, Problems of the Indonesian Revolution (DEMOS) 1963, p. 41.
11. Brackman, p. 260.

12. See McVey, pp. 290-322 and Aidit, pp 68-72. Although the 1926 PKI revolt was seen as "leftist" and "adventurist", the PKI leaders hung the label of "Trotskyist" on Tan Malaka whose approach was actually more in line with Comintern strategy than was that of Musso. Musso and Alimin were quick to link themselves with a Stalin who had eliminated Trotsky and were thereafter under strong Soviet influence if not control. In Musso's case this continued through the 1948 Madiun rebellion of the PKI. Tan Malaka, facing the Dutch repression of the PKI after the 1926-27 failure, sought to present himself increasingly as a nationalist as well as a Marxist. In this respect, and for similar reasons, his political course of attempting to fuse Marxism and nationalism broadly resembled that of Sukarno although they were rivals and operating from different personal histories.
13. The traditional view of Sukarno as primarily a nationalist whose expressed Marxism was played down is apparent in Kahin's otherwise pioneering and invaluable work and it persisted in the work of American and Australian scholars who followed Kahin, as well as by journalist experts on Indonesia such as Brackman. These views were also accepted by almost all American diplomatic experts on Indonesia before 1964 and by some thereafter. This view is also apparent in the major biographic work on Sukarno by the German scholar, Dahm. See Bernard Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesia's Independence* (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, English translation)

1969. Original publication in German in 1966. A more recent biography of Sukarno is similar in this respect: C. L. M. Penders, The Life and Times of Sukarno (London, Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd.) 1974.
14. Sukarno's speech of September 13, 1965 to the PSII (a small political party claiming direct descent from the Sarekat Islam) as reported in Embassy Jakarta Airgram A-30 of October 22, 1965 entitled "The September 30 Affair", p. 34 (Indonesian Country File, National Security File, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library). Also Howard P. Jones, Indonesia, The Possible Dream (New York, Harcourt, Brace and Ivanovich, Inc.) 1971, p. 381 for a more extensive quotation from the original Embassy report which is not available.
  15. See McVey on relocation of the PKI headquarters to Bandung, p.327.
  16. The term "national democratic stage" is a late refinement of the "bourgeois" or "capitalist" stage that precedes the "socialist" stage in the historical dialectic. See Aidit, op. cit. p. 58 and 148 showing variations in terminology. Also see Robert Martens, "A Soviet View of the Road to Communism in the Third World", The National War College Forum (Washington D.C.) Fall 1969. pp 42-60.
  17. A typical disparagement of Marhaenism as a serious Marxist concept is a passing reference in Van der Kroef, p. 51, referring to it as "a nativistic kind of populism".

18. Hanafi's initials of A. M. stood for Anak Marhaen or "son of the Marhaen", a reference to his spiritual relationship to Sukarno's philosophy and perhaps to his filial attitude toward Sukarno himself.
19. Four of the seven top leaders of Partindo were also four of the top seven leaders of Baperki according to comparisons of their politburo equivalents as published in the Partindo newspaper, Bintang Timur in 1963. All, including Hadi and Hanafi, were also close associates of Sukarno (others were Winoto Danuasmoro and S. Tahsin). Baperki was officially an organization for all Indonesian citizens regardless of race which provided the rationale for a non-Chinese leadership even though it was widely regarded as the organization of pro-Communist Indonesian Chinese. Hanafi fled to Moscow after 1965 but reportedly changed his exile to Sweden later.
20. A rationale for collaboration with the Japanese was also provided by the ancient Javanese myth that a "Ratu Adil" – a kind of mystic hero - would eventually free Indonesia from a long period of colonial servitude but only after a brief occupation by another race whose physical description fitted the Japanese. Dahm and others place considerable stress on the influence of the Ratu Adil myth on many Javanese leaders and on Sukarno in particular. I do not deny such influence or, indeed, the importance of Javanese mysticism and personality characteristics on Sukarno but I do not find this to negate his

attachment to Marxist thought or the decisive role of the latter in shaping his political commitments and actions.

21. Harian Rakiat March 19, 1965. The speech itself was made on February 11 - the delay of over a month is unusual.





## II

# The Conceptions and Tactics of the Indonesian Revolution

To understand Sukarno and the PKI and to understand what happened in the so-called coup by the September 30 Movement in 1965, one must examine closely the Marxist concept of the historical dialectic and how it was fitted into the theory of the Indonesian Revolution. Indeed, Sukarno's speeches show a preoccupation with the historical dialectic adapted, of course, to his perceptions of the concrete situation in Indonesia - that even exceeded that of the PKI. This preoccupation became particularly striking in 1965 when Sukarno's speeches and actions demonstrated a desire to leave the "national-democratic stage" as soon as possible in order to gain personal credit before the bar of history for having led Indonesia into "socialism" in his lifetime. The classical Hegelian view of the dialectic is, in a nut shell, that every "thesis" gives rise to internal contradictions which constitute an "antithesis". Resolution of this inherent conflict between thesis and antithesis then creates a new "synthesis". This "synthesis" also becomes the "thesis" for a new round of thesis, antithesis and synthesis which can go on indefinitely. Marx applied this theory to history although elaboration of the historical dialectic also owes much to Marx's collaborator, Friedrich Engels. In essence, human history begins with a stage of "primitive"

society which is replaced by a higher "slave-holding" stage followed by "feudalism", "capitalism", "socialism" and ultimately "communism". Since Marx and the Western European Marxists lived in capitalist societies, their attention was focused primarily on the transition from capitalism to socialism which was to occur because the internal contradictions of capitalism would cause progressive concentration of capital in fewer and fewer hands, the impoverishment of a growing proletariat, and an increasing wave of revolutionary consciousness on the part of the proletariat as its grievances and numbers multiplied. The presumption was that socialist revolution would occur first in advanced capitalist societies in Western Europe.

Russian reality caused problems for the Bolsheviks since, as Lenin noted in 1914, Russia was more feudal than capitalist. (1) The result was a gradual shift after the Second Party Congress of the Russia Social Democratic Party in 1903 to concepts of a highly disciplined, secret and conspiratorial party that would seize control of the bourgeois revolution long before the situation was ripe for a socialist revolution and would then lead this bourgeois revolution in a way that would prepare the ground for a more rapid and uncontested entry into the socialist stage. Since the less developed colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America were even more removed than Russia from the advanced stage of capitalism which Marx had seen as the launching pad for socialist revolution, Marxists in the Leninist tradition have had to bend Marx's historical dialectic further to legitimize communist

seizure of power in societies even more backward than Tsarist Russia. This they have done with tortuous lines of reasoning beginning with Outer Mongolia in the 1920s and 1930s (it was said that small feudal societies adjoining the USSR and under its protection could be guided to socialism without going through capitalism). (2)

After communist advances in the wake of World War II, North Korea and North Vietnam were regarded as "People's Democracies" similar to the new conquests in Eastern Europe although "People's Democracy" was a term that had been designed to cover a transition from the capitalist societies of Eastern Europe to socialism. The Chinese Communists had already conceived of a two stage revolution in which the first stage would be "national" and "democratic", that is a variant of the pre-socialist bourgeois revolution applicable to Asian conditions and accordingly a possible ideological justification for Communist Party rule in an economically backward society. This terminology and thought process is close to that adopted by the PKI and Sukarno in 1959 and it was also folded into the formal Soviet ideological framework in 1960.(3) Sukarno's Political Manifesto of August 17, 1959 - the ideological underpinning of Sukarno's rule under Guided Democracy - set forth the doctrine of a two stage revolution in which the first stage, which was labeled "national democratic", would require the elimination of foreign imperialist institutions from Indonesian soil and the elimination of "feudalism" from the countryside. Only then could the "socialist stage" of the revolution be launched.

While this simple conceptual formulation did not specify just what was meant by the prospective elimination of imperialism and feudalism from Indonesia, it became clear that eliminating imperialism would require seizure of foreign enterprises and the removal from political power of Indonesians who dragged their feet against the increasingly radical policies of the 1960s. Elimination of feudalism came to be vaguely identified with "land reform". Actually Indonesia did not have an extensive classical land reform problem from an objective standpoint since there was no significant large landholding class and land holdings were generally small. Nevertheless, tensions over land were high because of high rural population density in Java, a point to be developed later. The essential meaning of the PKI doctrinal requirement that feudalism be eliminated in the countryside before the national democratic stage could be considered as completed was that the PKI would become politically dominant through its peasant organization affiliate, the Barisan Tani Indonesia (BTI) and be able to intimidate all other rural power centers with Sukarno's implicit backing. As will be seen, both these goals appeared to have been accomplished by September 1965. In this respect, Sukarno was ahead of the PKI, incidentally, as will be seen. This whole manner of thinking will seem strange to the average Western reader and, indeed, to most non-Marxist Indonesians as well. But it must be emphasized that these ideas were at the very center of PKI philosophy and were even more at the forefront of Sukarno's thinking in 1965. They emerge clearly in Sukarno's repeated assertions throughout 1965 that Indonesia had "almost

completed the national democratic stage" and was "beginning to enter the socialist stage". It should be noted that entry into the socialist stage did not mean "socialism" was then achieved; what was meant was commencement of the building of socialism which might go on for a long time. Entry into "the socialist stage" was a kind of shorthand for beginning to "build socialism". There must have been a great deal of oral discussion of this idea among Sukarno's coterie as well since various Indonesian cabinet ministers and other political figures felt it necessary in 1965 to include references to these two stages and to an imminent transition from one stage to another. (4)

Sukarno's view of the Indonesian Revolution also had other sweeping historical aspects which were related to the actual course of events that he had witnessed in his lifetime. He described the Revolution as consisting of five generations (angkatan) in a speech to the MPRS in May, 1963 and harked back to these five generations on a number of occasions thereafter, the most significant being in September, 1965 shortly before the so-called coup.(5) Although romantic and even mystical to a degree, this concept again was at the very basis of Sukarno's thinking and is also important to understanding the events of 1965. The first of Indonesia's five generations of revolutionaries was labeled "perincis" ("perintjis" in the old orthography) which means those who "specify" or "identify" and was applied to the early national movements starting with Budi Utomo in 1908 and continuing through the early Sarekat Islam of Tjokroaminoto. The second generation was called "pencoba" ("pentjoba") which meant those who "try" or "attempt" and was

identified by Sukarno with the ascendancy of the early Indonesian Communist Party up to and through the unsuccessful PKI revolt against the Dutch in 1926-27. The third generation was called "penegas" meaning those who "affirm" and this was applied to the period after the suppression of the PKI and up to World War II. This was the period of Sukarno's own early prominence and has been seen as applying to the early Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) and its offshoots. The fourth generation was called "pendobrak", from the Indonesian word for "break" and was applied to the so-called 45 Generation that had declared and then achieved national independence (broken away) from the Dutch. The fifth generation was labeled "pelaksana" for those who "carry out" and applied to the revolutionary stage that was then being reached in 1963-1965.

In September 1965, Sukarno suddenly amended this ordering of the "generations" to call the 1926 PKI "penegas" for toughening or strengthening the revolutionary movement while the third, post-PKI, generation was now labeled "pencoba" with this word for "attempt" now given a disparaging connotation of unwarranted collaboration with the Dutch.(6) The published text of this latter speech (it only appeared in the PSII newspaper, Karya Bhakti) shows considerable identification by Sukarno with the 1926 PKI but Sukarno's actual ad lib remarks went even further. The Karya Bhakti text of September 15 must have been the originally prepared written text because Sukarno's actual words contained an explicit assertion by Sukarno that he had belonged to the second ("penegas") generation (the 1926 PKI) and a denial of his having belonged to the third generation, that

is the Algemene Studie Group or PNI nucleus with which Sukarno had always been identified.

Sukarno's published text in September, 1965 also shows a belief that all the generations were revolutionary in their period (except the third) but that revolutionary credentials must continually be reaffirmed. This theme had been stated in various ways all through 1965. Both Sukarno and his leading deputy in the government, Subandrio, had declared since early in the year that some former comrades were no longer keeping up with the march of the revolution to the left (that is to higher levels) and would have to be left behind.(7) Sukarno also noted on at least two occasions that the 45 Generation (the "pendobrak" generation) had played an important role in its day but that its members would have to show that they were still revolutionary by meeting the tasks of the present "pelaksana" generation.(8) Only two weeks before the September 30 Affair and shortly after his speech to the PSII on the five generations, Sukarno noted that the 45 Generation had been the "pendobrak" generation but must now become part of the current pelaksana" generation which would require adherence to Nasakom in practice and in spirit. Subandrio followed up in even sharper terms by noting that "some" people were saying that "revisionism" was to be found in the "Pendobrak" generation since it did not wish to move forward to continue the revolutionary advance. Subandrio then said the 45 Generation needed to subject itself to introspection and remain on the "rails of the revolution". These criticisms were aimed particularly at Chairul Saleh who was a rival of Subandrio and had clashed with

Aidit in late 1964 and early 1965, points to be discussed later, but the form of the criticism also reflected Sukarno's view of the historical revolutionary process in Indonesia.

Another important aspect of Sukarno's ideology that was pertinent to the unfolding of the revolutionary offensive of 1965 was Nasakom. Although Nasakom had been a key element in Sukarno's thinking from the 1920s, it had slipped into the background until its revival during the early stages of Guided Democracy. It was then recognized as a somewhat more ominous formulation of national unity than Sukarno's more vague and less tendentious concept of "Panca Sila" which had been introduced on the eve of the independence proclamation in 1945 during a time for caution given the correlation of forces within the national movement as a whole and within a Southeast Asia conquered by the United States and the British Empire. However, most observers still regarded the revival of Nasakom as evidence of the President's desire to balance the main political forces of the country in order to maximize his own influence. The popular view seemed to be that, while Nasakom legitimized the communists and permitted rapid growth in their numbers and position, Sukarno was merely permitting their advance as a counterweight to the Army and its political allies. However, the real significance of Nasakom was and had always been that of a tactical formula for advancing a communist cause with as wide a following of temporary fellow travelers as possible. In other words, Nasakom meant the employment of a popular front or national front in which the nationalist and religious elements would be used as



allies against immediate enemies (at various times the Dutch, the British, Malaysia, the United States and "imperialism" generally on the international side and, internally, the Hatta/Sjahrir and Masjumi syndromes, the right and later the center of all political parties. etc.).

This deeper purpose was less evident but was occasionally manifested in the difficult conditions of the 1930s and under constitutional democracy during the early republic but it finally became extremely clear in the 1960s when the time appeared ripe to employ salami tactics to the fullest. Of the ten Nasakom parties, only the PKI was allowed to remain its unalloyed self. Of the four "Nas" or nationalist parties, every effort was made to neutralize strong leaders and then subvert them. The IP-KI party, which was originally intended by its army sponsors to be an anti-communist political force, was compelled by Sukarno and Sukarno alone to appoint Aminah Hidajat, the pro-PKI wife of Lt. General Hidajat, a Sukarno cabinet minister, to be its General Chairman, while the moderate wing was suppressed. Since this was an artificial imposition of pro-PKI control at the top, the IP-KI grass roots remained strongly anti-communist, of course, but Sukarno's intent was clear. The Partindo Party, run by Sukarno's two quasi-adopted sons and certain Palace cronies, was, if anything, to the left of the PKI and the Partindo cadres would easily and surely have been incorporated into an expanded PKI when it came time to have one party (in the socialist stage). Murba, the small national communist party, was a ready ally of the PKI for a time but once it became a center of anti-communist opposition in 1964, it had to be denounced and

abolished. Although the PKI led the hue and cry against Murba, it was Sukarno himself who banned Murba and who made it clear that this move was not reluctant. The larger Indonesian Nationalist Party or PNI, the real core of the nationalist element in the Nasakom troika, was purged of its moderate elements by Sukarno in the summer of 1965 and turned over to its Secretary General, Surachman, a known PKI infiltrator.(9) Even Ali Sastroamidjojo, the former prime minister who had gone along with Sukarno's every demand and presided over the purge of "false Marhaenists", became almost invisible in September as Sukarno dealt almost exclusively with Surachman on PNI matters during the final two or three weeks before the September 30 affair.(10)

The religious or "Agama" element, the "A" of Nasakom, underwent similar experiences although its experiences were less spectacular or complete. The real core of political Islam, the Masjumi, had already been dealt with by a ban in 1960. Of the remaining five parties, two were Christian and three Islamic. The Christian parties were not very important in the first place and there was little effort to subvert them. Their traditional fear of political Islam and their need to rely on Indonesia's secular politicians made them susceptible to Sukarno's leadership, particularly the Protestant Parkindo which followed the lead of Sukarno's weak Second Deputy Prime Minister, Johannes Leimena. For the Catholics, a less effective but similar role was played by one of Sukarno's ministers, Frans Seda. The Catholics were less malleable and subsequently became one of the more forceful and effective members of the

anti-communist coalition that developed after the September 30 affair.

Of the three remaining Moslem parties, the small West-Java centered Perti party was placed under the control of a strong communist sympathizer, Sjarifuddin Abbas, at the direct behest of President Sukarno even though Sjarifuddin Abbas had no real following for his views among Perti cadres or the rank and file. The process for Perti was similar to Mrs. Hidajat's ascendancy in IP-KI. A small leftist minority was established and became very noisy. The "Great Leader" then posed as a fair-minded and judicious balancer of forces, and agreed to mediate the quarrel. After listening and appearing to ponder the issue, the President would announce the inevitable result - the "real" IP-KI or Perti was to be the far left faction. In the case of Perti, the non-communist faction continued to exist, although in total obscurity, but then emerged briefly as a supporter of the anti-PKI "Sukarnoism" movement in late 1964 before sinking from view again after Sukarno's disavowal of that movement: after his return from abroad. A second minor Islamic Party, the PSII, was the rather pathetic remnant of the old Sarekat Islam. Its leader, Arudji Kartawinata, who also held a position somewhat similar to that of speaker for the impotent and largely ceremonial Parliament, could be relied upon to advocate any position enunciated by Sukarno and the PKI in as obsequious a way as possible. Arudji's apparent revolutionary ardor was, in fact, opportunistic as his quick shift to denunciation of the communists after their fall was to show, but before that fall the PSII had become

a virtual mouthpiece and transition belt to a particular constituency for the communists.

The non-communist party least taken over by the communists by September, 1965 was the large Nahdatul Ulama (NU) or Moslem Scholars Party. The NU had a reputation for know-nothing fundamentalism in the religious sphere and for crass opportunism in the political arena. Its leaders had often been willing to sell principle for representation in cabinets and other high positions. It was always prepared to repeat PKI themes and extol Nasakom at the Jakarta level while its grass roots were frequently in conflict, even violent conflict, with PKI cadres. NU provincial cadres, particularly its youth arm, Ansor, conducted the anti-communist vendetta in late 1965 in East Java. The NU appeared to be no real problem to Sukarno and the PKI as the revolution approached its culmination of leaving the national democratic stage in mid-1965, however. Sukarno had exploited the corruption and venality of its leader, Idham Chalid, and fed him patronage in return for his unswerving adherence to the revolutionary line. Other NU national leaders generally remained quiet or slavishly repeated regime propaganda, whatever their real feelings. One of the NU deputy chairmen, Subchan, later emerged as a leader of the anti-communist reaction to the September 30 movement.

The picture that emerges from this brief review of the political parties is clear. Nasakom was an instrument for the progressive employment of salami tactics in order to remake all the non-communist parties into appendages of the communists. The

rationalization was loyalty to Bung Karno (the affectionate name for Sukarno, "Bung" meaning brother in a common man context) but the reality was their progressive emasculation. It has often been argued that Sukarno could not have been a communist since he allowed a multiplicity of parties and held no position in the PKI. Such an argument ignores the realities of the Indonesian political situation that Sukarno and the PKI were experiencing and had experienced. Sukarno could not identify himself openly with the PKI when that party was first suppressed (by the Dutch) and then (in the 1950s) was weak and in need of protection from above by an ostensibly impartial national hero. This did not mean that Sukarno was opposed in principle to eventual establishment of a single vanguard party, to use the traditional communist jargon. Indeed, Sukarno talked of a vanguard (pelopor) party but did so in a vague futuristic way that would avoid premature ill-feelings on the part of other parties. He spoke of "Manipol competition" between the parties, meaning that they should all try to outdo each other in revolutionary spirit in order to earn the glory of being a "vanguard". "Manipol" was an acronym for the "Political Manifesto", Sukarno's national day speech of 1959 which laid out the tenets of Sukarno's "Guided Democracy". As 1965 proceeded, however, Sukarno and his spokesmen such as Sabandrio became more open in applying the term "pelopor" to the PKI while omitting such a phrase for others. Sukarno's repeated praise of the PKI to PNI audiences was another way of saying that the PKI was to become the vanguard while the PNI was not, although this was expressed primarily by innuendos since the immediate job was to

press for more "Nasakomization" against the army's obvious reluctance.

## Footnotes - Chapter II

1. V.I.Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", Selected Works, Vol. 1, pp 633-687.
2. Lectures I attended in Moscow in 1956-58 followed this line. Also G. Kim and A. Kaufman, "Non-capitalist Development: Achievements and Difficulties", Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn, December 1967. pp 98-108 and E. Bavrín, "Mongolia's Road to Socialism" Pamphlet (Moscow, Novosti) 1973, p.6 and pp 84-86.
3. See Robert Martens, op sit, for a discussion of the development of Soviet views on the "non-capitalist path" and "national democracy". Prior to Sukarno's "Manipol" speech of August 17, 1959, the PKI spoke of both a people's democracy stage and a revolutionary stage that would be "national and democratic". See D.N. Aidit, Problems of the Indonesian Revolution, p. 58.
4. See Warta Bhakti, March 25, 1965 (Partindo leader Asmara Hadi), April 6 (Cabinet Minister Ruslan Abdulgani), April 8 (Air Force Commander Omar Dani), April 13 (PNI leader Ali Sastroamidjojo), April 17 (MPRS ratification), May 4 (Navy Commander Martadinata), May 7 (Central Java military commander General Surjosumpeno, the man who later organized the defeat of the September 30 Movement in his region), May 17 (Police Minister Sutjipto Danoekoesumo), May 21 (Armed Forces Minister General Nasution), May 27 (Foreign

Minister Subandrio), and August 26 (Indonesian Chinese leader Oei Tjoe Tat).

5. The 1963 speech to the MPRS is summarized in Harian Rakjat of May 21, 1963 and also appears in the Indonesian press service "Warta Bhakti" of that date.
6. Karya Bhakti September 15, 1965.
7. Harian Rakiat Jan 4, March 25, April 7, 1965.
8. Warta Bhakti April 16, 1965
9. Surachman had spent his early political life in the Communist youth arm, the Pemuda Rakjat, rather than the PNI affiliate. His PKI identification was widely known.
10. Ali Sastroamidjojo was visibly embarrassed by the "false Marhaenist" campaign, of which he was a leading spokesman during a conversation with the author in July, 1965. When asked about the false Marhaenists mentioned in Sukarno's speeches, Ali corrected me by saying "so-called false Marhaenists" and made an expression of disgust. Although Ali remained a Sukarno sycophant to the end and had done terrible damage to the cause of a democratic society during his career, I could not help but feel sorry for him during the Bandung conference of the PNI in the early Suharto era when he and the Surachman clique were expelled for collaboration with the PKI. I passed him and his broken down car on the way back to Jakarta but he politely refused my offer of help. His whole appearance was that of a forlorn and broken figure, confused by all that had befallen him.



### III

## The Road to Guided Democracy and the Rise of the PKI

For the purpose of this work, it is unnecessary to trace in great detail the process that led to the gradual collapse of the moderate and democratically oriented governments of the republic's early years and finally of the institutions of constitutional democracy themselves. While some of the democratic leaders might have done things differently, their task had always been enormous, once independence had been won given the fact that Indonesia was a far-flung underdeveloped archipelago with a great variety of cultural, political and religious differences and was beset by complex problems of social cohesion, overpopulation and poverty. There were long-standing rivalries between Java and Sumatra, the two principal islands that had led the revolution against the Dutch, between those two islands and the forces - mainly in the eastern islands - that had wished to maintain some kind of interdependent relationship with the Netherlands and between the strong Islamic segments and the essentially anti-Islamic currents that not only appeared in some modernist circles but rose particularly from the pre-Islamic and Hindic cultural milieu of Central and East Java. The strong Moslem currents were divided themselves between an essentially modernist segment that crystallized in the Masjumi Party and was centered

mostly in Sundanese West Java and Sumatra on the one hand and a more rigid and traditional Islam that was represented in the Islamic Scholars Party (Nahdhatul Ulama or NU) which was especially prominent in East Java, particularly in Madura and along the northeastern coast of Java itself. (1)

As noted in Chapter I the Javanese, that is the population of East and Central Java, were divided among the priyayi, abangan and santri classes of which the last was strongly Moslem and the core of the NU while the priyayi and abangan were philosophically and politically opposed to the Islam of the santri class despite a superficial Islamic overlay of their pre-Islamic cultural values.(2) These typically Javanese elements were greatly attracted toward secular nationalism and Marxism and toward the PKI and PNI. All the political parties had branches and supporters throughout the archipelago but the PKI and PNI were especially strong in East and Central Java, the NU in East Java, and the Masjumi (banned in 1960) in West Java and Sumatra. Some of the smaller parties tended to have geographic affinities as well. Perti, a small Moslem party, had a West Java orientation; Parkindo - the Protestant Christian party - was strong in North Sulawesi (the Celebes), a largely Christian region; the Catholic Party was rooted among the sizable Catholic element among the Chinese and among the indigenous population in the Lesser Sunda islands where early Portuguese missionary work had left its imprint. Partindo and Murba were small Marxist parties with constituencies similar to the PKI and PNI. The two other small parties, IP-KI and the PSII were essentially fossilized remnants of

still-born or spent political tendencies. IP-KI was intended to be a political vehicle for the Army and especially for Nasution but it had been largely neutralized by Sukarno in the early 1960s. The PSII was a somewhat pathetic remnant of the old Sarekat Islam under the guidance of a servile Sukarno lackey, Arudji Kartawinata. There had earlier been a number of other small parties, incidentally, but their number had been reduced by executive fiat in the late 1950s.

After the failure of the 1948 Madiun uprising, the PKI leadership and many of its cadres had been largely destroyed or dispersed. Since the Republican government was lenient toward those not directly involved (unlike 1965), a few leaders such as Alimin and Tan Ling Djie, were able to reconstitute a legal PKI but they understandably decided to keep a low profile for the Party and look toward a long slow rebuilding process that would emphasize elitism and infiltration of other parties and front groups. This was undoubtedly due not only to the chastening experience that Musso's aggressive tactics had produced in 1948 but also to a certain sense of vindication on the part of Alimin and Tan Ling Djie that their advice had been swept aside by the enthusiasm for Musso's "New Road". The PKI might have remained in the doldrums indefinitely but for the return to Indonesia of Aidit and Lukman, two very young second level party leaders under Musso.(3) These two had fled abroad, the bulk of their exile being spent in China and North Vietnam, and had slipped back into Indonesia in 1950. Joining with another young man in their age group, Njoto, and supported by others such as Sudisman and Sakirman from a self-styled "Leninist wing" of the Party, they

were able to isolate Alimin and Tan Ling Djie and to take control of the Party by January, 1951. Alimin remained in the new Politburo along with Aidit, Lukman, Njoto and Sudisman while Tan Ling Djie remained a Central Committee member only. The two older leaders were to be dropped by stages from the leadership entirely prior to the Fifth Party Congress in March, 1954. Another older generation rival, Wikana, the communist youth leader who had played such a prominent role in 1945, remained on the Central Committee until the collapse of the PKI in 1965 but he was never again a significant figure.

There were tactical differences between the new and older leadership over national front strategy, the Aidit group initially being doubtful about the efficacy of parliamentary maneuver and opposed to the idea of working through other parties. They also supported somewhat more aggressive tactics in mass organizations, giving particular support to the communist controlled labor front, SOBSI, which was led by Njono, another younger generation member of the Aidit clique who had frequently been at odds with Alimin over the latter's impatience with Njono's boldness on the strike front. Above all, Aidit was intent on development of the party and its cadres. He also reaffirmed the Musso "New Road" strategy, probably sincerely at the beginning, but early recognition of new opportunities caused the PKI to embark on a strategy of ingratiating and cooperation with the President and other left wing nationalist groups such as the PNI, coupled with vigorous growth of Party and front group membership.(4)

The principal reason for this initial shift toward cooperation with Sukarno, the PNI and Murba-oriented "national communists" was the increasing evidence of polarization between the large Masjumi Party and the PSI on the one hand and the PNI and other ultra-nationalist groups on the other. This split was accompanied by an obvious deterioration of relations between two supposedly supra-party symbols of Indonesian independence, Sukarno and Hatta, the first sympathetic to the leftist parties and to a radical stance in foreign policy and the second favoring the Masjumi and PSI while more cautious and pragmatic on foreign policy issues. Sukarno was already pressing for Dutch cession of western New Guinea or West Irian and inveighing against imperialism. The PKI, which had labeled Indonesia a semi-colonial country because of the rather minor restrictions on its freedom of action emanating from the Round Table agreements, was eager to lend its own shrill voice to all such issues, of course. Although the top Army leadership was generally anti-communist and, in the case of some of its top officers, even sympathetic to the PSI or the Masjumi, there were a variety of cliques. Some of these cliques were opposed to the Army leadership because they were leftovers from the factional irregular forces of the late 1940s, some resented efforts to professionalize the military and some were loyal followers of Sukarno and his policies. These conditions formed the background to one of the major slow motion, shadow-play political struggles of the early 1950s - the confrontation of the Army leadership with Sukarno on October 17, 1952 and a split in the Army between a pro-October 17 group and an anti-October 17

group supported by Sukarno, the PNI, and the rest of the nationalist left.(5) Nasution, one of the leaders of the October 17 group, had apparently been encouraged initially by Sukarno on the basis of Nasution's anti-parliament sentiments and his support for a strong unfettered presidency but Sukarno's interest shifted to opposition as it became clear that the Nasution group's plans would amount to too powerful a restraint on the President's freedom of action.

This chain of events reinforced the PKI leadership's increasing commitment to a strategy of identification with Sukarno. This partly developed from a realization of the Party's weakness after the Madiun failure coupled with a similar understanding of Sukarno's enormous personal popularity. However, it was also undoubtedly reinforced by Aidit's understanding of the strength of Sukarno's ideological commitment to Marxism and a socialist perspective for the Indonesian revolution, however much he was also an Indonesian nationalist. Although an apparently monolithic Moscow-centered world communism to which Aidit was still loyal stood in the way of complete identity of views, the road was paved for increasing cooperation. Furthermore, Aidit himself had come to communism as a nationalist and his close relationship to Sukarno as a young member of Sukarno's entourage in the later war period probably generated mutual trust in the similarity of their underlying beliefs and long-term objectives.(6) Ultimately, Aidit and Sukarno moved on the same path because they instinctively favored a coupling of Marxist ideology and a Marxist philosophy of revolution with an Indonesia-first priority that precluded subservience to an allegedly

infallible and domineering communist big brother in Europe, the Soviet Union. This, after all, was not much different than the earlier willingness of Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin to adjust Western European Marxism to the national demands of the Russian revolution. Despite their different perspectives on the imminence of revolution outside Russia, this was as true of Trotsky as it was of Lenin, for it was Trotsky who made the earlier adjustment toward advocating a communist-led revolution in an essentially feudal country, Tsarist Russia, when that was contrary to previous orthodox thinking.(7)

The PNI, meanwhile, was profiting from the tacit support of the PKI while apparently having to give up little in return since the balance of forces in the country coupled with the continuing stigma of Madiun in the background, meant that only the PNI would obtain the rewards of cabinet positions and even most of the spoils of office in the provinces. PKI skill in mobilizing worker and peasant demonstrations contributed to the fall of the Wilopo cabinet in June, 1953. Although Wilopo was from the PNI, this Government was strongly influenced by the Masjumi and PSI and Wilopo himself represented a moderate wing of the party that was thoroughly disliked by Sukarno and the PNI militant left (many of whom would later be purged as too moderate).

The Ali Sastroamidjojo government, which followed Wilopo, and lasted from July, 1953 to July, 1955, was the first to be supported by the PKI even though the latter was given no seat in the cabinet. The Ali cabinet excluded the Masjumi and PSI but included the opportunistic NU which had split off from the Masjumi.(8) A

mixture of moderates and hyper-nationalists, the Ali cabinet brought in for the first time since the days of Amir Sjarifuddin several radical nationalist Marxists including Sadjarwo of the Barisan Tani Indonesia (the PKI-dominated peasant front) as Minister of Agriculture and two Tan Malaka disciples in key ministries - Iwa Kusumasumantri in Defence and Muhammad Yamin in Justice. The Ali period was one of rapid growth for the PKI, a sloganeering approach to foreign policy, and a much increased stature for Sukarno. It was also a period of eclipse for the moderate political parties, the fading of Hatta as a virtual co-equal of Sukarno, and the progressive decline of sentiment for constitutional democracy on a Western model. The Indonesian initiative for an Afro-Asian summit at Bandung in 1955 became one of the major world events of the 1950s and provided Sukarno with a platform to project himself on the world stage. It also set Indonesia on a path of radical leadership in the Third World and common cause with Communist China. PKI growth under these conditions of PNI alliance and Sukarno's patronage was rapid. The priority commitment of the PKI leadership to development of a mass party was the key factor, of course, and Aidit understood that the long association of the earlier PKI with nationalist sentiment provided a fertile field for recruitment. Party membership had been less than 10,000 and party organization confined to Java in 1951 but the Party increased to over 100,000 in 1952 while the organization was extended to Madura, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, the Lesser Sunda Islands and the Moluccas.<sup>(9)</sup> Membership was said to be 165,206 at the time of the Fifth Party



Congress in 1954, one million in 1956, two million in 1962, three million by the PKI anniversary in May, 1965 and 3.5 million in August 1965. Growth of PKI affiliated organizations such as SOBSI (trade unions), the BTI (the peasant front), Pemuda Rakjat (the youth front) and Gerwani (the communist women's organization) was also rapid. As noted elsewhere, these figures - especially in the final period - are subject to some skepticism since their announcement had a tactical objective of reinforcing a bandwagon image. The earlier figures are probably more certain but, in any case, there is no question that growth was spectacular. This was demonstrated in the 1955 parliamentary election where the PKI received more than six million votes or some 16.4 percent of the total and emerged as one of the top four political parties (the PNI had 22.3 percent, Masjumi 20.9% and the NU 18.4%).(10)

Meanwhile, the Ali government had fallen in July, 1955 on issues connected with leadership of the Army. Ali's Defense Minister, Iwa Kusumasumantri had named a rather junior colonel with a reputation for pliability, Bambang Utojo, to be Chief of Staff but this caused a great uproar by Army professionals led by the fiery deputy (and acting) Chief of Staff, Zulkifli Lubis. The Army coalesced on this issue including both supporters and opponents of the Nasution modernizing group of the October 17, 1952 affair. Iwa was forced to resign and then joined Sukarno on a convenient pilgrimage to Mecca as the Ali government collapsed in the face of Army intransigence. The Burhanuddin Harahap cabinet that followed in August, 1955 and which hung on after the September elections

was a kind of last hurrah for the moderate forces. It was formed with the support of Vice-President Hatta and the Army leadership but quarrels over patronage made it more ineffectual than was hoped. Burhanuddin was from the Masjumi and the cabinet was a mixture of Masjumi, other Islamic parties including the NU, the PSI, and like-minded forces. The PNI was excluded as, of course, was the PKI. The life of the Burhanuddin cabinet was determined by the need to form a new cabinet on the basis of the newly-elected parliament.

Sukarno had been elated by the election results and particularly by the poor showing of the PSI, the democratic socialist party headed by his long-time rival, Sutan Sjahrir, which had captured a mere 2% of the vote. Sukarno now became much more active, introducing for the first time a program for "planned" democracy in place of liberal western institutions and launching a series of charges about illegal Western plots to undermine the internal order through corruption and sabotage and compelling the republic to "sign foreign treaties whose disadvantages would not be known until later".(11) Then, in November, 1955, Sukarno began to attack Western liberal democracy as an institution and to propose a "planned democracy" which was later to become a program of "guided democracy". The Burhanuddin Harahap government responded by opening negotiations with the Dutch in December to try to recover West Irian and thereby preempt the left but this effort failed because of Dutch failure to perceive the importance of shoring up what was to be the last hope of supporting a moderate pro-Western government.

President Sukarno now named Ali Sastroamidjojo as formateur of a new government based on the elections. He pressed initially for a "four-legged" cabinet that would include the PKI but that objective proved unobtainable. While this was partly because of the opposition of key Army officers and the traditional opposition of the Masjumi and PSI, it also reflected concern on the part of the PNI over the rapid gains of the communists in the elections and a much increased awareness that these two parties were competing for influence in the same constituency, the traditional anti-Moslem classes of Javanese society.

Although Ali was a longtime supporter and colleague of Sukarno and was to follow the President's direction in carrying out a pro-communist purge of the PNI in 1965, Ali was also a PNI organization loyalist who never had any great sympathy for the PKI. In 1956, the PNI was fearful of communist gains at its expense, especially in its central Java stronghold, and desired a coalition that would provide some reconciliation with the Masjumi. Although members of the anti-PNI Burhanuddin cabinet were excluded, the new government eventually formed by Ali included both Masjumi and NU ministers as well as those of the PNI. The communists originally sought to be included in the cabinet, but seeing that this was not possible, pressed for inclusion of some PKI sympathizers. Sukarno himself pressed strongly for this latter alternative, the names being offered including the two brothers, A. M. Hanafi and Asmara Hadi, the BTI (leftist peasant) leader, Sadjarwo, and a Professor Purbodiningrat who had been prominent in communist peace front

activities. The new coalition partners and Ali himself refused to go along, however, and Sukarno settled for a non-communist technician whom he trusted, Djuanda.<sup>(12)</sup> Tension mounted in 1956 on a number of fronts. The Army had lost its unity again following the return of General Nasution to the Chief of Staff position in October, 1955. Although anti-communist, Nasution was a strong proponent of highly centralized government, was critical of the political parties and was opposed to the independent "war-lord" tendencies of some of the regional commanders who were sympathetic to the Masjumi or PSI and had long tenure in their billets. He was also at odds with his deputy, the same Colonel Zulkifli Lubis who was among his opponents in the October, 1952 affair. The new intra-Army struggle did not always follow the previous line-up as Nasution was intent on transferring not only Lubis but a number of commanders who had supported him in 1952 such as Colonel Simbolon in North Sumatra. He also appears to have made his peace with Sukarno as well as Ali, and not for the last time.

Another factor was Sukarno's assumption of an increasingly independent role separate or "above" that of the Ali Government. This was reflected in his criticisms of liberal democracy and in his somewhat highhanded conduct of personal diplomacy abroad, most notably his pressing Foreign Minister Ruslan Abdulgani to sign a controversial Joint Statement with the Soviet Union during the President's visit to Moscow in September 1956, a trip which also netted a Soviet economic assistance package of 100 million dollars. Sukarno now began to gather around him a group of relatively young

leftists from the so-called '45 Generation including Chairul Saleh and the former "Student Army" leader from the revolutionary struggle period, Achmadi. Most of these new young leaders were Marxists as well as radical nationalists whether they were connected with the PKI, Murba or Partindo. On returning from the Soviet Union and China in October, Sukarno had high praise for communist systems, particularly that in China, and began to press much more openly and strongly for a system of "guided democracy" to replace the "liberal democracy of Western Europe". This guided "democracy" was linked frequently with Sukarno's favorable impressions of China and was also called a "national democracy", a term that was to fit in with developing communist concepts of a national democratic stage as a tactical waypoint on the road to establishing a communist regime. As Arnold Brackman has noted, there was a certain "poignant tragedy" in this sequence of events since Sukarno's push for a system of guided democracy based in part on his tour of the communist world took place in the year of Khrushchev's exposure of Stalin's crimes and at the very time that Poland and Hungary were shaken with popular uprisings and a less known peasant rebellion was quelled in North Vietnam. (13)

Sukarno's drive for guided democracy and his open favoritism for the communist countries drew sharp criticism from Vice President Hatta who announced his intention to resign. This he did on November 30, 1956. Withdrawal by Hatta was widely interpreted in Sumatra as raising the threat of increased Javanese domination over the Outer Islands as the Sukarno-Hatta duumvirate had always

stood for some kind of geographic as well as ideological balance. The combination of Sukarno's play for greater power and his more open leftist stance, Hatta's withdrawal, and Nasution's efforts to remove territorial commanders including Simbolon led to a series of revolts throughout Sumatra in December. The Masjumi party left the government coalition in January, 1957. An effort was then made by Sukarno to form a new government based on the PNI, NU and PKI but this failed because of NU opposition.<sup>(12)</sup> Sukarno then engaged in a bizarre but effective maneuver to make himself "formateur" and appoint a government of "experts" headed by Djuanda Kartawidjaja, a nonparty independent, as premier. Djuanda subsequently became "First Minister" under Sukarno as Prime Minister and retained that position until his death in late 1963 but he was totally overshadowed by Sukarno.

The new cabinet contained no open PKI members but a process was begun of installing a certain number of Marxist-oriented extreme leftists in cabinet positions. These included both people who were close to the PKI and others who were more attuned to the old national communist coterie of Tan Malaka under the banner of the Generation of '45 headed by Chairul Saleh. The PKI occasionally showed its displeasure with inclusion of these figures but its leadership almost certainly understood Sukarno's need to mobilize a fairly broad-based leftist and nationalist front against the "right" which was defined as including not only genuine reactionary and feudal elements but all the confused and disorganized forces of constitutional democracy that opposed Sukarno's drive toward a

totalitarian order. The pattern of the further Indonesian revolution was set. Sukarno and the PKI, working hand in glove, were embarked on a strategy whereby the PKI kept up the pressure "from below" while Sukarno, as President, Great Leader of the Revolution, Father of Marhaenism and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces (to use some of the principal titles he accumulated over the next few years), played the role of ostensible moderate and judge who would placate all forces when necessary and then move to the left as fast as the traffic would bear. These tactics are analyzed in greater detail elsewhere.

In 1957 as in later years, a radical posture toward foreign enemies was employed not only to achieve specific foreign policy objectives but, much more, to further the internal revolutionary process. A campaign to force Dutch cession of West New Guinea or West Irian was launched that built up steam throughout the year with the PKI highly visible as the most vociferous and most organizationally skilled component of the national front. Foreign communist support for the Indonesian claim was also on display, particularly during the triumphal visit of the Soviet chief of state, Marshal Voroshilov. The PKI profited in regional elections held at this time, largely at the expense of the PNI, and to a considerable extent because of Sukarno's warm attitude toward it. The communists came in first in Central Java, were second to the NU in East Java by only a small margin and second to the Masjumi in West Java and Jakarta. In the face of rising concern by moderate elements, especially outside of Java, both Sukarno and the PKI increased the

level of demagoguery over the West Irian issue and, following an unsuccessful attempt on Sukarno's life, seizure of Dutch properties by the Communist trade union federation, SOBSI, began. The simmering revolt in the Outer Islands erupted more fully in early 1958 as a number of prominent disillusioned moderates headed by a Masjumi member and former President of the Central Bank, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, proclaimed a rival government with its capital at the mountain resort of Bukittinggi in West Sumatra. Hatta and Sjahrir, although appalled by Sukarno's dictatorial practices and leftward drift, nevertheless opposed the PRRI, as the rival government was known. (13)

A key factor in the political equation was the attitude of the Indonesian Army or TNI (for Tentara Nasional Indonesia). Born in the revolution against the Dutch from a mixture of Japanese-trained officers, units of various political coloration that had been spawned by the independence struggle and finally by a growing coterie of professionally minded soldiers, the TNI officer corps had come to regard itself as a national institution with a political as well as a military role. This role was not seen in the 1950s as requiring the establishment of military rule but as a kind of silent partnership with the civilian leadership in which the Army would participate in the political life of the country to some degree, would act as a guarantor of national unity, and might intervene for limited objectives on special occasions. The Army leadership around General Nasution were all firm proponents of national unity and the territorial integrity of the Indonesian archipelago although these values co-existed with a



strong hostility toward the PKI which was based not only on ideology but on their view of that Party as a would-be saboteur of the Revolution in 1948. Nasution, in particular, held this view because of his role and that of his Siliwangi division in suppressing the Madiun revolt. His role in 1957-58 in moving decisively against the Sumatran and Sulawesi rebellions was also undoubtedly the natural consequence of his conflict with the territorial commanders in pure internal army terms, that is his desire to put his personal stamp on the Army and to insist on his authority to effect transfers.

The Army leadership, particularly Nasution, was also critical of the Western parliamentary system and favored replacement of political parties with a system of "functional groups" of which the armed forces would be one.<sup>(14)</sup> This latter idea seemed, at least superficially, to coincide with some aspects of Sukarno's guided democracy, particularly the idea of abolishing parties and establishing a national front based on functional groups such as labor, peasants, youth, the armed forces, etc. Such a National Front was established formally by Sukarno although political parties remained and most of the functional group membership consisted of political party affiliates. The National Front, in fact, came to be dominated by the extreme left and was a vehicle for ensuring that PKI and Sukarnoist agitprop activities were projected as national efforts. The writer believes that Sukarno was clever enough to project his "national front" ideas in forms that appeared to coincide with Army thinking in order to make the Army a fellow traveler for his immediate purposes but with no intention of abolishing all the

political parties at this stage. There was a "consolidation" of parties that eliminated some small splinter organizations, however, and Sukarno's Masjumi and PSI enemies were soon to be banned, of course.

The Army, Sukarno and the PKI were agreed at this point on the need to move swiftly and effectively against the Outer Island rebellions and this they did. During a few short months in the spring of 1958, the Indonesian army under the field command of General Yani took major towns in Sumatra including the PRRI capital at Bukittinggi, employing fairly sophisticated airborne assault tactics; and in June took the Sulawesi capital of Manado following an amphibious landing. Scattered insurgency continued in rural areas and neither the civilian nor military leaders of the rebellion were to surrender until 1961. Nevertheless the ease with which the Indonesian Army had defeated the PRRI and Permesta forces ensured their ultimate failure while providing Sukarno and the PKI with a symbol for attacking the internal opposition at home and the West, particularly the US, abroad. The downing of a rebel B-26 flown by an American pilot, Allan Pope, became a particular cause celebre that was exploited fully by the PKI. These events had created a new constellation of forces which the political shorthand of the day reduced to a triangle of the Army and PKI being balanced by the President. There was some truth in this summary as the sputtering Outer Island rebellions had not only placed its open supporters outside the pale but had discredited the Masjumi and Socialist (PSI) parties as well as Hatta and many non-Javanese Army officers. The

chief beneficiaries were clearly Sukarno, the central Army leadership and the PKI but the political equation was in fact much more complex due to the continued participation in political life of a variety of other elements and the susceptibility of the Armed Forces to manipulation because of internal rivalries, nationalist appeals on particular issues and Sukarno's personal authority and control of the initiative.

Nevertheless, the Army was initially able to act rather decisively on its own behalf and against the communists when it chose to do so. A number of its officers entered the cabinet and a variety of other important civilian positions. It openly harassed the PKI in 1959 and again in 1960, forcing a Party Congress to be postponed in the first case and closing the party newspaper temporarily and interrogating leading Party officials on the second occasion. The Army also supported an anti-Chinese campaign in 1960 that forced the Chinese out of rural trade where they had had a virtual monopoly position and established much more restrictive rules on Indonesian citizenship. The Army's political position was gradually eroded, however, since it had proclaimed its loyalty to a president with enormous personal prestige and an inner commitment to drive the Indonesian Revolution step by step to the left in accordance with a radical Marxist conception. Nasution's own position as head of the Army was also undermined by the fact that he was a Sumatran in an Army that had become more Java-centric after the PRRI/Permesta defections and Sukarno was also able to use patronage and the glow of his personal attention to erode much of the

Army loyalty from Nasution to himself. This was a gradual process that had become much more effective by 1963-65 but it was important from the beginning. Nasution's own personal indecisiveness in a crunch was also a major factor although this too was not as clear in the late 1950s as it was to become in 1965-1966.

Meanwhile, Sukarno retained the initiative and the ability to take advantage of internal and external events to further an atmosphere of inevitable revolutionary change. His August 17, 1959 Independence Day speech, reportedly drafted in part by Aidit, became a blueprint for a revolutionary offensive. Called the Political Manifesto (Manipol), it contained a set of five vague but lofty principles (USDEK) that became a touchstone for loyalty to the Revolution and could be used to condemn almost any form of opposition. The very vagueness of these principles (the 1945 constitution, socialism, guided democracy, guided economy, and Indonesian Identity) was conducive to a process of constant reinterpretation of the standards of loyalty while the mesmerizing use of slogans and acronyms served to extinguish critical thought and create an atmosphere of hypnotic obedience. The 1959 speech also mentioned the two stages of the revolution concept without elaboration. Indeed, one of Sukarno's brilliant tactics was to introduce Marxist ideas in formulations that were initially vague and unorthodox in their jargon but fit loosely into traditional Indonesian cultural values and symbolism. Once the jargon had been accepted by the elites, who had little understanding of what they were accepting, definitions began to be expanded and interwoven with

new slogans so that a whole society was being herded toward revolutionary goals that were held in common by Sukarno and the PKI. For example, Sukarno tried to make the pro-communist doctrine of "Nasakom" more palatable by linking it to the traditional Indonesian concept of "gotong-royong" (cooperation and mutual self help, especially at the village level) and "panca sila", the five vague principles he had proclaimed in 1945 which were accepted as traditional aims of the independence struggle. It is also worth noting that Sukarno's ideas of a national democratic stage to be followed by a socialist stage were enunciated in Manipol more than a year before this terminology began to emerge in world-wide communist doctrine at the Moscow Conference of Communist Parties in November, 1961.

In this period Indonesia began to step up its demands for the Netherlands to cede West Irian to Indonesia and responded to Dutch recalcitrance by beginning a process of gradual seizure of Dutch properties. The PKI and the ardent left-wing nationalists were in the forefront of this campaign while the Army and moderate elements were caught in the difficult position of favoring the national objectives at issue (and after securing for themselves practical advantages in additional management positions) but they were also concerned by the political advantages accruing to the PKI as well as the decline in national economic capacity inherent in such actions. Communist bloc support, both verbal and material, was also being increased, particularly after Khrushchev's visit in early 1960. The

Soviet leader not only endorsed Indonesia's claim to West Irian but offered a 250 million dollar line of credit at low interest. (15)

Sukarno now began to move more emphatically to install the institutions of Guided Democracy. He dismissed the elected parliament on March 5, 1960 and established an appointed "Gotong-Royong" parliament twenty days later (the Gotong-Royong phraseology implied that cooperation, not party competition, would be demanded and that cooperation with the communists, in particular, would be expected). Sukarno was given power to ban political parties if he saw fit. He established a "National Front" with a strong leftist orientation that came increasingly under the leadership and domination of the communists. He appointed a People's Congress, the MPRS, which consisted of the 283 members of Parliament, 232 representatives of functional groups (youth, labor, peasants, military, cultural, etc.) and 94 regional representatives. On August 17, 1960, Sukarno dissolved the Masjumi and PSI parties and many of their leaders were imprisoned a year or two later including Sutan Sjahrir (leader of the war-time resistance and twice premier), Mohamad Rum (signatory of the agreement that ended Dutch rule and secured Indonesia's independence), and Mohamad Natsir (leader of the Masjumi and a former premier). Moderate forces fought back by establishing a "Democratic League" while Sukarno was abroad but it was eventually disbanded by Sukarno in much the same manner that the Body to Promote Sukarnoism (BPS) led a short exhilarating existence until banned by Sukarno in 1964. The

Army also launched another short-lived anti Communist campaign in the summer of 1960, first on a national scale and then instituting a regional ban of the Party in South Kalimantan, South Sulawesi and South Sumatra (sometimes called the Three Souths Affair), all of which evoked denunciations of "communist phobia" from the President. All of these efforts were but a minor and weakening counter effort against the predominant thrust of the country toward a tightening dictatorship of an ever more powerful Sukarno and continued momentum for the fast growing PKI.

Sukarno's prestige and position were increasing, above all because of his ability to turn the country toward external confrontations, the immediate target being an accelerated political offensive to gain West Irian. It was unfortunate that the Dutch had not included this territory in its transfer of sovereignty over the Dutch East Indies earlier although there was also a case that the peoples of this territory were not Indonesian and might not wish to be part of Indonesia. A transfer of this large, underdeveloped territory to Indonesia a decade earlier would have strengthened the prestige of moderate, democratic government; its transfer to Sukarno would demonstrate that an extremist approach paid off. On the other hand, it was also clear that Sukarno would use the issue, as long as West Irian remained Dutch, to arouse the revolutionary tempo internally and damage the already cowed democratic forces. The policy of confrontation, not surprisingly, had the support of both the PKI and the Nasution-led Army. As the propaganda campaign proceeded, Nasution travelled to Moscow where substantial military

assistance was provided. By 1961, advanced Soviet aircraft including TU-16s, MIG-19s and MIG-21s were arriving as well as a variety of warships. A concerned United States was fearful of Indonesia falling under Soviet and Chinese influence that might be prevented, it was hoped, if a peaceful transfer of West Irian could be accomplished with US help. A US offer to mediate was advanced in early December, 1961, a move undoubtedly welcomed by Sukarno as a sign of weakness. The President ordered "total mobilization" as part of a military effort to take the territory but this was largely a blustering propaganda show. Although the PKI was offering the bodies of its membership and of its front organizations as volunteers, such military action as took place was by the professional military under the field command of General Suharto and even this was largely limited to hit and run raids by small elite units beginning with a parachute drop in January, 1962. Under the auspices of the US mediator, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, agreement for a peaceful transfer was signed at the UN on August 15, 1962 with the actual transfer to take place by May, 1963.

The Irian settlement was accompanied by a revival of hopes that Indonesia would now pursue a path of peaceful economic development. Substantial US economic assistance was offered as part of a program of economic stabilization to be conducted by First Minister Djuanda. This dream was not to last long, however, as Sukarno had other ideas. His own economic program was stated to the MPRS in May under a new slogan, DEKON, the main anti-capitalist and anti Western elements of which were preached by



the PKI with great fervor. Sukarno's main trump, however, continued to be his ability to stir up foreign crises. The opportunity to do just that was presented by the British decision to combine an already independent Malaya with several colonies along Indonesia's northern periphery into a single entity that would be given independence under the name of Malaysia.

## Footnotes - Chapter III

1. Although the Masjumi leadership and cadres were overwhelmingly modernist, that party also embraced some of the more fanatical fundamentalist groups, particularly in West Java and certain strongly Moslem areas of the Outer Islands such as South Sulawesi and Aceh. This presumably reflected the identification of most non-Javanese with the Masjumi rather than the Java-centered Nahdatul Ulama. Islamic fanaticism was expressed most vividly in the Darul Islam rebellions in West Java and South Sulawesi. The first had been largely suppressed in the late 1950s, the latter only in 1964. It must also be emphasized that the Nahdatul Ulama Party of the later Suharto era and post Suharto period, while a descendent of the party of the Sukarno era, is not the same. Since the Masjumi was never resurrected, the modern Nahdatul Ulama embraces a wide spectrum of Islamic adherents.
2. The classic study on this subject is Clifford Geertz, The Religion of Java (Glencoe, Ill) 1960. Most Indonesians and Western scholars agree with the importance of these sociological groupings although not always with Geertz's detailed analysis. Van der Kroef, while not denying their significance, held that they have been somewhat over-emphasized and felt that loyalty to modern institutions such as political parties should be accorded greater significance in analyzing political conduct. His point is well taken although

the significance of these competing (or sometimes reinforcing) loyalties has varied in different circumstances. The interweaving of various ethnic, cultural, institutional and personal factors was and remains especially complex in Indonesia.

3. Aidit was born on July 30, 1923; Lukman in 1920; Njoto in 1925 and Sudisman in 1920. They accordingly ranged in age from 25 to 30 when they took over the Party in 1951.
4. Actually, all significant PKI figures continued to give lip service to Musso's "New Road" in general terms although Alimin and Tan Ling Djie had shown much more caution than Musso in practice. The Aidit PKI obviously deviated greatly from the 1948 stance toward Sukarno and in the manner of applying united front tactics but it continued to claim a direct lineal descent from Musso and his New Road. There were considerable areas of similarity, of course, particularly in respect to Party discipline and organization. Van der Kroef, p. 45, discusses the Alimin posture.
5. See Herbert Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press) 1962, pp. 246-273.
6. As noted elsewhere, Aidit attended lectures by Sukarno and other Indonesian nationalist figures during the Japanese occupation and subsequently claimed to have been attracted to Marxism by Sukarno's teachings. Both he and Lukman belonged to a small Japanese-trained para-military force that

acted as a bodyguard for Sukarno in the latter stages of the Japanese occupation. The latter point is noted by Mortimer, p. 36.

7. Discussed at length in Bertram Wolfe, Three Who Made a Revolution (New York) 1984.
8. The first Ali cabinet included representatives of several small nationalist parties as well.
9. See Aidit, Problems of the Indonesian Revolution p. 263.
10. The growth of the PKI under Aidit's leadership is accorded detailed treatment in Brackman, Van der Kroef and Donald Hindley, The Communist Party of Indonesia 1951-1963 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press) 1964. The latter contains much useful detail but suffers, in my view, from an analytical defect in its summation. Hindley lays out a whole series of hypothetical options as to how the PKI might achieve power along with the liabilities of each. Since Hindley had a traditional view of PKI separateness from Sukarno, none of his options covered the real dynamics of the unfolding revolutionary situation - an advance toward communism by Sukarno himself. On the other hand, Hindley, in my judgment, has a more valid view of essential PKI leadership harmony than some writers and is properly skeptical of popular rumors about significant leadership splits.
11. Brackman, p. 221.
12. In an autobiography written shortly before his death, Ali Sastroamidjojo said that Sukarno was very angry with him for

not including the PKI in his second cabinet. (p.324). He also said the only reason why Sukarno's "policy of Nasakom was espoused by the political parties was expediency, because the authority and power of Sukarno was so great that to oppose his policies was to commit political suicide". Ali Sastroamidjojo, Milestones on My Journey (St. Lucia, Queensland, Australia) 1979. p 357.

13. Brackman, p. 228.
14. The PKI continued until the very end to refer to Sukarno's "conception" of February 21, 1957 as its basis for advocating a Nasakom cabinet. See, for example, the Harian Rakjat edition of February 22, 1964. On February 23, 1964, Harian Rakjat cited current statements by Murba, IP-KI, Partindo, Perti and the PNI in support of a Nasakom cabinet. It is noteworthy that the NU (as well as the Catholic and Protestant "Parkindo" parties were not cited by the PKI newspaper, apparently an indication that the NU had still not backed off from its opposition of seven years earlier in spite of the national leadership's willingness to echo Nasakom slogans more generally.
15. The initials PRRI derive from the Indonesian words for Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia. It called itself the Government of the Federated Republic of Indonesia after 1959 but is still generally known as the PRRI. The rebellion in Sulawesi took the initials PERMESTA, an acronym for the "Universal Charter for Struggle". Subsequent

denunciations by the PKI and Sukarno of their enemies commonly combined the two acronyms into a common "PRRI/PERMESTA".

16. The leading American academic authority on the Indonesian Army has been Guy Pauker of the RAND Corporation. For example, see his "The Role of the Military in Indonesia" in J. J. Johnson, ed., The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries (Princeton, N.J.) 1962.
17. Brackman, p. 273.

## IV

### The Indonesian Communist Party

A considerable Western literature now exists on the Indonesian Communist Party including books by Arnold Brackman, Ruth McVey, Donald Hindley, Rex Mortimer, Justus Van der Kroef, and Antonie Dake. The points of view among these authors range from strongly anti-communist to sympathy or regret for the PKI's fall but all make useful contributions and are serious scholarly works. Much of the basic data on the PKI and its history is now firmly established although some areas of controversy remain. While I do not propose to reconstruct this vast history, I would like to review some essential points about the PKI as an institution and note some areas where I believe at least some of the existing literature has gone astray. Since the early attraction of communism in Indonesia was to its anti-imperialist and anti-colonial features, the PKI has always been prone toward distinctly national Indonesian variations. Its invention of the "bloc within" strategy and that strategy's initial early success also made the PKI inordinately inclined toward national front tactics and toward making rather far reaching ideological and tactical compromises to advance its cause. Sukarno's own blurred record of combining Marxism and nationalism also served as a beacon for the young leaders and cadres of the PKI organization, especially since it became clear in the 1950s that the PKI would go nowhere except

under the protective umbrella of the Great Leader of the Revolution. There were, as in all human affairs, countervailing tendencies at times, of course. Dutch efforts to suppress the PKI in the 1920s, both before and after the unsuccessful 1926 revolt, caused the exile of many leading communists to Moscow where they came under great pressure to conform to whatever international line was being pursued by the Soviet Union at the moment. PKI resistance to these blandishments is ably recorded by Ruth McVey in her history of the early movement and by Arnold Brackman and others for later periods. This Soviet influence waxed most strongly in the 1930s and 1940s when the Party was weak and then in the early post-war period when the hard "Zhdanov line" of encouraging armed action and de-emphasizing accommodation with potential allies was imposed. The 1948 Madiun fiasco was the result, a premature and abortive second PKI revolt that remained an albatross around the Party's neck in later years no matter how hard the PKI and Sukarno himself tried to rid the party of the charge of treason against the young Republic that was fighting for its life against the Dutch. Without the blemish of Madiun and the enmity for the PKI which it established in the minds of much of the Army, there is little doubt that Indonesia would have followed Sukarno into a communist-dominated Indonesia in 1965. Much has been written about the fabulous rebirth and rapid growth of the Communist Party during the 1950s under the imaginative leadership of D. N. Aidit, Lukman and Njoto. Their policy of patient construction of a mass party, development of a plethora of strong front groups such as the Pemuda Rakjat (youth),



Gerwani (women), SOBSI (labor unions), the BTI (peasant front), CGMI (university students), HSI (scholars and intellectuals), and LEKRA (culture), participation in elections, friendly relations with certain partners and groups while ostracizing others, and patriotism, all proved essential. Above all, these young men understood the need to work with Sukarno and to build respectability by identifying themselves and their party with the symbols and causes of Indonesian nationalism. This course allowed for criticism as well as support of the government and some of this criticism was seen as directed at times toward President Sukarno.

To the extent that analysts of Indonesia have seen Sukarno as a neutral balancer of forces and as the all-powerful leader of the government, the tendency has been to hold that PKI criticism of the government was anti-Sukarno. Since no relationship, even among close associates, is devoid of friction, it would be foolhardy to deny that some real criticism of Sukarno was occasionally intended. However, much of the abstract criticism of the government in general or of the government "leadership" was intended to strengthen Sukarno's hand against the Army and other moderate or right wing forces that retained a powerful veto, particularly in the early years of guided democracy. Some authors, for example, have seen PKI criticism of Sukarno for his failure to establish a Nasakom cabinet when, in fact, it was Sukarno who tried to bring the PKI into the cabinet as early as the late 1950s and who worked consistently thereafter toward reducing "communist phobia" and enhancing the Party's acceptability among the powerful entrenched interests of the

country including those who controlled the instruments of physical power. Another example is Rex Mortimer's description of Sukarno in the so-called Three Souths Affair of July 8, 1960 (crackdowns on the PKI by local military commanders in South Sumatra, South Kalimantan and South Sulawesi) as having "moderated the collision between the two parties (the Army and the PKI), demonstrated his authority over both, and left the power balance relatively undisturbed".(1) The implication of a Sukarno who was motivated solely by his personal power needs and was ideologically equidistant between the two contenders is one interpretation but one may also view his role as consonant with PKI needs as well as his own. After all, the Army was powerful and visibly intent on restricting the PKI in that period, was feeling its oats as a result of its victories against the Outer Islands rebellions, and was especially strong throughout the Outer Islands where the PKI and even Sukarno were weak. Some accommodation had to be made, particularly in view of the commitment of both Sukarno and the PKI to achievement of their internal goals in the context of a united Indonesia. Given Sukarno's clear ideological kinship to the PKI, as demonstrated in his conduct as well as his rhetoric in the years that followed, the alternative model of Sukarno and the PKI working in close collusion even in 1960 seems preferable. There was a differentiation between the two but it was primarily a tactical one; the Great Leader who was in reality committed to one side could not afford to appear so committed prematurely but had to seem above it all, to be judicious and "balanced" - while endeavoring to shift that political balance

gradually in the direction he wished to go. To do otherwise would have meant the undermining of his own authority and also the destruction very quickly in 1960 of the PKI itself.

Much has been made of alleged differences among the PKI leaders - too much, in fact. Arnold Brackman speaks a bit too emphatically of differences between a pro-Soviet and a pro-Chinese faction, for example, but Dake goes particularly far in elaborating an almost independently powerful pro-Chinese "Njoto faction" that strains the credulity of one who followed the PKI at close hand in its closing years.(2) As a Soviet specialist for some years before going to Indonesia, I was predisposed by background and training to look for factional splits but I found them less evident in Indonesia than in any other communist party I encountered either before or after Indonesia (even the apparently monolithic Romanian party under Ceausescu showed more fissures under careful Kremlinological analysis, in my view). The very young triumvirate of Aidit, Lukman and Njoto that took over the PKI in 1951-52 appeared extremely close and united on the basic party strategy for achieving power. After the expulsion of their predecessors (Alimin and Tan Ling Djie) and isolation of other senior Party leaders such as Wikana, the PKI showed remarkable continuity in its senior cadre structure.(3) Year after year, the same Politburo, the same Central Committee and the same Central Verification Committee members remained. Promotion was a problem, particularly given the young age of the top leaders, and could only be effected artificially by expanding the size of the Party's higher deliberative bodies. The promotion of a Njono (SOBSI

chief and later head of the Jakarta city committee) or a Rewang (Central Java leader) to the Politburo in 1964, for example, offered recognition but did not mean that they had moved from sixth to fifth or from eight to seventh (or whatever) in the hierarchy. Their relative positions remained unaffected or virtually unaffected. This could be said equally of somewhat less senior Party officials in the 45th or 51st positions in the Party as the size of the Central Committee was progressively expanded. In other words, the Party showed none of the direct signs of excessive infighting and splits that characterized many other Communist parties. This basic unity is important to understand since there was evidence of disagreement in 1965 over PKI policy toward Sukarno's decision to "enter the socialist stage" that year; however the disagreement was overcome without a serious fight and without a purge.

Although other Politburo members such as Sudisman (head of the Secretariat) and Sakirman (economic specialist) had a certain prestige and secondary prominence, the PKI was dominated by the Chairman and two Deputy Chairmen as a triumvirate.<sup>(4)</sup> While Aidit had overall authority, guidance over the organization appeared to be divided three ways with Aidit in charge of party organization and general command and membership functions, with Lukman in charge of the various front groups and with Njoto dealing with agitprop and ideology (he was editor of Harian Rakyat, the Party daily, for example). Lines of demarcation were undoubtedly blurred on occasion and there also appeared to be conflicts of interest ("contradictions") among these different functions from time to time.

Signs of such conflicts in the published party material were usually extremely obscure although Aidit did acknowledge at the Party Conference in July 1964 that contradictions existed within the PKI. Although minor compared to those with the Party's enemies, they needed to be resolved by discussion, he said.<sup>(5)</sup> One could easily read a lot or very little into the apparent differences of emphasis that undoubtedly existed, as they exist in all organizations. My own belief is that some Western observers have read too much into these obscure passages and, in retrospect, I believe I sometimes did the same despite an early conviction that this was a more unified Party than most.

This tendency to overemphasize factionalism was abetted by the prevalence in Jakarta of alleged PKI tipsters willing to peddle supposedly inside information for a price, whether monetary or securing recognition and inflated importance for themselves. One could be offered detailed accounts of just who was supposed to be "pro-Soviet" or "pro-Chinese" by informants who could not, however, even identify the heads of Central Committee sections (we knew some from exhaustive study of the PKI press and Party publications purchased openly and regularly at the three main Party bookstores in Jakarta and at similar small stores in major provincial towns).

This is not to say that there was monolithic unity of views at all times. The Party shifted its posture toward the international communist movement and the issues between the leading foreign parties through the early 1960s as the Sino-Soviet conflict deepened

and as PKI interests required. There were undoubtedly differences of nuance, and differentiated Party roles were even required of some leaders to say more than others or to pitch their remarks in the context of different ultimate audiences. Insofar as Njoto appeared more "pro-Chinese", for example, this may have reflected his role as senior ideologue and propagandist who had a certain responsibility to project a given line toward other parties. Lukman, on the other hand, had responsibilities for coordinating disparate affiliates and fronts that may have required a different emphasis while Aidit had to be especially conscious of the need to keep the PKI position close to that of Sukarno and to take account of national policy considerations. Soviet support was still to be solicited on many issues as late as 1964, for example, even though the PKI (and Sukarno) were increasingly dissatisfied with the Soviet emphasis on peaceful coexistence when both China and Indonesia believed that Asia was ripe for revolution and demanded confrontational policies. Deep down Sukarno himself was among the most radical, as 1964-65 later demonstrated, and it is true that Njoto became both more prominent and especially close to the President in this period. However, that can be attributed to his expertise as a speech writer and propagandist and as a Javanese with a personality pleasing to Sukarno.<sup>(6)</sup> There is no evidence that Aidit was displeased by this additional PKI tie to the President, particularly since his own influence on and compatibility with Sukarno remained high.

The important fact in the 1962-65 period was that Indonesian Marxists (and this includes Sukarno as well as the PKI) had assessed

the revolutionary prospects within the country and throughout Southeast Asia favorably and that this view coincided with the assessment of the Chinese and most other East Asian communist parties while progressively differing from that of a more cautious and realistic Soviet Union. While China's excessive revolutionary optimism and lack of realism were partly a reflection of its isolation, that of Indonesia was to some considerable degree a function of Sukarno's apparent success in the face of opponents at home and abroad who appeared to be vacillating, weak and sycophantic toward his person.(7) To Sukarno, this even seemed true of the United States, whose efforts to show understanding and good will were often misconstrued, particularly since they could be set alongside actions that were seen as gross intervention either in Indonesia (low-level support of Outer Island insurrections) or in other parts of the region (Vietnam and Korea).

It is small wonder then that the Soviets were almost as isolated and out of touch by early 1965 as the Americans while Indonesia, North Korea, China, and North Vietnam were linked together in a love feast that came to be known as the Pyongyang-Peking-Hanoi-Phnom Penh-Jakarta axis.(8) Sihanouk, and to a large extent Pakistan, were regarded as affiliates - the latter, in particular, after clashes with India developed into full scale war in August, 1965. Another aspect of PKI behavior that deserves emphasis is its stress on a mass party and collaboration with Sukarno. Although both Peking and Moscow also courted Sukarno and encouraged PKI policy in their different ways at the time, it

became fashionable after the failure of the September 30 movement and the destruction of the PKI for both communist superpowers to criticize the PKI for alleged strategic errors. The PKI was said by the Chinese to be too inclined toward collaboration with the national bourgeoisie (defined after the fact as including the now discredited and defeated Sukarno) and thus insufficiently committed to armed rebellion from below while the Soviets also pointed to overreliance on collaboration with Sukarno and alleged a half-cocked adventurism that could be described as ultra-left and unduly influenced by China. When all the jargon is stripped away, the criticism of both ring hollow; each has wished to rewrite history to justify its position toward each other and toward the rest of the movement after it was clear that Indonesian communism had failed and had to be written off. (9)

In the real world of the Indonesia in which the PKI operated, there was little choice. The strategy of revolution from above and below had to rely mainly on revolution from above and this meant both identification with Sukarno and, above all, Sukarno's identification with the PKI view of the Indonesian revolution. Given Sukarno's history and romantic view of himself and Marxism, this latter point was not very difficult. Revolution from below - that is organization of a massive Party and front group structure as well as organization of demonstrations and intimidation at the grass roots level - was distinctly supplemental. It was never designed to be revolutionary in the physical, guerrilla warfare style that occurred in China and Vietnam. This mass effort from below was aimed at



demonstrating "inevitability", that the march of the revolution was proceeding step by step in accordance with Sukarno's rhetoric and Sukarno's progressive emasculation of all non-communist forces. The announced increases of PKI and front group membership figures seemed to be accelerating as the apex of the revolution approached, reaching 3.5 million for the Party by September, 1965, eight million for the peasant front, three million for the Pemuda Rakjat and so on (Sukarno's speech to the PKI forty-fifth anniversary celebration in May, 1965 cited three million party members and 20 million in affiliated organizations). These figures were never real, either in my view at the time or in my view now; they were simply convenient numbers designed to awe the opposition and to demonstrate the revolutionary trend. They were also reasonable or believable because of the size of PKI electoral results in mid 1955 and especially 1957 as well as the "feel" of the political situation at any given time based on Party visibility. But these large numbers did not mean hard-core cadres or even a disciplined rank and file that could be used in a quasi-military role. Crowds of demonstrators could be recruited, and by no one more efficiently than the PKI, but even the one or two hundred thousand Party and front group cadres were geared overwhelmingly to a wajang (shadow play) revolution in which theatricality and posturing were supposed to do the trick as long as the "dalang" or puppet master - Sukarno - knew the plot and skillfully led all the puppets through their allotted roles.

## Footnotes - Chapter IV

1. Rex Mortimer, Indonesian Communism under Sukarno (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press) 1974, p.107.
2. Dake. See pp. 286-287 in particular although the theme is recurrent throughout most of *his* book.
3. Alimin launched a strong criticism against the Aidit leadership in 1956 but failed. The Aidit leadership thereafter was sufficiently entrenched to make use of Alimin and Wikana as respected elder statesmen. Both Aidit and Sukarno praised Alimin as a national hero on his death in 1965.
4. Being head of the secretariat became a route to great power in most communist countries, Stalin's triumph being the classic example. Sudisman's position in the PKI appeared to be more technical and no real power base for a challenge to the top three leaders. He was slightly older than Aidit and Njoto and, though respected and consulted, was not a full member of the three-man inner circle. The fact that he survived the early post September 30 affair massacre for a while, and perforce became head of the underground party until captured and publicly tried, has given him more visibility than he otherwise would have had. His criticisms of PKI strategy and tactics at his trial had to have been greatly influenced by his predicament and that of the Party; his earlier public pronouncements when the PKI was in its heyday echoed the Party line but were among the most sterile and pro forma of any PKI officials.

5. Harian Rakjat, July 5, 1964.
6. As noted by Dake, Njoto was a major drafter (along with Oei Tjoe Tat) of Sukarno's ominous "Tavip" speech of August 17, 1964 ("the Year of Living Dangerously") and of Sukarno's speech to non-aligned leaders in Jakarta some ten months later. This was widely known in Jakarta at the time. See Dake, p 287.
7. This criticism has been leveled in particular at Ambassador Jones for his desire to appear more Indonesian than the Indonesians. I vividly recall acting as Russian language interpreter for Jones during the Mikoyan visit in 1964 when Jones gratuitously told the Chief of the Political Administration of the Soviet Armed Forces, General Yepishev, that anyone could look at the map and see that North Kalimantan (i.e. Sarawak and North Borneo or Sabah) rightfully belonged to Indonesia - a claim that even the Indonesians did not make overtly and one which Yepishev, incidentally, did not accept.
8. I attended several Sukarno speeches in mid-1965 at which I was the only foreign diplomat present other than the Chinese, North Vietnamese and North Koreans (other US embassy officers had similar experiences when they attended). The Soviets were simply no longer visible. In 1963, incidentally, the US Embassy received an invitation to "all diplomatic missions" (it should have been to all friendly diplomatic missions) to attend a Pemuda Rakjat rally. Another American officer (Henry Heymann) and I went and were seated immediately behind the PKI Politburo on the assumption that we were Soviet. No other

foreigners came. We had a nice friendly conversation with a Central Committee member until he asked where we were from and received a truthful reply (we had been careful to do nothing to give a false response to any queries although we had guessed, of course, that this invitation had arrived as the result of a clerical error). When Aidit and Lukman, who were seated in the chairs immediately in front of us, were informed of our identity, they seemed stricken with indecision but eventually moved to another part of the room. We were treated, however, with extreme courtesy in spite of the vitriolic anti-American speech by Pemuda Rakjat Deputy Chairman Anwar Nasution and we then left quietly after the speech.

9. There may be more validity to Soviet criticism that the Party should not have continued to claim that the September 30 affair was simply an internal Army matter that did not involve the PKI when that was clearly not sustainable. Aleksey Yuryev makes this point in his book Indonesiya Posle Sobytiye 1965 goda (Moscow, "Nauka") 1973, p.215. According to Yuryev, this stance caused confusion and immobilization in the party ranks. Aidit, he says, had lapsed into an "inertia of legalism" when he should have been mobilizing the Party to defend itself.

## V

### The Anti - Malaysia Campaign

Sukarno had used the West New Guinea issue (known to the Indonesians as West Irian) as a tool to mobilize revolutionary sentiment internally as well as for the more direct purpose of gaining additional territory. Once recovered as a result of the Ellsworth Bunker mediation effort in 1962, Irian could no longer be used as a rallying point and a touchstone for demonstrating revolutionary loyalty. It was accordingly hoped by the West and by moderates within the country that Indonesia would now turn to economic development and resolution of a multitude of problems faced by such a poor and underdeveloped country. The United States, in particular, hoped for recognition of its role in the Irian settlement and eagerly offered additional economic assistance. A preliminary credit of \$17 million was extended in February.(1) First Minister Djuanda, regarded as a sensible pragmatist, became the focal point within the Indonesian Government for a new network of cooperation with eager and idealistic American developers. Ambassador Howard P. Jones, a man whose life had become dedicated to Indonesia and to the proposition that Sukarno would be America's friend if only he could be understood and weaned away from evil influences, was among those most encouraged.(2) On one front, Sukarno did indeed cater to these hopes as internal political needs required some apparent

concessions to those who favored development; But not for long. With the PKI critical of economic reforms pushed through the MPRS in this period, Sukarno made a rousing speech to the MPRS on March 28, 1963 blaming economic ills on foreigners and the rich and advocating policies to improve the lot of the poor.(3) The "economic declaration", or DEKON as it came to be known in the popular newspeak, was trumpeted by the PKI over the next two years as a kind of mesmerizing slogan in support of PKI policy and as a weapon against its enemies. A series of austerity regulations passed by parliament in May, 1963 was eventually rescinded in 1965 and hailed as a victory by the communists.

The principal vehicle for a new revolutionary thrust, however, was to be the British and Malayan scheme to establish a new political entity of Malaysia out of the former and existing British colonies to the north of Indonesia. This new state would incorporate Malaya, which had achieved independence in 1957 after a long struggle against a communist insurgency, the largely Chinese city state of Singapore, which faced an internal communist threat and severe economic problems caused by its isolation from its former hinterland, and the three British colonies along the north coast of Kalimantan or Borneo, that is Sarawak, Brunei and British North Borneo. Some two thirds of the island of Borneo was Indonesian, having been part of the old Dutch East Indies. When originally proposed in May, 1961, the Malaysian concept attracted no visible opposition from the Indonesian Government although it was soon condemned by the PKI as a neo-colonial scheme of the British.

Philippine opposition appeared in due course because of an ancient claim of the Sultans of Sulu to Sabah or North Borneo (the northeastern tip of the island), a claim that was pressed in large part because Philippine President Macapagal had studied these claims as a young man and was emotionally involved with the idea.

In December, 1962, a revolt erupted in the small, oil-rich enclave of Brunei where opposition to Malaysia was strong because of the rich little territory's interest in avoiding any requirement to share its wealth with a larger entity. The populations of the much larger Sarawak and British North Borneo were strongly favorable to incorporation in Malaysia as the most viable route to independence in a secure setting. Both feared eventual incorporation into a Sukarno-dominated Indonesia otherwise. The Brunei revolt was led by a Brunei politician named Azahari who was also an adherent of the Partindo Party in Indonesia - a party usually regarded as a front for the PKI because of the identity of their policies but which was actually led by some of Sukarno's closest personal disciples and entourage members.<sup>(4)</sup> Azahari proclaimed his movement to be more than just a Brunei revolt; he announced the existence of a Unitary State of Kalimantan Utara (North Kalimantan) of which he was to be Prime Minister. This North Kalimantan Government was, in fact, a creature of Jakarta even to the point of reflecting the political spectrum in Indonesia. Although the North Kalimantan front was dominated by the far left, the Defense Minister was an NU member who also had the backing of Nasution. Born in Sarawak, this colorful fellow, Abang Kifli, had once served in the Philippine Army

during the Korean War and maintained clandestine connections with the Philippines. As Indonesia moved increasingly to the left in late 1963, Kifli was purged and became fearful for his life despite some degree of weak protection from Nasution. He was arrested, escaped and eventually fled to the Philippine embassy until the events of late 1965 permitted him to emerge. The Azahari movement by this time had become a Sukarno-Subandrio-PKI operation, reflecting the direction in which Indonesia itself was moving.(5)

Sukarno had already signaled a probable cool Indonesian attitude toward Malaysia in September, 1962 in a statement that Indonesia could not remain indifferent to developments there. After the Azahari revolt in Brunei in December, Subandrio asserted in January, 1963 that Indonesia would pursue a policy of confrontation against the new state and this was confirmed by Sukarno on February 13. Invective against Malaysia and the British mounted progressively as the September 16 date for official establishment of the new state approached. Anti-Indonesian demonstrations took place in Kuala Lumpur and anti-Malaysian and anti-British demonstrations occurred in Jakarta on September 16 and 17 followed by the sacking and burning of the British Embassy and the ransacking of most British homes on September 18 and the seizure of British business enterprises soon thereafter.(6) Relations between Indonesia and Malaya were broken, Indonesia placed a ban on travel to and from Malaysia that even included impediments to transit stops, and military activity by Indonesian-supported guerrilla groups increased along Indonesia's border with Sarawak and Sabah, the former British



protectorates that were now part of Malaysia. Confrontation was on with a vengeance, Sukarno and his claque shouted hysterically that Malaysia would be "crushed", and large billboards lined principal streets showing heroic Indonesian workers smashing puny figures labeled Malaysia and imperialism. "Imperialism" often looked suspiciously like a figure of Uncle Sam, and sometimes like Ambassador Jones.

The PKI Chairman, D. N. Aidit, returned from a trip to the USSR and China shortly thereafter and issued a long statement that attracted attention primarily for its almost complete identification with Chinese positions in the mushrooming Sino-Soviet ideological conflict (the PKI had originally been rather even handed but had already moved much closer to China during the previous year; this speech substantially completed the process).(7) The speech was also interesting because of veiled but clear language on how Indonesian political forces viewed the confrontation with Malaysia. Aidit's analysis was perceptive as he favored a policy of primarily political confrontation but warned against those who wanted more extreme measures in order to justify imposition of martial law in the Outer Islands, particularly the regions closest to Malaysia such as Kalimantan and Sumatra. This warning was clearly intended to apply to the Army and it was indeed true that speeches by Nasution and other army figures were of an especially saber rattling nature at this time. Both Sukarno and the PKI on the one side and the Army on the other tried to shape the confrontation issue in ways that would be advantageous to them in the subtle internal struggle but Sukarno, as

President, Great Leader of the Revolution and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, retained the initiative and continued to be much more imaginative than the Army in his tactics. The climate of nationalist hysteria was such that the Army and moderates not only had to appear as anti-Malaysia as the extreme left but felt themselves compelled to use Sukarno's ideological concepts and jargon, all of which severely curtailed their tactical options.

As time went on, Sukarno kept the rhetorical level high on confrontation but made sure that military action was restricted to pin-pricks with psychological, not military, goals in mind. Sukarno had already largely isolated the weak and vacillating Nasution by kicking him upstairs to be Minister of Defense while turning over actual command of the Army in 1962 to General Yani, a man he hoped to control because of Yani's love of the good life and apparent susceptibility to the glitter and prestige of Sukarno's palace atmosphere. Yani had also been made Chief of Staff of KOTI, the operations command that paralleled and in some ways superseded the traditional chain of command. In early 1965 the President also created another anti-Malaysia command (Mandala) headed by Air Force Commander Omar Dani, a pro-communist loyalist. Much of the limited military action that actually took place fitted this approach - infiltration of small subversion teams and small scale para-drops. For all the loud talk, significant combat operations which would have required Army infantry attacks, did not take place. Nor were they intended to although the existence of what was largely a

phony war provided an excuse to tip the balance of forces on Java. This, however, is a story for later.

The internal utility of confrontation does not mean that Sukarno did not have designs on Malaysia or that an aggressive foreign policy was purely a servant of the inexorable march toward completion of the Indonesian Revolution through advance into a "socialist stage" and an open communist regime. It does mean that the two objectives were viewed as mutually reinforcing and that real priority was accorded to the internal purpose in spite of every effort to project the contrary appearance of a Malaysia obsession with foreign enemies. It is revealing in this respect to observe how the campaign of propaganda, intimidation and, ultimately, terror progressed. In late 1963 and early 1964, the targets (and this meant an overwhelming cacophony of slogans and speeches on this subject) were Malaysia and Britain. (The former number one enemy, the Dutch, had been polished off and had receded into the background). Gradually the propaganda barrage shifted toward "imperialism" generally with Britain as an example, but one mentioned less often. After the famous "Tavip" (Tahun Vivere Pericoloso - Year of Living Dangerously) speech by Sukarno on August 17, 1964, the target began to shift again toward the United States as the main bulwark of imperialism.(8) By 1965, Britain and Malaysia had been reduced to minor themes while the United States and "imperialism", now virtually synonymous, were in the forefront of the hate campaign. Growing US involvement in Vietnam gave credence to this campaign but every American policy and weakness was pounced

upon in a range and form of attack that was virtually indistinguishable from similar campaigns emanating from Moscow and Peking. While the US target never disappeared (nor did those of Malaysia and Britain), the focus continued to shift as 1965 proceeded toward the supposed "subversives" and "lackeys" of the United States and imperialism within Indonesia. The climate of terror was by now enormous since internal opposition, however mild, had become equivalent to treason. The intention was to intimidate the weak into ready compliance (and even statements of eager agreement) with the leftist offensive and its slogans like "Nasakom", Marxism, completion of the national-democratic stage, and purges of false Marhaenists, false Nasakomists, false Manipolists, etc.. Those who did not comply and they were becoming precious few, would be isolated and removed from any kind of significant position.

There were, of course, various well-meaning efforts to negotiate some kind of settlement and the United States Government was a leader in these efforts. Initially, the Maphilindo concept of Philippine President Macapagal held some attraction, since it conceived of a close community of consultation among the three Malay countries of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. This idea had some attraction to the Indonesians since there was a definite strain of "Greater Indonesia" thinking in Sukarno's makeup and that of other Indonesian nationalists. This was reflected in Sukarno's penchant for calling the Indian Ocean the Indonesian Ocean, for example, and by occasional Sukarno assertions that the Indonesian people extended from Madagascar to Easter Island.(9) This ultimate nationalist dream

was borne in on me on one occasion by a large embroidered wall hanging map in Merdeka Palace in which the existing Indonesia was shown in solid yellow while solid yellow borders highlighted areas regarded as once ruled by pre-Dutch Indonesian empires. Other areas were bordered less ostentatiously. The visual impact was striking, at least to this observer. Whatever the extent of ultimate nationalist pretensions or the degree of their intensity, there is no question that a greater Indo-Malay vision had its attractions provided, of course, that it would be dominated by Jakarta. There were also the tactical considerations of encouraging an anti-Malaysia ally in Macapagal and making the Sukarno leadership appear more righteous internally. These considerations, along with a certain residual wariness toward US and other Western powers in the region, caused Sukarno, in my view, to go along with intermittent negotiations in Tokyo and Bangkok and to receive and toy with such American emissaries as Robert Kennedy in early 1964. While the American Ambassador remained optimistic, at least to all appearances, most of his political officers never had the slightest doubt about Sukarno's ultimate intransigence, whatever their differing views on his underlying motives and ideological consistency. The view of some writers such as Antonie Dake, that the PKI was angry with Sukarno for being prone to compromise at certain times in 1963-1964 appears totally mistaken to me.(10) Occasional PKI warnings against possible Indonesian Government softness were designed to maximize pressure in support of Sukarno's own intentions and to provide some hints of differentiation that afforded tactical advantages for what was

really their joint approach to their opponents abroad and at home. Any other interpretation is not consistent with the overall posture of the Indonesian Government and Sukarno throughout this period.

To return to the central point of this chapter, defeat of Malaysia remained a stated Indonesian goal until the Sukarno era began to crumble in October, 1965 but it had gradually lost its singular importance as the central issue and had become incorporated in the broader thrust toward completion of the internal revolution within Indonesia. Expulsion of the imperialists from the area, or at least from Indonesia, was one of two pre-conditions for entering the socialist stage and anti-Malaysian rhetoric was part of this but only one of declining importance.

## Footnotes - Chapter V

1. Antonie C. A. Dake, In the Spirit of the Red Banteng (The Hague Mouton and Co.) 1973, p. 175.
2. This was a rather common view of Ambassador Jones' attitude both within the Embassy and without. Jones was a hard-working, well-intentioned and dedicated envoy, however, and a man for whom I, for one, had much respect as a human being. He was right in his basic commitment to stay in the game and to try to work with the forces that were there. Some Americans would like to have seen the United States withdraw its presence from Indonesia entirely out of pique with Sukarno's behavior toward us. As it turned out, it was a good thing for US capacity to understand and influence the course of events and to build a new relationship after 1966 that we were still there on October 1, 1965 although it is also true that the size of the mission, particularly its aid components, might have been reduced quietly and gradually so as to make the US presence less of a visible target. While Jones' policy of hanging on was useful, there is little doubt, however, that he was romantically naive about Sukarno and excessively protective of a government that was demonstrably hostile. He was also excessively wedded to the efficacy of personal diplomacy (the basis for his own claim to continuation in his Ambassadorial job was the myth of his personal clout with Sukarno) and he argued even into 1965 that a Johnson-Sukarno summit was needed. US failure to

arrange such a meeting was held by Jones to be a significant reason for Sukarno's anti-US posture. Jones told President Johnson on December 18, 1963 that he should meet soon with Sukarno, arguing that US influence would depend on the personal rapport between the US President and Sukarno. A Jones telegram in January, 1965 argued that Sukarno's main vice was his vanity. According to Jones, Sukarno had wanted to work with the United States and had demonstrated this in his acquiescence to Djuanda's stabilization program in early 1963 but had unfortunately been diverted by the Malaysian question. Because of US support for Malaysia, Sukarno did not know where he stood with President Johnson. Accordingly, a meeting was needed to clear up this essentially personal misunderstanding. See Embtel 1358 (Jakarta) Jones to Rusk, January 14, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.

3. Warta Bhakti and Harian Rakyat, March 29, 1963.
4. I made a study of the leadership bodies of Partindo and Baperki in 1963 (the racial integration society popularly regarded as the "Chinese" organization close to the PKI) and found an extraordinary overlap. Of the seven top leaders of each, that is their governing boards or politburos, four overlapped on both boards. Even more illuminating was the fact that they included Sukarno's two adopted sons, Asmara Hadi and A. M. Hanafi, S. Tahsin, the chief editor of the Partindo newspaper Bintang Timur (regarded incorrectly by Dake and others as a PKI organ



more radical than Harian Rakjat but actually the organ of Partindo), and Winoto Danuasmoro, who for many years was the chief of Sukarno's household staff. The top Partindo leader was Asmara Hadi and A. M. Hanafi was one of the deputies.

5. I met Kifli in late 1963 when he suddenly appeared out of the bushes at the home of an embassy officer friend with whom I was having dinner and whom Kifli had known for five or six years. Although we tried to keep Kifli at arms length given the possibility for any such contact to be misconstrued, Kifli made it a habit of dropping in on me occasionally although he was in a state of growing terror because of alleged threats to his life from the PKI and/or the Indonesian intelligence organization, the BPI.
6. I arrived in Indonesia with my family that very day. It was my wife's introduction to life abroad in the Foreign Service.
7. The text appeared in Harian Rakjat on October 4-5, 1963.
8. The slogan "Vivere Pericoloso" was derived from a poem by d'Annunzio that later entered the rhetoric of Benito Mussolini; its use by Sukarno was as a colleague put it, a reflection of the Indonesian leader's "rag-bag mind". A more positive way of expressing this quite accurate observation would be its reflection on the eclectic nature of Sukarno's mind. While devoted to his ideological Weltanschauung of general goals and principles; he was not limited to dogmatic forms of expression or limited sources of ideas. The straight-jacket of Marxist

dogma was one side of Sukarno's mental structure but he also remained a colorful and wide-ranging individualist.

9. Harian Rakjat, August 6, 1964.

10. Dake, see entire discussion of Malaysia beginning on p.173.

## VI

# Acceleration of The Internal Struggle in 1964

The final two years of Sukarno dominance, that is the period coinciding with confrontation against Malaysia and leading up to the September 30 affair or attempted communist coup as it has been inadequately labeled, were marked by an accelerating drive by Sukarno and the PKI to advance the revolution internally toward a socialist state. While most of this effort was being made through intimidation and development of a spirit of ultra-nationalism from the top, Government sanctioned PKI intimidation from below was also practiced. This effort proceeded along a number of fronts. A major contribution in this respect was the PKI unilateral action (aksi sepihak) campaign in rural areas of Java that became prominent around May and June of 1964. Inauguration of the rural campaign was presaged by the Central Committee plenum in December which called for a revolutionary offensive along a broad front.(1) Unilateral action by the PKI peasant affiliate, the BTI, was an essentially new program and it was slow getting off the ground. A massive "research" program headed by Aidit himself was launched in April and involved Party cadres laying the organizational groundwork at the village level. The campaign involved mass actions by PKI-organized peasants to demand compliance with the existing land

reform and crop sharing laws, actions to go beyond those laws to secure a greater return for sharecroppers than the laws required, and support for seizure of state forests, estates and properties belonging to politically vulnerable landholders; including those identified with "imperialism". While there were undoubtedly hundreds of incidents over the next year, only a few produced sufficient violence to become well known at the national level. The most famous were those at Klaten and Boyolali in Central Java in the late spring and early summer of 1964 and at Indramayu in West Java some months later.

The PKI "actions" were pegged to demands for better compliance with the crop-sharing and land reform laws that had been enacted in 1959 and 1960, partly as the result of PKI pressure at that time. Some background points should be noted. First, the shortage of land and the social pain of inequitable distribution were acute in Java with its extremely high rural population density and a rapidly growing young population. Second, most of Java (and particularly certain areas such as the north central coast and a chronically impoverished area southeast of Yogyakarta - previously Jogjakarta) had suffered widespread starvation due to drought and crop failures in late 1963 and early 1964.<sup>(2)</sup> Finally, although inequities did exist, Indonesia did not have numerous large estates and classical absentee landholder conditions on the massive scale that could produce spectacular results from land reform. Put another way, however one evaluated the need for reform, there was simply not enough land to go around to alleviate the underlying socio-economic problems in

more than a marginal way. The very fact that the underlying problems were so intractable made for tremendous tensions in the countryside and for a high political charge to be placed on any effort to arouse class conflict to a greater pitch. Although it is getting ahead of the story, it would appear in retrospect that the PKI campaign of rural violence was a major strategic error as it not only galvanized rural support and revolutionary sentiment for the PKI but frightened the latter's rural opponents into violent counteraction, the full fury of which was only realized after the Party's unexpected defeat at the national level.

The land reform law restricted the size of land holdings and required excess land to be made available for distribution. Special issues turned on absentee landlords, foreign holdings and the efforts of landholders to retain excess land through allocation to relatives. The crop sharing law was probably more important. A landholder (and this included the probable great majority of what would be regarded in the West as very small holders - that is modestly well off peasants by local standards but people who were far poorer than the Jakarta leaders of the agitation or than Western observers) would receive a fixed amount of the harvest while the sharecroppers would get the rest. The percentages varied according to local tradition but were often 50-50 although they could be 60-40 in favor of the sharecropper or even higher. The PKI had originally pressed for a 60-40 national minimum back in 1959 but had settled for 50-50 although with provisions for ensuring the rights of the sharecroppers to a higher percentage where such a favorable ratio had already been

secured by local effort and for obtaining official support for their rights through better enforcement of existing legislation.(3)

The PKI campaign in 1964 not only urged more forceful demands by local peasant organizations for implementation of existing rights under the law but urged local demands for the 60-40 split favored by the PKI. It would be difficult to go into the merits of these demands which in any case are beyond the scope of this work. In many cases, however, a small landholder who found it profitable at a given division of the crop to leave the work to others while he pursued a small trade in a town would find it uneconomical to continue that course at a more unfavorable ratio. Some of the more violent clashes in Central Java occurred when peasant landholders returned to farm their land themselves and to expel their sharecroppers. The PKI would organize the landless sharecroppers to counter-action while the landholders were undoubtedly also being supported by rival organizations. In some cases this was the NU or the underground Masjumi but in Central Java it was usually the PNI. Furthermore, Central Java was an area of great strength and party militancy for both the PKI and the PNI. The latter was headed by a leadership more conservative (and pro-Western) than the PNI national leadership and one that was acutely aware of its competition with the PKI at the grass roots level. Its leader, Hadisubeno Sosrowerdojo, was to be purged at Sukarno's insistence a few months before the September 30, 1965 coup as a "false Marhaenist" but he regained his position after the defeat of communism a year later.

A similar but initially less publicized conflict was taking place in East Java where the main rival of the PKI was the Moslem NU party. Here the land reform conflict was exacerbated by the underlying enmity between the strongly religious Santri class, which tended to be more well to do, and the culturally pre-Islamic abangan population. The local NU cadres, and particularly its youth front, Ansor, were much more combative and took an active part in organizing opposition to PKI pressures and demonstrations. This led to violent clashes in 1965 between Moslem youth groups (both Ansor of the NU and the Masjumi oriented HMI) on the one hand and communists on the other. Sukarno eventually had to intervene by admonishing all sides to avoid playing into the hands of the imperialists through fighting among themselves. Even so, his favoritism toward the PKI side of the conflict was evident since the PKI claimed to be the aggrieved party in the more publicized cases. Indeed, the PKI had generally been put on the defensive at the grass roots level in East Java by 1965.(4)

While East and Central Java were the main arenas of grass roots struggle, similar politicized strife was taking place elsewhere without much fanfare. The resulting polarization and development of an atmosphere of terror throughout 1964-65 set the stage for the widespread killing that occurred at the end of 1965, as will be seen. Some examples of these conflicts in other regions were the tensions between large numbers of Javanese immigrants in the western portion of Bali and the native Balinese, tensions between Javanese migrants, particularly rubber estate workers, and native Sumatrans in

North Sumatra, and traditional conflicts between the Christianized Karo and Toba Bataks and the Moslem Mendailing Bataks of North Sumatra. This latter conflict was politicized by the tendency of Karo Batak leaders to identify with Sukarno, the PNI and even the PKI as a protective measure against their Masjumi-oriented Moslem enemies.

The Indramayu (a small town near Cirebon) affair in West Java in late 1964 illustrated a different aspect of PKI direct action on behalf of landless peasants for in this case the opposition was the government bureaucracy which sought to evict squatters from state-owned forest lands that were regarded by officials as essential to the government program for water and soil management. The PKI supported the squatters in a well-publicized campaign.<sup>(5)</sup> Similar, less publicized incidents occurred in some other areas, notably in East Java. The issue was bound up with efforts at the technical level of government to prevent encroachment of squatters on state lands, particularly forested areas that were supposed to help deter the extensive erosion that was a serious long-term threat to the agricultural viability of the island. At a very basic level, the conflict was again one of overpopulation which drove a needy surplus population to desperate action whatever the macro-economic and ecological long-term arguments, while government counteraction also had a solid basis from the standpoint of the general welfare. These sociological features of the conflict were largely obscured, however, by the politicization of the issues for the sake of revolutionary political goals as every effort was made by the



aggressive revolutionary forces to intensify the problem rather than to resolve it. A somewhat similar case occurred in Sumatra in mid-1965 and resulted in the killing of a government official by aroused squatters. The PKI sided with the squatters, of course, in this so-called Bandar Betsy affair.

Sukarno's implicit support for the PKI on these issues, a support that became quite clear in his August 17, 1964 Tavip speech and even more during the course of 1965, provided a message to the working level authorities that they were expected to support the demands of the PKI-organized peasant groups. This became especially prominent after Sukarno announced in March, 1965 that Indonesia had almost completed the national democratic stage, since one of the two frequently reiterated conditions for that historic step was to be the elimination of "feudalism" which was defined almost entirely in land reform terms (the entire landlord class is held to be feudal in communist doctrine although this would not include PKI sympathizers in practice). The nation's judges were also lectured repeatedly in 1964-65 by the pro-communist Minister of Justice, Astrawinata, by Sukarno, Aidit, the labor Minister, and others on the need for judges to decide cases on the basis of the needs of the revolution in general and of the "peasants" against the "landlords", in particular.<sup>(6)</sup> The interpretation of this latter formulation totally followed the PKI definition of peasants, based on the Party's political requirements. Those who sought different interpretations, such as the moderate PNI leaders, were soon condemned as "false Marhaenists",

that is people untrue to Sukarno's conception of the Marhaen as the poorest peasants and the revolutionary class to be idealized.

Another area of radical pressure was the constant campaign to intimidate the country's non-Marxist intelligentsia, to expunge liberal Western thought, and to require acceptance of Marxist textbooks. Like the PKI's direct action campaign in agriculture, terror tactics against the intellectuals took many forms. In the field of education, the pro-communist Coordinating Minister for Education, Prijono, had pressed for the replacement of Western textbooks with ones from communist countries or ones that reflected Marxist doctrine. Progress was checked somewhat by a non-Marxist Minister of Higher Education, Tojib, and by various university officials including the rector of the University of Indonesia, an Army doctor, Colonel (later Major General) Sjarif Thajeb, who had developed a good personal relationship with Sukarno.<sup>(7)</sup> Tojib was replaced by the more malleable Thajeb during a 1964 cabinet reshuffle. While no tower of strength, Thajeb tried to steer as balanced a course as was possible and eventually emerged as an accepted member of Suharto's circle after the failure of the September 30 affair. Whatever the delays, there is no question that the curriculum in Indonesian universities was being forced into a progressively Marxist and anti-Western direction by late 1963. This was also a period of PKI-organized book burnings in which gangs of "progressive youth", often led by the radical PNI head of the Youth Front, Zaini Mansjur (Mansjur was a communist infiltrator of the PNI who had originally been a member of the PKI university student group, the CGMI,

rather than its PNI counterpart), carried out well-publicized demonstrations during which massive piles of Western books were destroyed. The ability of the demonstrators to discriminate was often faulty, incidentally, as there was an impression that anything in a Western European language must perforce be imperialist, causing some very pro-communist books in English to disappear with the rest.

While the non-communists were reluctant to fight back directly given the prevailing atmosphere of revolutionary zeal, increased fear was also accompanied by increased desperation which resulted in short-lived bursts of "counter-revolutionary" activity. One such burst occurred in early March of 1964 with the organization of an Islamic-oriented writers' conference which had the behind-the-scenes backing of General Nasution. A large majority of the almost 600 participants signed a "Cultural Manifesto" written by H. B. Jassin, one of Indonesia's most gifted writers and a lecturer at the University of Indonesia, and by Wiratmo Soekito, an official of Radio Republic Indonesia (RRI) as well as a columnist for an Army subsidized newspaper, Semesta. This document favored some degree of cultural independence from the state and, while paying obeisance to Sukarno, chose to emphasize "Panca Sila", the Sukarno-invented slogan preferred by the moderates, while ignoring Nasakom. The communists had promptly condemned the conference and the Manifesto, attaching the acronym of "Manikebu" to the latter in a fashion that made it synonymous with treason. Sukarno refused an invitation to speak or even to send a message to the conference while

the leftist Education Minister, Prijono, sent a message that in essence questioned the loyalty of the participants. Nasution and another senior cabinet minister, Ruslan Abdulgani, who had also given initial encouragement to the organizers, could not back away entirely. On seeing Sukarno's negative attitude, however, they soon tried to distance themselves from the conference. Ruslan failed to appear in person but sent a written message while Nasution, who did appear, gave little encouragement and asked the audience not to quarrel with other groups. Both Nasution and Ruslan commented that the Cultural Manifesto was not in conflict with the revolution but suggested that some words might be changed. Sukarno fed the flames of communist agitation in a speech on August 14 by praising students who demanded the expulsion of professors who were not revolutionary. Left out on a limb, the Manifesto's authors, Jassin and Soekito, were hounded from their jobs and the Cultural Manifesto itself was banned on May 8 by the President.(8)

The atmosphere of intimidation against non-communist intellectuals increased steadily over the next few months, much of it out of public view. I recall an Indonesian professor of Chinese descent whom I knew as a sensible, apolitical scholar. He was a man who had shown great courage up to this point in standing up to communist intimidation. The atmosphere in Jakarta was already such that, at my own initiative, I never parked my car in front of his house during my occasional calls at his home. In July or August of 1964, this professor was publicly attacked by a British communist woman on Subandrio's staff who was also a deputy chairman of the PKI

scholars front, the HSI. The professor was so strongly intimidated by this verbal assault, which obviously had been sanctioned by the regime that he stopped his resistance.(9) The professor broke off all contact with me and laid low. When I saw him by coincidence at the house of a third party shortly before the September 30 affair, he literally broke into tears over the course of events and the growing threat to his family and himself. To paraphrase his remarks, the gist of which I remember clearly, "If the country becomes communist, which seems likely, I will undoubtedly become a victim as my efforts to accommodate to them almost certainly came too late but, if by some miracle, they fail, I will also be vulnerable because any swing the other way would have to be based on a wave of anti-Chinese right wing hysteria". Although the second alternative occurred to a degree, it was more discriminating than the professor believed and he, like most other non-communist Chinese, emerged unscathed although not without some trepidation. While the above account is anecdotal, it reflects the climate of fear that was growing by leaps and bounds in Indonesia at this time (10)

Another sign of the growing isolation of the non-communists and a corresponding enhancement in the power of Sukarno and the pro-communist elements that he favored was a restructuring of the state "retooling" apparatus in a way that appeared to carry awesome implications for the future. The word "retooling", incidentally, was a popular Sukarnoesque phrase for purging a person from whatever position he held. A retooling organization had already been in existence since 1959 called the Committee for Retooling the State

Apparatus (or "PARAN" from the initials of this title in Indonesian). Its chairman and vice-chairman in this period were General Nasution and Ruslan Abdulgani, both regarded as anti-communist, however ineffectually so. Nasution was strongly and consistently anti-communist at least whatever his compromises, while Ruslan, a long-time Sukarno confidant and spokesman, was stirred by certain immediate personal considerations as well as by his ties to the Army and his awareness of the growing resistance to the PKI by his Nationalist Party's organization in Central Java. (In addition to his probable resentment over his replacement by Subandrio as Foreign Minister some years earlier, the personal considerations related to the arrest and torture of his brother-in-law on the basis of trumped up charges by the PKI that the brother-in-law had organized a "Gerakan Anti-Sukarno" or Anti-Sukarno Movement.)(11) A Presidential decree of May 3, 1964 abolished PARAN and established a new body called the Supreme Operations Command for Retooling the Apparatus of the Revolution or KOTRAR for short. KOTRAR was to be chaired by President Sukarno personally with Subandrio as Deputy Supreme Commander and General Yani as Chief of Staff.(12) The latter, although regarded by Sukarno and the PKI as an improvement over Nasution, was actually a second choice. The original idea, advanced by Subandrio, had been to appoint a Colonel Bambang Supeno, a bitter enemy of Nasution, to the top operational leadership position in the new organization but this had been opposed by Yani as unacceptable to the Army. Subandrio then proposed himself as Deputy Commander and Yani as Chief of Staff,

the latter being regarded as far less political than Nasution, subject to flattery and the good life, and accordingly manageable. Subandrio's position was regarded as carrying considerable potential power since "retooling" also fitted in with his position as head of the principal Indonesian intelligence organization, the BPI (Badan Pusat Intelligensi). Of equal concern was the apparent intention to convert the old innocuous PARAN into a purge organization with real teeth and to apply it not just to government offices but to all aspects of society, an intention even implicit in the new title since Retooling the Apparatus of the Revolution could cover almost anything.

There were, however, cautious efforts to divert or slow down the revolutionary trend of events. Although weak and inadequate in appearance since they were advanced in a package of glorification of Sukarno and tortuous reasoning, these efforts also reflected considerable courage on the part of their promoters given the reign of terror and idolization of Sukarno that dominated the Indonesian scene at that time. The principal figures behind this modest counteroffensive were an unlikely lot. One was Ruslan Abdulgani, a senior "coordinating minister" for public relations in the cabinet and prominent in the upper reaches of the PNI leadership. Although a Sukarno sycophant, he had better relations with the Army than other senior Sukarno cronies. Another was Chairul Saleh, one of three deputy prime ministers, head of an organization called the "45 Generation", made up of generally leftist veterans of the revolutionary period and a one time follower of national communist Tan Malaka. They tried to keep their roles obscure and they soon

retreated after Sukarno made his disapproval known. The more forceful leadership belonged to two former Tan Malaka followers of the national communist Murba party, Sukarni and Adam Malik, who had returned from ambassadorial assignments in Peking and Moscow respectively in early 1964. Both were apparently highly disillusioned with the communism they had seen practiced in China and the USSR and, as the two most prestigious members of Murba, they soon turned that party from its previous sycophantic echoing of the PKI into a nucleus of moderate opposition. The principal platform for the views of this new opposition were three newspapers closely connected with Murba - Berita Indonesia, Warta Berita and Merdeka, the last owned by Indonesia's ambassador to Bangkok, B. M. Diah, a man whose political life had been associated with the PNI but who had also had associations with Murba in the past. From their recent years abroad (and Diah was still in Thailand most of the time), it would appear that all three were less mesmerized by the peculiar atmosphere of the Sukarno court than the other courtiers (and this included such top military figures as General Yani and Admiral Martadinata in my view).

In the initial stages, several vague speeches and articles were advanced by Ruslan Abdulgani on "Sukarnoism" which appeared to define Sukarno's thinking in a nationalist but non-communist direction. Simultaneously, Berita Indonesia and Merdeka began in June to advocate the replacement of the ten legal political parties by a broad single party while hinting their opposition to the theory of a two stage revolution. They implied at one point that the PKI was



aiming at elimination of all parties except itself, their own apparent intention being to merge the PKI into a broader "vanguard" party which the communists would not control. Aidit promptly rejected the claim that the PKI sought to be the sole vanguard party but reserved most of his ammunition for attacking proposals to eliminate existing political parties, holding that this was not appropriate for the current revolutionary stage. A debate then followed between Harian Rakjat on the one hand and Merdeka on the other with Berita Indonesia and Warta Berita, the two Murba-oriented papers, in occasional support of Merdeka. Merdeka had become particularly aggressive because Diah had returned on a long trip from Bangkok and decided that something had to be done to slow the PKI. His paper had been following a pro-PKI line because of his absence and the effective management of editorial policy by a pro-communist editor. The new Merdeka line was thus established by Diah personally and was made easier by Sukarno's absence from the country coupled with the fact that Chairul Saleh had been left in charge along with the politically weak Leimena. Saleh, as a former Tan Malaka follower who was close to Malik and Sukarni, had long favored replacement of political parties by a single "national front".

The debate began in earnest with a Merdeka editorial on June 15 which charged that the "Harian Rakjat group" misused the ideas of Sukarno to try to still all voices but their own and broadened its attack in the days that followed to cast doubt on the PKI's ultimate intentions, even alluding to the 1948 Madiun revolt. It roundly condemned the PKI for provoking rural violence which it likened to

Madiun. Some rather forced courtesy remained as the two papers agreed to print each other's editorials alongside their own and both relied heavily on quotations from Sukarno's writings of the 1920s and 1930s but the openness of the polemic was unusual by prevailing standards. Not surprisingly, the PKI was soon able to muster statements from other parties, particularly the PNI, Partindo, the NU and Perti, in opposition to abolition of the parties while claiming that Sukarno himself was not against their continued existence. Sitor Sitomorang, a well known leftist writer close to the PKI, labeled Berita Indonesia as "anti-revolutionary" for its position on the parties and the two stage revolution.<sup>(13)</sup> These two points were linked since the PKI held that multiple parties were necessary to the national democratic stage of the revolution and that much had to be done in the way of revolutionary action before the socialist stage could be reached. It continuously charged that its opponents were opposed to the two stage theory of the revolution because, if the revolution was already completed, it would not be necessary to take further steps to the left nor would it be necessary to replace office holders with more revolutionary people. Needless to say, the moderates did not openly condemn the two-stage theory, since it was enshrined in Sukarno's Political Manifesto of 1959 and by the MPRS as state doctrine, but the communists were right about the drift of their opponents' thinking.

Sukarno returned to Jakarta on June 21 but did nothing directly to stop the debate which continued for some weeks. However, his sympathy for the PKI viewpoint should have been clear from the

nature of his speech on the occasion of Soviet Politburo member Mikoyan's visit two days after the President's return. Sukarno emphasized that the Indonesian Revolution would be successful only if it were carried out by the "people" and went on to say that those who thought it could be done by "the generals" and "leaders" were wrong.(14) A few days later, Subandrio stated in Bandung that Sukarno valued the political parties, which he regarded as necessary to carry out the revolution, a further indication of his support for the PKI side of the debate.(15)

Sukarno's attitude became still more clear in his August 17 "Year of Living Dangerously" speech which should have left little doubt that he was siding with the PKI and warning such people as Nasution, Chairul Saleh and Ruslan Abdulgani to back off. Any doubts about his attitude would ultimately be dispelled by his actions later in the year to repudiate the efforts of Malik and others to pursue a non-communist "Sukarnoism" platform in a more vigorous and organized way. Aidit himself was confident. He reassured the Party in a speech at the Aliarcham Academy, a school for PKI cadres, that Sukarno "is loyal in making Marxism the property of the Indonesian nation" and that the President, in contrast to former Vice President Hatta, regarded Marxism as the only theory competent for resolving the problems of history, politics and the society.(16) Indeed, Sukarno was not hiding his views all through this period. He told a congress of secondary school students at this time that Western media efforts to portray him as a fascist were ridiculous since he was a member of the "red front" of the workers, of socialism and communism, against

capitalism.(17) Sukarno's annual Independence Day speech on August 17 clarified his pro-PKI posture for all to see. It not only raised the temperature of his anti-Western foreign policy but clearly threatened non-communist Indonesian political figures who were trying to oppose communist objectives. The speech was titled "Year of Living Dangerously" (Tahun Vivere Pericoloso or "Tavip" for short). Its intended effect of frightening the moderates into submission was to be effective as far as inspiring fear was concerned but the temporary subsiding of the non-communists was soon to be replaced by another and stronger effort to stem the communist tide. That too was a product of the growing fears about Sukarno's course even though every effort was made to lay the blame on his leftist advisors and the PKI.

As noted earlier, the Tavip speech was drafted in large part by PKI deputy chairman Njoto and the crypto-communist minister, Oei Tjoe Tat, and it espoused views that were in line with those of the PKI in all respects.(18) It also further exposed Sukarno's views in areas where there might be doubt as in his attitude toward land reform issues where he expressed a revolutionary and demagogic approval of PKI positions, including support for unilateral seizure of land by landless peasants. Although Sukarno's language was veiled, it was also clear that he was condemning Nasution, Ruslan Abdulgani and Chairul Saleh, among others, for opposing the communists.(19) A reference in this context to the slogan of "let many flowers bloom" seemed to imply that Sukarno had delayed committing himself on some of the sensitive issues (presumably land

reform and probably the Merdeka - Harian Rakjat debates on ideology) in order to trap the moderates who persisted in putting their neck in the noose by basing their non-communist positions on their interpretation of the teachings of Bung Karno himself. Much of this was wishful thinking but understandable since much of Sukarno's earlier public pronouncements had perforce been vague and subject to varying interpretations because that was required by the tactical needs flowing from Marxist weakness in terms of actual power. Needless to say, Tawip also showed unremitting hostility toward the West, particularly the United States, that went far beyond the specific issue of Malaysia which had been the original platform for launching the revolutionary offensive. Even the title, "the year of living dangerously", implied that Sukarno was prepared to take major risks to push the "revolution rapidly forward" even though that would sorely strain the national consensus that was his for the asking if he would only pursue a moderate "balanced" policy. It is also noteworthy that the title of the speech and its theme of risk echoed Aidit's major speech in February, 1963, "Dare, Dare and Dare Again" (Berani, Berani, Sekali Lagi Berani) as well as the theme of the PKI December, 1963 plenum which called for a "revolutionary offensive" in all fields. This latter theme continued to be advanced by the PKI right up to the eve of the September 30 affair in 1965. Although little noted at the time, Sukarno made a point of endorsing again the theory of a two stage revolution and the need to move forward toward the ultimate socialist stage.

Although American Ambassador Howard Jones continued to plead for greater US sympathy and understanding toward Sukarno, the rest of the Embassy felt that Sukarno's course was implacably set against both the West and regional non-communist countries in foreign policy and toward a full-fledged communist society internally. As Jones was on consultation in Washington, it fell to Charge d'Affaires Francis Galbraith to warn that the Tavip speech "could not be shrugged off". Galbraith noted that Sukarno had been continuously misjudged by many Americans who had developed an image of him as "less serious, more frivolous and less potent than he really is". Sukarno was the architect of Indonesian policy, he declared, and "whether from his training and habit pattern as a revolutionary or from a blueprint prepared long ago, Sukarno's plans have unfolded with remarkable consistency". Furthermore, "he has never really concealed that he stands for Marxism against liberal democracy" and "he has made it clear that his aim is to establish socialism in Indonesia on a communist model and to place Indonesia on the side of the communist camp".(20) A later cable by Galbraith noted the obstacles, including the non-communist nature of the Army, and Sukarno's age and health and followed with what proved to be a very perceptive observation that "The drive by Sukarno to take Indonesia into the Socialist camp is therefore a race by him with Father Time in which the odds are against Sukarno".(21)

Sukarno had indicated in his Tavip speech that major high level changes were in the offing but the actual cabinet reshuffle that was announced on August 24 was not nearly as sweeping as most

observers had expected. Nasution, Chairul Saleh and Ruslan Abdulgani, believed to be the principal domestic targets of Tavip, were all retained and Adam Malik became Minister of Trade. No overt PKI leaders were made ministers in charge of government ministries but Njoto and Oei Tjoe Tat became Ministers attached to the cabinet Presidium, although with no specific management responsibilities. They and another new Minister attached to the Presidium, a senior police officer who was probably close to the intelligence chief (and Foreign Minister) Subandrio, all played more significant roles than most regular ministers in the months that followed. They were clearly in Sukarno's inner circle as were Aidit and Subandrio. It was obvious that the changes were not all that the PKI or Sukarno had wanted and both hastened to point out that this was neither a Nasakom nor a Tavip cabinet but a "Dwikora" cabinet (that is the same old thing, a cabinet based on a consensus supporting the twin "Dwikora" goals of "crushing Malaysia" and strengthening Indonesia internally). (22) Actually, during the week after August 17, Sukarno had tried to make extensive cabinet changes, the main feature of which was to be the dismissal of Nasution. While little is known in detail, it was clear that the Army had refused to accept Nasution's dismissal. Although Nasution no longer had great influence over the Army as a whole and was not well regarded by Yani and a number of other senior Army officers (this probably reflected anti-Sumatra and anti-Siliwangi division feelings among some senior Javanese officers among other things), the proposed move apparently seemed too direct an assault on the Army's position.

The attitude was "we'll support Nasution one more time but not much longer".

Sukarno was soon to go abroad on an extensive trip from September 17 to November 5 and this provided the harassed moderates with another opportunity to counterattack which was somewhat similar to the Merdeka/Berita Indonesia/Warta Berita effort of June-July but much more organized and consistent. The moderates were to project the same fundamental weaknesses, however, and to do so in an even more pronounced form, through basing their whole strategy on the vain hope that Sukarno's real intentions and goals were similar to theirs. They called their movement "Sukarnoism" and established a "Body for the Promotion of Sukarnoism" or "BPS" as it universally came to be known from the initials of its Indonesian words "Badan Pendukung Sukarnoisme". Their main hope was to play to Sukarno's ego and to present themselves as loyal followers of the Great Leader. The origins of the BPS and even the identity of all its backers are obscure in detail but the key figure was Trade Minister Adam Malik. It may be assumed that Chairul Saleh favored the effort but he never came out openly and, after the fall of the BPS, was to proclaim loudly that all efforts to connect him with the movement were false. Ruslan Abdulgani, whose mild articles on Sukarnoism some months earlier may be considered a germ of the movement, was now conspicuous by his absence.(23) To jump ahead, he seemed a faithful follower of Sukarno again in 1965 and managed to escape the purge of "false Marhaenists" but he was also able to avoid the counter-purge of the



Ali-Surachman clique when Suharto gained power. Nasution's hand was not visible and he does not appear to have played any significant role in regard to the BPS even though he came from the same Batak group as Malik (some said they were cousins but they were certainly not close in any case from all I was later to understand from some of their close associates). The BPS did have the behind-the-scenes support of B.M. Diah, the Indonesian Ambassador to Bangkok and owner of the newspaper Merdeka.

The principal overt figure in the BPS was Sajuti Melik, a PNI intellectual who began writing a series of articles under the pen name of "Juti" in the unofficial Murba paper, Berita Indonesia, as early as July. His articles on "Sukarnoism" were not opposed to Marxism or overtly anti-PKI but stressed the religious aspects of the Sukarnoist state philosophy and argued that Indonesian socialism was already established. The articles were often obscure and tortuous in their reasoning as well as obsequious toward the Great Leader but that did not matter since everyone understood that they constituted at least a glimmer of opposition to the PKI and a plea for Sukarno to be the Sukarno the non-communist nationalists wanted him to be - that is the Sukarno of Panca Sila and Indonesian nationalism, not the Sukarno of Nasakom and ever more revolutionary Marxism. The Sajuti Melik articles were reprinted in a number of other non-communist newspapers such as Merdeka and Warta Berita and their various provincial counterparts and their fame increased as they came under PKI attack. The apparent success of the BPS also inspired non-communist trade unions and student groups to organize

under its banner at the grass roots level. The Army, including both Nasution and Yani, were sympathetic although they were unwilling to take a public stand. Subandrio, who was in charge of the government during the President's absence, avoided condemning the movement publicly although he did call in Murba and NU leaders to request a cessation of controversy in the interest of national unity.(24)

Sukarno meanwhile had been in Vienna for medical consultation concerning his defective kidneys before going on to Moscow, Pyongyang and Tokyo. He was apparently advised to have a large stone removed from his one remaining kidney and was probably advised that his life expectancy was short, especially if the stone were not removed soon.(25) It is known, in any case that his Viennese doctors did not expect him to live more than one or two years.(26) Presumably Subandrio had just been apprised of the bleak Viennese assessment of Sukarno's health when he made a speech on October 25 wherein he asked how the revolution would be continued after Sukarno was no longer there to lead it. Subandrio's answer was that the entire people must become progressive and revolutionary to avoid the country being torn apart by coups and conflicts since the Indonesian revolution had been defined by Sukarno as leftist and national-democratic with a socialist perspective.(27) The non-communist elements were grasping for other straws to discredit the PKI by trying to show that its ultimate objectives were still classically communist, however much the Party might try to identify itself with the Sukarnoist state philosophy. On October 19 Aidit

made a speech to a group of "revolutionary cadres" in which he criticized the efforts of "some people" to emphasize Panca Sila as if it were the only philosophical statement of the Indonesian Revolution while ignoring Nasakom and Manipol.(28) He also sought to undercut the advocates of a single national party by differentiating between the national democratic stage when several parties were desirable and a second, socialist, stage when there would be but one. In the course of these remarks (the exact words are not available), he said something to the effect that Panca Sila was a doctrine of unity for the first stage and then either said or implied that Panca Sila would have served its purpose and no longer would be needed once the socialist stage were reached. An obscure newspaper, Revolusioner, leaped on this statement to claim that Aidit had let the cat out of the bag by indicating that Panca Sila and religion would be abandoned in the second stage if the PKI had its way. Aidit responded on October 23 that Revolusioner had distorted his remarks and was subversive and counter-revolutionary. Revolusioner followed with even stronger statements and was banned by the Attorney General on October 31 for its headline of a few days earlier that "Confrontation toward the PKI is the same as confrontation toward Malaysia".(29) It also appears that in December Chairul Saleh tried to raise questions about a document that alleged a PKI plan to seize power by 1970. Aidit promptly labeled the document as false and Sukarno again sided with Aidit who was probably able *to* make a convincing case *to* what would have been a sympathetic audience, the President.(30)

The communists had not been simply reacting to the anti-communist counter-offensive in late 1964, however, but continued to be on the attack and have most of the initiative. The United States was a principal scapegoat and regular attacks took place against American film imports (which were publicly defended by Malik at one point) while demonstrations against the American Embassy, AID, USIA and American policy were regular occurrences. The USIS library and the headquarters of the American film distributors were destroyed by mobs on December 4.(31) The communists continued to press for land reform and attacked Trade Minister Malik for the rapid price inflation as well as Minister of Basic Industries Chairul Saleh and unnamed "capitalist bureaucrats". This phrase was understood to include the large number of Army officers in civilian positions relating to the economy. Whatever hopes the non-communists had, and those hopes were meager in spite of some brave talk to foreigners, they were soon dashed by Sukarno. The President assembled party and government leaders at Bogor on December 12 and imposed a truce which required consultation on the basis of Nasakom and strict adherence to the policies of the Great Leader of the Revolution. (32) Not surprisingly, the Sukarno solution was remarkably close to the four point "code of Nasakom ethics" professed by Aidit in September. (33) The signatories for the parties included Sukarni of Murba who was soon to be arrested and Hardi of the PNI who was to be purged nine months later.

The Bogor Declaration was promptly followed by decisive Sukarno suppression of the BPS. He banned that body on December 17 and simultaneously gave KOTRAR, the purge agency, responsibility for dissemination of Sukarno's teachings as well as forbidding interpretations of those teachings by others. (34) Murba was suspended on January 6, 1965 and dissolved completely the following September a few days before the September 30 movement "coup". Sukarno acted with equal force on the foreign policy scene by pulling Indonesia out of the UN on New Year's eve on the pretext that Malaysia had been elected to the Security Council. Many Western observers have evaluated this move as an irrational, emotional act. In my view, it was a coolly calculated move that merely took advantage of the pretext. Indonesia had been demanding for some time that the UN be "retooled" or reorganized at the expense of "Nekolim", that is the "neo-colonialists and imperialists". More important, Sukarno had cast Indonesia's lot solidly with the Peoples Republic of China which was excluded from the UN and he believed that his new project of a Conference of New Emerging Forces (CONEFO) would become a rival rallying point for an international Nasakom consisting of the communist countries and Third World radical nationalism (religion was no longer much mentioned and had always been merely a sop to local sensibilities). Sukarno's commitment to the CONEFO idea was demonstrated by a major construction effort to build a complex that would not only serve as a site for the conference but would become the permanent headquarters for a new revolutionary alternative to the United

Nations. The latter, it was hoped, would be left to "Nekolim" and their "lackeys". 1964 thus ended on a note of foreboding for non-communist Indonesians and a rallying call for radicalism. The auguries for 1965 were momentous and accurate indicators of what was yet to come.

## Footnotes - Chapter VI

1. Harian Rakjat, December 26, 1963 reports on Aidit's speech to the plenum. The theme was recurrent.
2. I took an extensive trip through Java with Embassy Political Counsellor Floyd Whittington at this time and personally witnessed scenes of malnutrition and even acute starvation, emaciated human beings and even efforts by people at one location to eat non-edible fibers.
3. Much of this can be gleaned from the Indonesian press of this period. The subject is covered thoroughly and well, although largely from the PKI vantagepoint, in Rex Mortimer, Indonesian Communism under Sukarno pp. 276-328.
4. Jacob Walkin, "The Moslem-Communist Confrontation in East Java", Orbis XIII, No. 3 (Fall 1969) p 829.
5. Indonesian press throughout October, 1964. Harian Rakjat's views were expressed strongly on October 8 and October 28.
6. Special land reform courts were established in 1964. Astrawinata lectured a group of prosecutors and judges on May 27, 1964, for example, that "a decision may be responsible in a juridical technical way, but don't forget that a case has other aspects. This is often forgotten by judges and prosecutors whose way of thinking is stagnant and not progressive and revolutionary". As he told the same group, Astrawinata also favored close consultation between judge and prosecutor throughout the trial, a consultation from which the defendant's

attorney was excluded. See Warta Berita, May 28, 1964.

Astrawinata was not formally a member of any political party but he had long been associated with the pro-PKI wing of Murba and with the PKI itself, having been elected on the PKI slate in West Java to the Constituent Assembly and as Chairman of the People's Congress for West Java from 1953 until the Congress was dissolved in 1960. He had also been the PKI nominee for the post of Deputy Governor of West Java.

7. Sjarif Thajeb was one of four brothers from Aceh, a province on the northern tip of Sumatra, three of whom (including himself) were non-communist. A fourth brother was a member of the Central Verification Committee of the PKI. The other two brothers were long-time ambassadors, although one returned to become a minister during the last year or so of the Sukarno era. Sjarif Thajeb, an Army doctor with specialist training as a pediatrician, reportedly became close to Sukarno on the basis of his medical services to the Sukarno family. He was always friendly and warm toward Americans in the most difficult of times and was regarded as solidly in the Army camp after the September 30 affair. I believe he was an advocate of protecting Sukarno's reputation, however, based on a long conversation I had with him around May or June of 1966.
8. This paragraph is based in large part on the notes and recollections of another American embassy officer who covered the conference and its aftermath and reflects conversations with



a number of Indonesian sources as well, of course, as the press accounts.

9. The British lady in question, Carmel Budiardjo, had gone to Eastern Europe in the late 1940's, married an Indonesian communist and settled with him in Indonesia. Arrested along with her husband after the Communist failure in 1965, she was subsequently released and founded a "human rights" organization in London, which vociferously denounced the Suharto Government's treatment of communist prisoners while remaining silent on the Sukarno Government's suppression of its and the PKI's opponents.
10. Another personal anecdote from this period may show that an even greater level of terror existed at the grass roots level: A young Indonesian who had dropped his university studies because of poverty gave Indonesian lessons to some of us foreigners. After almost a year of weekend lessons at my home, I decided to finance his return to the university since the rampant inflation and devaluations had made such a course easily affordable to me and I had come to regard the young man as a worthy friend. After telling him this one afternoon, he left by the front gate of my house but soon came running back since several men had been laying in wait to kill him, he said. He was obviously in great fear but wanted to return to his kampong (section of lower class housing consisting of shacks without streets or modern facilities) out of concern for his mother and younger brother. I walked him through the rear gate to a bus

stop on a main street several blocks away and expected to see him the following week. He never reappeared, however, even after the communist failure, despite my offer to help him get through school. I believe he was almost certainly killed by the communist cadres whom he had said were strong in his kampong and disapproved of his affinity for liberal democracy.

11. Based on conversations with Indonesian sources in 1964.
12. Harian Rakjat May 14, 1964.
13. Harian Rakjat June 10, 1964.
14. Harian Rakjat June 24, 1964.
15. Harian Rakjat July 5, 1964
16. Harian Rakiat July 20, 1964
17. Harian Rakjat July 27 and August 7, 1964.
18. Njoto's role has correctly been noted by Dake (the Embassy had reports to this effect too), but he overstates Njoto's role in this and other places. See Dake, p. 287. Oei Tjoe Tat's major role in drafting the speech was reported by the Embassy on August 20. See Embtel 331, (Jakarta) Galbraith to Rusk, August 20, 1964, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, L.B.J. Library
19. Ibid.
20. Embtel 312 (Jakarta) Galbraith to Rusk, August 18, 1964, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
21. Embtel 359 (Jakarta) Galbraith to Rusk, August 24, 1964, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
22. Harian Rakjat, September 4, 1964. "Dwikora" was another

Sukarnoist slogan that emanated from an anti-Malaysia speech of the Bung in May, 1964.

21. Jones, p.327.
22. Jones, p.351.
23. Jones, p.354.
24. Central Intelligence Agency, Office of National Estimates Special Memo No. 4-65 of January 26, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
25. Jones, p.354, Antara, October 26, 1964.
26. Harian Rakjat Oct. 22, 1964.
27. Harian Rakjat Nov. 1, 1964.
28. An alleged PKI document purporting to establish 1970 as the year for the Party to seize power was circulating during early 1964 on a fairly wide basis in Jakarta. The document appeared to be a forgery and to reflect an extremely superficial understanding of the PKI at that. It was believed to come from a civilian group close to the Army but it did not attract much attention at the time because of its rather silly and transparent falseness. This may have been the document resurrected by Chairul Saleh some six months later. It was publicly denounced by Aidit at the Gerwani meeting in January as noted in Harian Rakjat on January 22, 1965.
29. Reported gleefully by Harian Rakjat on December 5.
30. Harian Rakiat December 14, 1964.
31. Harian Rakjat September 28, 1964.
32. Jones, p.356.



## VII

### Early 1965: Sukarno Decides to "Enter the Socialist State" Soon

The openness of Sukarno's favoritism toward the PKI had become ever more evident in 1964, particularly with his Tavip speech and his banning of the moderate "BPS" or "Sukarnoism movement" in December. This latter measure had been followed by a suspension of the Murba Party, the closure of several important Murba-oriented newspapers and a great deal of pressure on anyone remotely connected with the BPS. The Army had extended some support to the vanquished moderates, notably by establishing two new newspapers, Angkatan Bersendjata and Berita Yudha, on the premises of the banned Merdeka and Berita Indonesia, and had even retained many of the personnel of the banned papers. The new newspapers were still dependent on the communist-dominated Antara news agency for most of their material, however, and they both adopted a generally cautious line in view of Sukarno's obvious willingness to act decisively against anything and anyone that could be regarded as counter-revolutionary. Except for the army, the non-communist forces were in terrible disarray. Not only had the real "right" long been forced from political life but most of the democratic center. Paradoxically, the main line of civilian resistance against a communist takeover had come down in late 1964 to the

onetime "national communists" and radical nationalists of the Murba Party and their sympathizers. Many of these newly designated "moderates" were people whose assumption of leadership positions in the early stages of Guided Democracy had been greeted with considerable trepidation by the shattered democratic forces that had always looked to Hatta, Sjahrir and Natsir. Their entry into government had also been viewed at the time by most foreign diplomatic, academic, and journalistic observers as a major step by Sukarno to the left. What was once radical was now regarded by Sukarno as counter-revolutionary and by opponents as the last line of resistance.

The Army leadership was sufficiently frightened that General Yani assembled a small "Brain Trust" of generals whose political views he trusted. He did not include his principal deputy, General Mursjid, or several others that would have been logical from their positions in the Army hierarchy because he obviously mistrusted them as overly close to Sukarno and/or the PKI. This "Brain Trust" met informally and consisted of Yani, Suprpto, Harjono, Parman and Sukendro. All but Sukendro were members of Yani's senior staff and all were strongly anti-communist. Except for Sukendro, all were to die on the morning of October 1. This group was undoubtedly what the communists would later refer to as the "Generals Council", although there is no evidence that they did more than discuss defensive measures to protect the Army from political attack as well as internal personnel questions including those of reliability, assignments and promotions at senior levels. There is no indication

that they thought in terms of deposing Sukarno or that they even engaged in planning practical measures of any kind.

Meanwhile, Sukarno and the PKI were obviously intent on driving the revolutionary offensive, as they called it, to a higher and higher pitch. The task did not seem that difficult as far as the overt political arena was concerned because the media were proclaiming in concert the same strident revolutionary message and the political statements of all elements of the elite (other than those in prison or under house arrest) reflected the jargon and revolutionary temper of the period - whatever some of them may have felt privately. This included the Army leaders too. Both Sukarno and the PKI were aware - although not sufficiently as it turned out - that there was another potential arena, obscured by this curtain of uniform and seemingly mindless jargon, namely the physical balance of forces in the country. Army leaders spoke the required nonsense (as they often viewed it) but the traditional enmity of many Army leaders toward the communists was well known. There was also the standing problem of latent anti-communist sentiment in the Outer Islands. Sukarno's Tavip theme of "living dangerously" and Aidit's reinforcing refrain of "dare, dare, and dare again" showed a consciousness that there was risk - that the communist base of support was thin and that a potential backlash was there under the surface. The leadership of any potential opposition was regarded, however, as confused, cowardly and not very bright politically. There was considerable reason for such a view. Sukarno opened the new year with a series of actions and revolutionary rhetoric that

continued the momentum of late 1964. He pulled Indonesia out of the UN on New Year's eve and issued a decree a few days later suspending the Murba Party. Murba members were promptly expelled from the National Front on January 8 and from other organizations thereafter. Subandrio, in a speech to the staff of the NU newspaper Duta Masyarakat on January 4, proclaimed 1965 a "year of crystallization" in which the revolution would march inexorably forward and former comrades would be "discarded" because they "no longer follow the path of the revolution and have become counter-revolutionary".(1) Subandrio did not specify who was to be left behind but he surely had in mind his arch-rival for the succession, Chairul Saleh, among others, and this was borne out by the strong and persistent press attacks on Saleh and Malik that followed. Malik, as noted earlier, was an overt Murba leader while Saleh was linked to Murba by his Tan Malaka past and his known sympathies and informal connections, if not more. PKI unions demonstrated at the offices of Saleh and Malik on January 6 and on a number of occasions thereafter. Saleh pleaded on January 12 that efforts (by the US press he said) to link him to Murba were not true but he was not believed or allowed to get off the hook.(2) Aidit attacked him personally a week later in a public speech for backing distribution of a document falsely ascribed to the PKI while the drumfire of criticism against "capitalist bureaucrats" or "Kabirs", to use the PKI-coined acronym, mounted.(3) This latter term applied particularly to Saleh as the coordinating cabinet minister in charge of the industrial sector of the economy and to the numerous Army



officers who ran government enterprises and many of the economic ministries.

There was no question, incidentally, that Saleh and many others were reaping enormous personal benefits from their official positions despite their revolutionary Marxist rhetoric. Saleh reportedly had a massive wardrobe containing literally dozens of suits, for example, and often sported large diamond rings. He was widely believed to have become one of Indonesia's richest men. It was also widely believed that only the PKI was immune from the temptations of corruption and personal enrichment although the truth was more mixed. The economic and political systems did not provide legitimate methods for financing political organizations which were more personalized, complex and multi-organizational than the formal political party structure would imply. The result was that political leaders felt compelled to tap the corruption spigots in order to finance what could be rationalized as higher causes that deserved their support. And once this step was taken, it was not too difficult to rationalize the further use of corrupt funds for personal use as well. This problem of systemic corruption remained a continuing problem for Indonesia all through the Suharto period and was a major factor in its collapse in the late 1990s. The same point applied to the PKI, incidentally, although not so visibly. The Chinese business community was systematically tied into the far left Baperki organization not only for political purposes but to provide a channel of funds to both the PKI and the Palace. Chinese businessmen cooperated because they also received benefits in terms of

government business, allocation of domestic raw materials and the right to import needed machinery and raw materials from abroad as a quid pro quo. The Baperki/Partindo channel divided the take between the beneficiaries (long suspected, this mechanism could be confirmed from documents seized by the anti-communist student movement in 1966).(4) While PKI leaders did not live ostentatiously, Lukman's house, which I passed regularly enroute to work, was an upper middle class home similar to those of many non-communist cabinet ministers, generals and other members of the elite.(5) Aidit's home was smaller and less favorably located. The private lives of PKI leaders were cloaked in secrecy, however, much in the manner that prevailed in Eastern Europe.

The PKI and Subandrio were not alone in keeping up the revolutionary pressure. Surachman, the crypto-communist Secretary General of the PNI, was demanding a ban of the small non-communist trade union, SOKSI, and of the Moslem student organization, the HMI.(6) Subandrio, incidentally, was attempting at this time to become the patron of the HMI and other Moslem organizations, although under the obvious conditions that they show loyalty to him and be prepared to cooperate with the PKI and Sukarno's revolution. These efforts were not very successful, particularly at the grass roots level. Radical revolutionary themes were being expressed in speeches by Hardi and Isnaeni, two PNI leaders who were later to be purged as "false Marhaenists".(7) Sukarno himself had continued to crow over his departure from the United Nations and had begun to advance the justification that

Indonesia would now stand proudly on its own feet.(8) This latter expression was to become the title theme of Sukarno's two most trumpeted speeches of the year, his "Berdikari" address to the MPRS in April and his national day speech on August 17. If 1964 had been labeled "the year of living dangerously", 1965 was to be proclaimed as the year of "standing on one's own feet". Sukarno also ordered Indonesia out of UNICEF, UNESCO, the FAO and later the ILO. New demonstrations were launched against the US embassy on January 20 and February 12 and a USIS building in Jakarta was sacked on February 15. The USIS building in Medan was seized on February 21. Sukarno praised the demonstrators on February 25 and Subandrio followed the next day with a statement in Medan that the government would take steps against US installations. On February 23, Sukarno likened the "CIA appendage" BPS to Kartosuwirjo (a Darul Islam rebel leader), Kahar Muzakkar (another Darul Islam rebel recently killed in Sulawesi) and the Masjumi (the large banned political party which had headed several governments in the 1950s). These unsupported and demagogic linkages were intended to imply, or indeed to state explicitly, that all who failed to go along with the drive toward a communist Indonesia would be regarded as traitors.

A campaign also began to unfold against a most unlikely scapegoat, the local head of the American Motion Picture Association, Bill Palmer, who was declared by the PKI to be an agent of US intelligence on the basis of an article in the Indian paper, Mainstream.(9) This allegation was attributed to Subandrio and it is clear that the whole scenario was manufactured by Subandrio's BPI

or Central Intelligence organization. Palmer was a pudgy, middle aged man who had lived for years in Indonesia and was totally enamored with Indonesian culture. He considered himself a personal friend of Sukarno and had arranged Sukarno's 1961 visit to Hollywood where the President and his party were lavishly entertained. I did not know him well but he was a fixture on the local cocktail circuit where he came across as one of the more apolitical and naive people I have known. Palmer not only sold films to Indonesia but showed them to private audiences of Indonesians at his retreat in the mountainous "Puncak" (Puntjak) area near Bogor. A few months later, Palmer was to become the goat for a Subandrio intelligence operation to plant a purported British embassy message in his mountain retreat. In this document, British Ambassador Gilchrist supposedly alluded to "our" people in the Indonesian military and spoke of a plot to kill Sukarno, Subandrio and General Yani. This document was not only a forgery but as crude and simple-minded a forgery as one could imagine. Poor Bill Palmer never knew what hit him. After being attacked repeatedly in the press, he would sadly mumble his appreciation for the Panca Sila and President Sukarno to anyone who came along. He seemed like a broken hearted rejected lover and eventually went to Thailand where he died some years later. American intelligence officers were assigned to Indonesia, of course, but CIA officials, including the Chief of Station, categorically denied that Palmer had any connection with intelligence in Indonesia. The possibility of such a connection was regarded, indeed, with considerable humor.

American films were one of the PKI's most frequently mentioned propaganda targets, however, and Bill Palmer was a convenient scapegoat, not least because he was so gullible and psychologically defenseless. The Gilchrist document was also said on occasion to have come from the seizure of the British Embassy almost two years earlier. This would have been a more logical place to find a purportedly secret British diplomatic document of great sensitivity but that version had the disadvantage of being more dated. Sukarno's military aide, Bambang Widjanarko, expressed this second version as the one he was aware of during his interrogation by the Army.(10)

On international women's day, Sukarno railed that Indonesia did not fear US support for Malaysia and would never compromise with imperialism because Indonesia was not alone, having the support of North Vietnam, China and all of the "New Emerging Forces".(11) Aidit, meanwhile, was speaking almost daily on the theme of Sukarno's belief in Marxism. Sukarno's teachings concerned "the problems of socialism and Indonesian socialism", he said, and those teachings "condemn reformism, opportunism and the like". Sukarno had been correct in adapting Marxism to Indonesian conditions according to Aidit, because Marxism was not supposed to be dogma but a program for action.(12) This latter theme had also been stated by Aidit in a speech to the Department of Transmigration (an agency to spur resettlement of people from overpopulated Java to other islands) on February 11 that was only reported by Harian Rakjat on March 13. "Sukarno was my first teacher of Marxism" when he was giving lectures at the Japanese sponsored institute at Menteng 31,

said Aidit, who added that there were two kinds of Marxism, dogmatic and creative, and that Sukarno had properly been a "creative" Marxist appropriately adapting Marxism to Indonesian conditions.(13)

The drift was clear toward placing increasing emphasis on the Marxist component as the central element of Sukarno's thought. Sukarno himself led this trend. He gave two speeches to a gathering of PNI cadres in late March in which he stressed that Marhaenism was Marxism adapted to Indonesian conditions and that he expected the PNI to become more genuinely Marhaenist and Marxist. He also introduced a new ideological theme that Indonesia was now in the national democratic stage of a two stage revolution but that it was now time to complete that stage by "expunging to the roots" imperialism and feudalism. True Marhaenism, said Sukarno, was a theory of struggle and those who did not believe in such a struggle were not true Marhaenists. Marhaenism was not a simple theory of unity but a theory of "national progressive revolutionary unity". Anyone who opposed the policy of Nasakom under the guise of unity would be expelled from the movement, he said, adding "I do not want to become the property of the false Marhaenists". Making it clear that Marhaenism and Marxism were to be equated more directly and openly, Sukarno then began talking of Marxism in the same manner, asserting that Marxism was "a theory of struggle, a guiding theory for conducting struggle" and labeling Marx himself as "the great teacher of Marhaenism". Several major PNI speakers such as Surachman, Ali Sastroamidjojo and Ruslan Abdulgani then

followed with demands to "crush" the BPS and form a genuine revolutionary unity on the basis of Nasakom. They also echoed the emphasis on Marhaenism as Marxism adapted to Indonesian conditions. All three also extolled the Marxist principles of historical materialism (the dialectic view of inevitable victory for socialism) - perhaps with foreknowledge of Sukarno's coming campaign to "enter the socialist stage".(14) These themes were observed by the Nasakom elite elsewhere as Partindo Chairman Asmara Hadi stated in Medan that "Nasakom unity is necessary to complete the national-democratic stage of the revolution now in order to finally advance to a socialist society of Indonesia". The responsibility of revolutionaries, according to Asmara Hadi, was to study Marxism and to work with "Kom", that is the PKI.(15) Even Idham Chalid of the NU was emphasizing that Nasakom was the basis of Sukarno's teachings and had been ever since the appearance of his "Nationalism, Islam and Marxism" in 1926 which was later refined by his "Sumpah Pemuda" article of October 28, 1928.(16) Sukarno told a veterans group two days later that the "Indonesian revolution is not completed" but that they must struggle to complete it soon.

Sukarno's new obsession with entering the socialist stage became still more evident in a speech to a New Emerging Forces indoctrination group in early April. After describing the differences between the first and second stages of the revolution and declaring that the main tasks of the national-democratic stage were to clear away obstacles to entering the socialist period, he said, "The national-democratic period is already almost completed and we are

already beginning to enter the period of building socialism". This socialism would be a modern socialism, not the socialism of a Mahatma Gandhi.(17) That is, Sukarno's intent was to achieve a "scientific socialism" in the Leninist sense, not a "utopian" version that digressed from the communist model. A chastened Ruslan Abdulgani was to say openly some weeks later that the socialism that was the revolution's goal was "scientific socialism"(18) The next day Sukarno told a congress of judges to understand and work for the revolution in one speech and in another speech that same day on the rather pedestrian subject of urban cleanliness, he cited Lenin as the authority for his admonitions.

The foreign policy aspects of this revolutionary surge toward communism were not being neglected either. One aspect was Sukarno's effort to turn the posture of the armed forces toward alliance with China, North Vietnam and North Korea and against the West, a course that was made evident from early April. This trend will be examined in another chapter. Both Sukarno and Subandrio were hailing Indonesia as being at the very center of the progressive effort to destroy imperialism. "Nekolim (the acronym for "neo-colonialism and imperialism", meaning the US and the West) is more afraid of Indonesia than the communist countries", he said, "because Indonesia is working to unify all the progressive revolutionary forces of the whole world".(19) This was Nasakom to be applied on a world scale through such mechanisms as the "Conference of New Emerging Forces" or CONEFO idea which was soon to be unveiled. Meanwhile Kim Il-Sung of North Korea arrived



on April 9 for a prolonged and greatly publicized state visit that was to take in Sukarno's major address to the MPRS (the rubber-stamp legislature in effect) and the spectacular celebration in Jakarta of the tenth anniversary of the original Bandung Conference. Indonesia and North Korea would "struggle together to establish a new world", said the Bung. Kim's prominence was no accident as he had long made it his and North Korea's trade mark to extol the principle of "standing on one's own feet", the new Sukarno theme. Mystic affinities between Indonesia and North Korea were later to be affirmed by rites between the Indonesian Parliament chairman, Arudji Kartawinata, and a North Korean parliamentary delegation in which the "sacred" soils of the two countries were mixed in a quasi-religious ceremony.

Sukarno's speech to the MPRS at Bandung in April was notable for several features. He declared a "Banting Stir", which was defined as a sharp turn of the wheel of Indonesian policy toward the left. This would involve an almost total severance of connections with the West under the "standing on one's own feet" theme which now acquired the acronym of "Berdikari". The 'life line of imperialism' in the Pacific was about to be cut and would become the "death line of imperialism". Sukarno's intent to organize a CONEFO conference in Jakarta of new emerging forces was also stated and the theme of entering the socialist stage was now put forward in a much more official setting. "According to the clear situation", Sukarno said, "the national-democratic stage is already almost complete. We already have defeated imperialism and are now entering the stage of Indonesian socialism". This second stage of building socialism

would be a stage of development and hard work but it would be conducted on the basis of guidance from the top since "liberal policies are finished". This would require greater discipline and close control of the economy. Sycophantic repetition of these themes promptly followed not only from the PKI but from virtually all political organizations.

Sukarno's emphasis on entering the socialist stage and leaving the national democratic stage in the near future can only be understood as an intention to place Indonesia on an open communist footing - to proclaim himself the leader of a communist Indonesia in which the PKI would be the vanguard party leading the state while all other elements would be shoved into the background. The Indonesian case, though unique in detail, was to be similar to that of Cuba under Castro. Incidentally, Indonesia and Cuba were the first two countries that the new Soviet theory of "national democracy" had placed in that special category of being embarked on a non-capitalist path leading to communism following the emergence of that theory in 1960, although a few other countries were to be added soon thereafter such as Nkrumah's Ghana and Sekou Toure's Guinea. This new Soviet theory was an evaluation of trends that Moscow wished to encourage but which were largely beyond its control. Sukarno's - and Aidit's - views were based on their own concept of the Indonesian revolution, however, and it was Sukarno himself who was the propelling force because he wanted to enter the socialist stage in his lifetime. He wanted, in essence, to go down in history as more than an Indonesian "bourgeois" leader, he wanted to

be the Lenin or the Mao of Indonesian history. No other analysis serves to explain why he should commit himself to "leaving the national democratic stage" so precipitously, to force to the wall an otherwise obedient Indonesian Army that was prepared to acknowledge his leadership, indeed his virtual divinity, and to undertake all the other radical and dangerous policies that he now wished to impose on the country.

The rhetoric about entering the socialist stage is intelligible only if it is viewed in conjunction with the practical measures that Sukarno then launched. For the Great Leader immediately embarked on a series of measures designed to force the pace of the revolution. The easily defined targets were (a) a complete political reorientation of the armed forces leadership including imposition of a commissar system, (b) a purge of all "false Marhaenists" from the PNI which meant complete domination by its extreme left wing under the guidance of its pro-communist Secretary General, Surachman, and (c) a purge of Chairul Saleh's base in the "45 Generation" organization. The second and third of the above goals were largely achieved prior to the attempted purge of the Army leadership on the night of September 30/October 1.

In regard to the last of these goals, Sukarno announced a new leadership of the 45 Generation on April 12. Saleh was retained but leadership was no longer vested in him alone but in a five man council that consisted of Saleh, A.M. Hanafi, Wikana, Sidik Kertapati and Astrawinata. Wikana and Sidik Kertapati were PKI Central Committee members while Hanafi and Astrawinata were

Partindo leaders whose views were indistinguishable from those of the PKI. The 27 members of the larger leadership body were also heavily PKI and Partindo oriented. They included Aidit and several PKI Central Committee members. Adam Malik, one of the principal figures in the 1945 events from which the organization took its name, was not mentioned. Several military men were included but most were well known leftists like Air Marshal Suryadarma and Djamin Gintings although Yani was included, presumably because of a residual hope that Yani could be handled with the application of sufficient soft soap, to which he was believed to be susceptible. If there was any balancing element to the right of the PKI in formal political party terms, it was limited to the inclusion of Surachman of the PNI and Arudji Kartawinata of the PSII, neither of whom could really be distinguished from the PKI line by the slightest deviation on any subject.(20)

A second line of attack was on the middle (Hardi and Isnaeni) and right wing (Hadisubeno) factions of the PNI, who were the targets of Sukarno's blasts at "false Marhaenists" within the PNI. Hadisubeno Sosrowerdojo, who lived on the same high ridge overlooking the Central Java port and capital of Semarang from which Joseph Conrad was reputedly inspired to write some of his tales of the Indies, was a somewhat traditional political boss who led the Central Java branch of the PNI. This branch was the traditional core of PNI strength in the country as a whole and it was also the main impediment to the PKI in Central Java where it had led the opposition to the unilateral land seizures by PKI-organized peasant

groups. Hadisubeno was initially the main target but was apparently defended by Hardi, Isnaeni and others in the central PNI leadership against the pressure for expulsion from Sukarno and Surachman while Ali Sastroamidjojo went along with Sukarno's wishes despite personal misgivings as noted elsewhere. Despite his firm opposition to the PKI, Hadisubeno looked upon himself as a loyal follower of Bung Karno and could not believe that he was the target of the false Marhaenist campaign. Even after his ouster, Hadisubeno maintained to friends that Sukarno must really have meant the communists in his attacks on "false Marhaenists" and that the Great Leader would surely require a purge of communist infiltrators from the PNI in the near future. This grasping at straws was characteristic in this period of many non-communist Indonesians who had committed their loyalty to Sukarno; it was the same psychology that had underlain the "Sukarnoism" movement of the BPS and the results were to follow the same disastrous course.

The third line of Sukarno's attack was to straighten out the Indonesian military but this was a more delicate and difficult task. As it turned out, all other lines of attack succeeded but this one ultimately failed. However, that was by no means a foregone conclusion and it was only through extraordinary good fortune and communist overconfidence that the action launched on September 30-October 1 failed. The Indonesian armed forces consisted of four armed services: the Army, the Navy (with a Marine Corps component known by its initials as the KKO), the Air Force, and the Police. The Army was overwhelmingly the most powerful of the

services and it had a rather good record of successful though limited military action. It had fought the Dutch to a standstill in the late 1940s; it had crushed the PKI Madiun revolt in 1948; it had contained and eventually put down Darul Islam rebellions in West Java and South Sulawesi, although not without difficulty, and it had been effective against the PRRI and Permesta rebellions at the onset of Guided Democracy. It had not done very much in the campaigns for West Irian and against Malaysia but those campaigns had really been ones of bluff and political maneuver, in which military force was not fully employed. Those who have been critical of the Indonesian Army's effectiveness against prolonged insurgencies might well compare its record against the record of counter-insurgency efforts elsewhere. The TNI is one of the few armies since World War II to have managed to subdue insurgencies, however long it took, and it did so in spite of the fact that the causes of those insurgencies - both from the left and the right - were attractive to significant segments of the armed forces themselves at all levels.

Although the Army had historically been beset by internal rivalries and factions, it had also developed a certain unifying mystique born out of the common experiences of its heroic period in the revolutionary campaigns of the 1945-49 independence struggle. There was a considerable tension between these centrifugal and centripetal forces and it would have been difficult to say which would win out in a crisis. That would depend greatly on the structure of any crisis and on the emotional appeal that such a crisis would

pose toward different facets of the Army's collective mind as well as toward the minds of its individual members. This was to be a key factor in October, 1965 and an instinctive awareness of the delicate balance between these emotions helps to explain both the caution and the firmness with which General Suharto was to move in that later period. It should also be noted that there was a certain tradition in the Army officer class of regarding the Army as more than a military institution. In one sense, the Army knew its place and had not attempted to seize power for itself from the constitutional governments or from Sukarno but, as earlier pages will make clear, it had frequently tried to exert a powerful influence and to be a kind of backroom partner to governments whose ultimate authority it acknowledged. Indeed, Army power to influence government had reached its height under early Guided Democracy although its decline thereafter had been due to the Army leadership's inability or unwillingness to make a crass grab for direct power. The residue of that period was manifested, however, in the continued presence of senior Army officers in a multitude of civilian positions, particularly those related to the economy, in its presence as a "functional group" in the parliament, National Front, and in other national bodies, and in its de facto ability to veto the Nasakom cabinet desired by Sukarno and the PKI. It supported a program of "civic action" including contributions of manpower and equipment to infrastructure projects and its local commanders were often the dominant partners in an institutionalized program of cooperation with the civil authorities at the regional and local levels.

The Army was generally anti-communist and consisted to a great degree of less than fervent Sukarnoists but there was also a significant minority of pro-Sukarno officers and a lesser number of convinced leftists who might be favorable to the PKI or at least to some vision of a "national Marxism" irrespective of Sukarno. The military commander in Bali and the lesser Sunda Islands, a Sukarno friend, General Sjafiuddin, was of the latter type as were, of course, people like General Supardjo and Colonel Latief of the September 30 movement. There were also devoted Sukarno followers like General Adjie, the commander in 1965 of the key Siliwangi Division of West Java that surrounded Jakarta. Adjie claimed to be very anti-communist but also fanatically pro-Sukarno. Was the first position related to a requirement for leadership of the anti-communist Siliwangi or was there a real, if confused, clash of contending loyalties? There were also people like General Pranoto, General Mursjid and General Djamin Gintings of the Army General staff who were certainly loyal Sukarnoists and who were also believed to be sympathetic to the PKI and to far left causes although it was possible, even likely, that the second aspect was heavily influenced by the first. Finally, there were numerous senior officers whose views were not clear. Everyone by this time was talking the jargon of Nasakom, Manipol-Usdek, Berdikari, crush Malaysia, crush the Kabirs, hidup (long-live) Bung Karno, etc. all of which made them appear to be indistinguishable from the communists in their public rhetoric. Some of this posture was undoubtedly reflected in private conversation too since most men must rationalize their



compromises for the sake of political need and personal advancement into a self-lie in which they feel compelled to tell themselves that positions they take for reasons of opportunism are what they really believe.

Aspects of this phenomenon, to be discussed later, were another important explanation of the slowness and apparent confusion with which the Army's reaction to the September 30 movement unfolded - especially in relation to Sukarno. The tendency of Army Generals to talk like communists was reinforced when they left the drafting of their speeches to staff members who were communists, either because the generals were too lazy or too inarticulate to do or to monitor the job themselves or because they were too disgusted with the jargon. I had begun to wonder in the summer of 1965, for example, whether the Jakarta garrison commander (Brigadier General Umar Wiranadikusumah) was not a communist, despite contrary assurances from our military experts, because of the content of some of Umar's speeches (I have not been able to locate the particular examples two decades later despite a rather methodical review of the Indonesian language Antara) but it turned out that Umar was very much on the side of Suharto during and after the September 30/October 1 "coup" and became one of Suharto's more trusted lieutenants and ultimately Vice-President of the Republic. I subsequently asked a knowledgeable Indonesian Army friend about this and was told that Umar left all his speeches to a certain colonel on his staff (not Latief) who was a convinced communist and was subsequently arrested. Suharto obviously knew Umar well enough to

trust him (particularly since Umar was the first general officer to act against the coup group, even before Suharto) but there must have been a lot of cases where loyalties were unclear.

None of the other services could be considered homogeneous political entities but all of the others were regarded by Sukarno as manageable. The Air Force was led by a communist or crypto-communist, Omar Dani, who had succeeded a man of similar leanings, and many senior Air Force officers were in the Omar Dani political camp. There were notable exceptions, however, and it may be remembered that it was an Air Force pilot, Lt. Daniel Maukar, who had tried to assassinate Sukarno several years earlier in a strafing run on the Palace.(21) The Omar Dani pro-communist clique in the Air Force was known, incidentally, as the "California group" because most had received training in the United States. Our training programs have been acclaimed as contributing to a Western orientation of the Indonesian military and civilian elites. That was a generally valid assessment but individual results were by no means as assured as some Americans seemed to think. I know of some cases where originally well disposed students turned against the United States, precisely because of their experiences in the United States. This was not always because of any bad treatment; one of the most striking cases I remember was due to the particular individual being intellectually incompetent to complete his program and being unable to accept that unwelcome truth. This phenomenon of disaffection toward the country of one's studies was much more true of Third World students in the Soviet Union, incidentally, where I would

estimate that the great majority were turned off by their experience. Of course, many, whether they were disillusioned or not, felt compelled to identify with the Soviet Union to protect their educational investment, particularly in countries where a Soviet education was considered suspect compared to a Western education.

The Navy, although led by an appealing Western-oriented lightweight, Admiral Martadinata, was regarded as manageable by the Sukarno and PKI forces and the Navy was not very important anyway, especially as a potential element in a coup situation. Some of the Navy's key figures below Martadinata were strongly Sukarnoist, while its lower ranks had been beset by an anti-Martadinata mutiny of obscure cause in the first half of 1965 (More than 100 officers were removed including a son of Deputy Prime Minister Leimena). The Marine Corps or KKO was a more serious factor in military terms and it tended to be arrayed against the Army, largely because of inter-service rivalry. Indeed, inter-service jealousy of the Army was probably the most significant factor for regarding all of the other services as potentially loyal to Sukarno in any show down. Furthermore, the KKO commandant, General Hartono, was a brother-in-law of Subandrio and firmly loyal to Sukarno. Oddly enough, Hartono had attended a course at Fort Benning and was unusually warm toward American military colleagues. I recall a US Marine Corps military advisor in our Embassy who had been in the same course at Fort Benning and who was a strong advocate of military assistance to the KKO in spite of its probable alignment on the wrong side from the US point of view.

Whether the American Marine officer was influenced by the fact that both he and the Indonesian had felt a common "outsider" unity during the US Army course or whether all Marines were regarded as "good", or whether it was simply a matter of personal friendship and lack of political sophistication, was unclear.

The Police was another service that had a high proportion of pro-Sukarno senior officers and it was a frequent target for appeals from Sukarno, Subandrio, the PKI and leftist cabinet ministers. Our AID Public Safety advisors had found most of the Indonesian police officers personally attractive and friendly but there was little question that the institution was regarded as personally loyal to Sukarno and another counter-weight to the Army. I knew one Indonesian police colonel rather well in 1964. He was American educated, opposed to the political trend toward communism, and became scared to death of too much association with Americans like myself as relations began to deteriorate more severely (our personal relationship was suspended but was later renewed in early 1966). This officer had been frank to admit that the overwhelming majority of the police appeared to be going along with Sukarno's pro-PKI and anti-Western postures (they are not the same but both lines were being accepted). In addition to the regular police, there was a police "Mobile Brigade", a highly modernized para-military force that traced its proud history back to Sutan Sjahrir's organization of it. Sjahrir and Hatta had regarded the Mobile Brigade and the Army's Siliwangi division as the modernized professional core of what was to be an apolitical national military establishment to overcome the

collection of half-trained, frequently-ideological, factional armies of the independence era. The Mobile Brigade had, for various reasons, been the darling of the American Ambassador and the AID program and was largely equipped by the United States. One hope seemed to be that the Mobile Brigade could be counted on to protect the embassies and other foreigners and to be well disposed toward the United States (many of its officers, even those ardently pro-Sukarno, were in fact personally friendly toward the United States when and to the extent that that was possible). In fact, the Mobile Brigade was one of the more reliable Sukarnoist forces, cooperating closely with demonstrating communist mobs, and was also a potential opponent of the Army. Like the KKO and Air Force, it did not openly come into play against the Suharto-led army in late 1965/early 1966 because the balance of forces appeared to preclude an effective military effort against Suharto. Furthermore, the "coup" and its aftermath unfolded in bizarre and unforeseen ways, and no command to act was ever delivered by the Great Leader of the Revolution and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

The police were brought further under Sukarno's control in May, 1965 when Police General Sutjipto Danukusumo (nicknamed "Little Tjipto") was replaced by Police General Sutjipto Judodihardjo ("Big Tjipto") as Minister of Police. The latter was a professional police officer who probably had few strong ideological beliefs of his own but who was an unswerving Sukarno loyalist. The former had been accused behind the scenes of being a Murba supporter. His ouster was reportedly engineered by Subandrio who exercised a great

deal of control over the police (Little Tjipto was given a consolation prize as "Coordinator" for West Irian affairs). Subandrio's influence over the police was based in part on his position as head of the BPI (Badan Pusat Intelligensi or Central Intelligence Agency) which had a number of Police generals such as the BPI deputy director, General Sutarto, and in part because two Police generals were cabinet ministers attached to the Cabinet Presidium who reported directly to Subandrio. The precise roles of these two police generals, Mudjoko and Bugi Supeno, were unclear but their appointments reflected greater regime reliance on the intelligence arm. It is noteworthy that Oei Tjoe Tat, the pro-communist Baperki minister attached to the cabinet presidium, was also given responsibilities about this time of working with the BPI and with Bureau VIII (the "Biro Khusus" or Special Bureau) of the Secretariat of State. The new Police Minister, Sutjipto Judodihardjo, wasted no time in making overtures to the PKI, incidentally, telling it that the "PKI and police are comrades in arms".(22)

The first step in the intended neutralization of the Army was a conference on revolutionary war doctrine held in Bandung in early April, that is prior to Sukarno's "Berdikari" speech to the MPRS. The themes of this conference were the reorientation of the Army to participate in the concentration of all progressive revolutionary forces based on Nasakom internally and in its integration on an international level with the New Emerging Forces. Nasution declared that ABRI (the Armed Forces) must become "cadres of Pantja Sila and Manipol" and "must be loyal to the Great Leader of the

Revolution".(23) Yani said ABRI and especially the Army must reevaluate and reorient itself since it was an "instrument of the revolution". Revolutionary war doctrine must be connected, Yani said, with the general political doctrines of the government and the revolution since the armed forces were part of the progressive revolutionary forces.(24) Yani was essentially repeating a similar statement by Subandrio to the conference earlier that day. The new doctrine for the TNI or Army that emerged was called "Tri Ubaya Sakti" (also spelled Cakti and Cekti - this is a Sanskrit phrase and transliteration from Sanskrit script was not always consistent) and held that the putative enemy could no longer be considered to be the communist countries but, on the contrary, must be regarded as Western imperialism (Nekolim) headed by the United States. It should be noted, however, that the long text (it appeared in the Indonesian language Antara piecemeal over several days in May), while verbose and filled with a great deal of the earlier jargon of Guided Democracy such as Panca Sila and Manipol-Usdek, only devoted relatively few words to Nasakom. However, Tri Ubaya Sakti did refer specifically to the two stages of the revolution which was now becoming necessary to include in all major pronouncements.

Of related interest on the doctrinal side, Sukarno established a new National Defense Institute on May 10 and declared that national defense must be political as well as military and based on the geopolitical needs of the state. He stressed that the curriculum of the Institute must include the teaching of Marxism, that "Nasakom phobia" must be eliminated from the armed forces, and that the

"people" must be brought into the system of defense organization, the efficacy of which had been demonstrated by the experience of the People's Republic of China and North Vietnam.(25) The senior Armed Forces representative in the leadership of the MPRS, a pro-communist political general loyal to Sukarno named Wilujo Puspojudo, was named as the Institute's director, supported by one deputy from each of the four armed services. Sukarno apparently hoped to make the Institute a major instrument for reorienting the thinking of the Armed Forces as he took the time during a very active period for him to make several appearances there in May. At the end of the month, Sukarno used this forum to press for the fifth armed force scheme, citing the advice of Chou En-lai (see below). Nasution was present.(26) Marxist indoctrination was being advanced at the Institute by other leading figures as well, ranging from those who had most to gain, such as Aidit, to those who were trying to prove their loyalty to Sukarno. Ruslan Abdulgani made it a point to emphasize to the Institute that the curriculum should be based on the study of Marx, Lenin and the Communist Manifesto.(27) Aidit soon appeared in his role as Coordinating Minister and Deputy Chairman of the MPRS to repeat the need for study of Marxist fundamentals, citing Sukarno's edict to that effect. Repeating an old PKI message, he said that Marxism was essential to the comprehension of Sukarno's teachings and that contemporary Marxist experience could be learned from the experience of the existing socialist states (the PRC, USSR, etc.).(28)



The attack on the Armed Forces had two more practical features that were to give the Army leadership real trouble. Most of the Army leadership was somewhat inured to (and benumbed by) indoctrination and prepared to go along with Sukarno's political line but tampering with the Army as an institution or threatening its power base was another matter. These two pro-communist measures were the establishment of a fifth armed force (also called the arming of the workers and peasants) and the establishment of a system of "Nasakom advisory councils" which was correctly seen as the imposition of a commissar system.(29) The fifth armed force concept was in one sense an idea that had long been brewing. In essence, this was a proposal for the military training and arming of a civilian militia on a massive scale, the assumption being that such a militia would be dominated by the communists. The Confrontation with Malaysia had been accompanied by much rhetoric from Sukarno, Subandrio and other high regime figures, as well as by the PKI leaders, about millions of "volunteers". Since announcements of the readiness of thousands or millions of volunteers by various left wing organizations (Sukatno of the Pemuda Rakjat gave a supposedly precise figure on one occasion of 1,280,730) was accompanied by much talk of rifles, "gun in hand", etc., the implication was that masses of armed volunteers were being offered for military purposes.(30) This was widely regarded as mere posturing toward Malaysia and indeed that was true as far as the international aspects were concerned but it was also a preparation of the psychological climate for a more serious proposal to create a leftist controlled

military force. In mid-January, Aidit said he had made a proposal to Sukarno in a palace meeting for the government to arm the workers and peasants against Malaysia and this theme began to accumulate momentum through repetition. As Mortimer notes, Aidit "would hardly have revealed the content of palace discussions on such a delicate matter without Sukarno's approval". The idea was subsequently made to sound a bit less overtly communist, when Sukarno called for the establishment of a fifth armed force at the National Defense Institute on May 31 although he hardly bothered to disguise its purpose very much since he attributed the idea to Chou En-lai.(31) As Mortimer again correctly notes, the President had given the PKI "the task of mobilizing public support", had then "contented himself at first with guarded pronouncements.... that 'the workers and peasants will be armed if necessary'" and then waited for a snowball effect after an initial PKI campaign had flowered into an apparently broader based groundswell of support drummed up by the National Front, the communist dominated journalist association and other mass organizations.(32)

The second major practical move by Sukarno and the PKI against the Army was the proposal for establishing "Nasakom advisory councils".(33) Advanced at about the same time as the fifth armed force scheme, it is clear that the original idea was to attach civilian commissars at various levels of the armed forces although public statements remained vague-presumably because of the delicacy of discussions with the armed forces leadership on the subject. Since "Nasakom" was gradually being swallowed by "Kom"

through the infiltration tactics discussed in an earlier chapter, Nasakom advisory councils really had to mean communist or quasi-communist indoctrination and political control, as the Army well understood. In my view, the Nasakom advisory council proposal was even more of a threat to the integrity of the army than the fifth armed force concept and was regarded as such by key Army leaders including Yani. Yani had always been willing to go along with Sukarno's ideological pronouncements and confrontational tactics against non-communist external enemies, while remaining aloof from the revolutionary drive against civilian moderates, but these last two moves meant more than ideology; they spelled interference with the army leadership's perquisites, self-respect and authority over its own organization. Yani resolved to oppose these plans in practice although he continued to give lip service to the current jargon about Nasakom as will be seen in the next chapter. While the Sukarno offensive was mostly one of intimidation, some effort was also made to sway the Army toward Sukarno's point of view through a show of interest in military activities and particular units as well-as an effort to convince military leaders that "Nekolim" was really up to nefarious ends. The Siliwangi division was visited by Subandrio on its anniversary celebration in early May and Sukarno sent it a message that was read by Chairul Saleh. Nasution was dispatched on a trip to Moscow with a personal message from Sukarno to Kosygin. A new "Mandala Siaga" command for infiltration of Malaysia was established in early 1965 under the command of the pro-communist Air Force commander, Omar Dani, but reporting to General Yani as

Chief of Staff of KOTI. Regional Mandala commands were also established but were placed under the two senior Army generals in Sumatra and Kalimantan, both of whom were anti-communist officers loyal to Yani (Major General Mokoginta in Sumatra and Major General Panggabean in Kalimantan). General Suharto as the KOSTRAD (army strategic reserve) commander became Omar Dani's deputy for the overall Mandala Command at this time. Although a compromise, this move was designed to elevate the importance of Omar Dani and provide him with the authority to handle high level operational matters in key areas at Sukarno's behest. In late May, Sukarno chose a conference of regional military commanders as the scene for revealing the alleged imperialist plot, mentioned earlier, to kill him, Subandrio and Yani during the forthcoming Afro-Asian Conference. This plot was supposedly revealed by reports of British Ambassador Gilchrist found in the mountain cabin of Bill Palmer. Proof of the hostile intentions of "Nekolim" would hopefully convince the army that the danger was real and therefore that Sukarno's demands for alliance with China, creation of a fifth armed force, and acceptance of Nasakom political advisors were justified.

The revolutionary offensive of this period had other aspects. In his May Day speech, Sukarno had quoted Lenin on the twisting path of revolution ("revolution is not a straight line like the Nevsky Prospect") and that the workers must "seize political power" (rebutkan Kekuasaan politik).(34) Judges were being called to task to shape their decisions to coincide with the needs of the workers and

peasants and with the demands of the Revolution.(35) Marxist indoctrination of civilian officials was proceeding on an extensive scale and the models of East Asian communism were being projected forcefully through the high visibility of visiting delegations, particularly as a feature of the "Dasawarsa" celebration in April to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Bandung conference. In addition to Kim Il-Sung, other prominent participants were Chou En-lai, Pham Van Dong and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The "Dasawarsa" celebration was hardly finished when a massive build-up was launched for the forty-fifth anniversary of the PKI. Congratulations to the Communist Party poured in from most cabinet ministers and from virtually all the other political parties, much of it fawning on what was clearly now the number one political party and the chosen instrument of the Great Leader of the Revolution. Chairul Saleh, the victim of persistent attacks from Aidit and the PKI press early in the year, now obsequiously praised the Party and even called the PKI the "vanguard party".(36) The idea of the PKI as the "vanguard" was gaining acceptance. Information Minister Achmadi also told the Pemuda Rakjat to be the "vanguard of the youth" at this time.(37)

After days of preparation, a massive rally was held in the large stadium of the Soviet-built Senayan sports complex with an attendance of more than 100,000. Likenesses of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin flanked portraits of Sukarno and Aidit. Sukarno spoke at length, hailing the Party as a "mighty factor" in completing the Revolution and noting that the PKI was "consistently progressive and revolutionary", an encomium in contrast to his talks to the PNI,

which had supposedly been "his" party. He had spoken to the PNI not of revolutionary "consistency" but rather of the prevalence of "false Marhaenists" that had to be uprooted. Sukarno noted that the PKI had grown to three million members and 20 million sympathizers (these figures were to be raised again a few months later) and said that the large number of sympathizers were the result of its consistently progressive revolutionary record. He stressed too that he had deliberately selected the title of Nasakom and not Nasamarx or Nasasos because only the communists were genuine Marxists whereas others, like the old PSI of Sjahrir, claimed to be Marxists but were merely revisionists. Building towards a climax, Sukarno said he had meant "Kom, Kom and again Kom - PKI onward, never retreat". Embracing Aidit, Sukarno called him the "fortress of Indonesia", a play on Aidit's two given names, Dipa Nusantara (Nusantara means archipelago, "Dipa" was the same as "Banteng", the word for fortress, according to the President).(38) Speeches were also given by such foreign luminaries as Le Duc Tho of North Vietnam and Peng Chen of China (the Soviets sent a rather obscure figure).

On the very next day, Sukarno spoke to the National Front, telling it and its component parties and functional groups that they must get down to the kampong level (the working class barrios) in order to create a stronger organization and to lead the people. The people do not act spontaneously, Sukarno said, but must be led "as was fully recognized by Lenin". He had just praised the PKI at its anniversary, Sukarno continued, and his warm feelings for the PKI

reflected the fact that it alone was getting down to the people. He then followed with a vague threat to move against those members of the National Front that did not follow the PKI in this regard.(39) Sukarno also received the PKI's guests from Cuba, the USSR, Romania, Japan, Albania, North Korea and North Vietnam a day or two after his participation in the PKI anniversary.(40) Provincial PKI anniversary celebrations, usually with the participation of PKI leaders such as Lukman, were also taking place around the country. They were accompanied by felicitations and praise from governors and regional military commanders. The steam roller of the Revolution seemed to be moving inexorably ahead. Perhaps this is why PKI Deputy Chairman Njoto was ready to declare three weeks later that Indonesia had now become the 14th country in which Marxism had been adopted as the doctrine of the entire country, the only one, Njoto observed, outside the formal socialist bloc.(41)

Confused and politically emasculated, the Army had to attempt a response. The next chapter discusses that response and Sukarno's decision to deal with its foot-dragging by opting for a violent entry into the socialist stage, the goal he was bent on achieving as the capstone of his life's work.

## Footnotes - Chapter VII

1. Suluh Indonesia, Harian Rakjat, Antara (Warta Bhakti) Jan 5, 1965.
2. Suluh Indonesia Jan 13, 1965.
3. Harian Rakjat January 22, 1965.
4. I was introduced to a KAMI committee in early 1966 that had just examined such documents in one industry.
5. Brackman, p.62, describes how Lukman procured this house through a corrupt arrangement engineered by a PKI official in a position to apply pressure on the previous owner. John Hughes, Indonesian Upheaval (New York, David McKay & Co.) 1967 describes the ostentatious living and private enrichment of the PKI leader in Bali, Gde Puger. p.178.
6. Suluh Indonesia January 27, 1965.
7. Suluh Indonesia January 6 and 12, 1965.
8. Harian Rakjat February 5, 1965, Suluh Indonesia February 6, 1965.
9. Harian Rakjat February 14, 1964.
10. Bambang Setyono Widjanarko, The Devious Dalang (The Hague).
11. Harian Rakjat March 9, 1965.
12. Harian Rakjat March 12, 1965.
13. Harian Rakjat March 13, 1965.
14. Warta Bhakti March 25 and March 26, 1965, Suluh Indonesia and Harian Rakjat same dates



15. Warta Bhakti March 25, 1965
16. Warta Bhakti March 26, 1965.
17. Warta Bhakti April 5, 1965.
18. Warta Bhakti June 1, 1965.
19. Warta Bhakti April 8, 1965.
20. Warta Bhakti April 13, 1965.
21. Brackman p. 273.
22. Harian Rakjat May 21, 1965.
23. Warta Bhakti April 8, 1965.
24. Warta Bhakti April 5, 1965.
25. Warta Bhakti May 10, May 20, 1965.
26. Warta Bhakti June 1, 1965.
27. Warta Bhakti June 8, 1965.
28. Warta Bhakti June 16, 1965.
29. Some people distinguished between the fifth armed force concept and "arming the workers and peasants". K. Werdojo, a member of the top leadership of the far left Partindo Party said in his role as a member of the Security/Defense Commission of the MPRS that the workers and peasants must be armed and the fifth armed force established. He added that arming the workers and peasants had first priority and the fifth armed force second priority. See Warta Bhakti, June 24, 1965.
30. Warta Bhakti June 1, 1965.
31. Mortimer, *ibid* (pp. 381-382).

32. Sukarno said he agreed with Aidit's proposals for Nasakomization of the armed forces on May 17, for example, according to Warta Bhakti of May 18, 1965.
33. As recalled from the notes of an Embassy officer who was present (not the author). Also see Warta Bhakti, May 2, 1965.
34. See Warta Bhakti April 6, 1965 for a Sukarno speech on this subject.
35. Warta Bhakti May 20, 1965.
36. Warta Bhakti May 26, 1965. The vanguard party concept was connected with entry into the socialist stage. PKI theory called for a number of parties in the national democratic stage as a corollary of its united front tactics (or Nasakom) while only one "vanguard" party would exist in the final socialist stage. There might be other parties then too (as in Poland) but they would not be of a vanguard nature.
37. Harian Rakjat and Warta Bhakti May 24, 1964.
38. Warta Bhakti May 25, 1965.
39. Warta Bhakti May 26, 1965.
40. Warta Bhakti June 24, 1965. Njoto did not identify the thirteen but that number would include Cuba which had been, with Indonesia, one of the first two "national democracies" but had been elevated to the "socialist stage" following Castro's declaration that he and the Cuban revolution were really Communist.

## VIII

# PKI and Army Responses to Sukarno's Drive to Enter the Socialist Stage

The Sukarno proclamation of intent to leave the national democratic stage and enter the socialist stage was probably understood only by the PKI and by those few who had a strong appreciation of Marxist terminology. The PKI might have been expected to have been elated at this development but this was not clearly the case. The declaration had probably not come as any great surprise to Aidit and Njoto, who were both very close to Sukarno, but others in the Party appeared to raise questions. Aidit had probably anticipated a move in this direction after the Tavip speech of the previous August 17 national day since he had begun to weave talk of leaving the national democratic stage into his speeches shortly thereafter. In a speech on August 28, 1964 to a conference on the arts, for example, Aidit had spoken of the need to complete the national democratic stage and advance to the socialist stage.<sup>(1)</sup> However, he had also warned against those who claimed that the socialist stage had already arrived, a theme that was to become the most powerful element of PKI discourse after Sukarno's MPRS speech. Aidit had said on October 5 or 6, for example, that "To say

we are now already building socialism is demagoguery, subjective and reactionary. The present stage must be to complete the national democratic revolution".(2) The targets of this attack were not identified but were easily identifiable as the non-communists generally and the ideologues of the banned BPS in particular (even if these elements were saying little in view of their recent disastrous defeat at the hands of Sukarno).

The PKI initially said little after Sukarno's proclamation that the national democratic stage was "almost finished" and Indonesia was "beginning to enter" the socialist stage. While other leftist elements began to repeat Sukarno's theme, Harian Rakjat soon began to carry statements about the transition from one stage to another in a highly theoretical way as if nothing had been said on the subject by the Great Leader of the Revolution. Lukman, in particular, seemed to be cautioning that one must be very careful about a premature transition to the socialist stage since failure could set back the revolution for a long time to come. (3) All of the PKI comment that followed emphasized that Indonesia was still in the national democratic stage and that major tasks still had to be accomplished before the country could go on to the higher socialist stage.(4) The PKI was pleased, of course, with Sukarno's commitment to move the revolution forward. It applauded the "Banting Stir", that is the sharp turning of the wheel of policy to the left that was announced in the same MPRS speech that spoke of leaving the national democratic stage. The PKI was elated over the campaign to purge the PNI of false Marhaenists and to whip the Army, its principal potential enemy, into line. Entering

the socialist stage would be fine too, the PKI soon implied, if the ground were prepared first. Aidit and others pointed out that the tasks of the national democratic stage were to expel all elements of imperialism and neo-imperialism and to rid the country of feudalism, meaning above all the completion of land reform. The PKI also added another requirement - realization at long last of a Nasakom cabinet. Given the virtual take-over or neutralization of other political parties, a Nasakom cabinet would be the practical equivalent of a communist dominated cabinet, the Asian equivalent of the Petru Groza cabinet in Romania during the latter's short "People's Democracy" phase when a tame figurehead non-communist was deemed expedient as a transition measure.

Sukarno himself was not opposed to meeting these conditions. The whole thrust of "Berdikari" or standing on one's own feet, after all, was to sever all economic ties with imperialism and to align oneself with Communist China, North Vietnam and North Korea. There was certainly no conflict on that score. Nor was Sukarno against more rapid implementation of the land reform and crop sharing laws along lines favored by the PKI. He and his pro-communist Minister of Justice, Astrawinata, had established land reform courts and were haranguing the judges to side with "the people" (the PKI) on disputed issues, setting aside "traditional" law where necessary in favor of the "laws of the revolution", meaning the most radical demands of those forces, notably the PKI, that claimed to lead the revolution. Sukarno was also unquestionably in favor of a Nasakom cabinet but this would require doing something about the

army's political veto. After his initial burst of speeches saying that Indonesia had "almost" completed the national democratic stage and was "beginning to enter" the socialist stage, Sukarno began to back off a bit in his rhetoric and this was almost certainly because of the PKI reservations and misgivings.(5) No one else had negative comments - either because they failed to comprehend the point, were surfeited with ideological jargon, or because they wanted to twist Sukarno's language to imply that the revolution could stop with the achievement of a proclaimed socialism that would not alter the real status quo. The PKI led the charge against this latter heresy (although few were advocating such a course publicly any longer given the degree of fear) and Sukarno soon joined in to emphasize that the goals of the national democratic stage indeed had to be completed first. But that, he said in effect, is just what he was up to.

I believe that the PKI leaders (and Lukman and Sudisman seemed the more cautious if one can trust one's sense of the Aesopian language that appeared in Harian Rakiat) were ambivalent - they were both skeptical and pleased at the same time by Sukarno's stated intentions. The PKI leaders were all much younger than the President, so in one sense they could afford to wait another ten or twenty years to achieve victory. On the other hand, they had to understand that the revolutionary advances being achieved under Sukarno could not be sustained if he should pass from the scene before a Marxist system was institutionalized (the socialist stage). Lukman might grumble, as he did in a speech to women cadres in April that organization and discipline were needed, "not

individualism and egoism"(6) but only Sukarno could ensure a successful entry into the socialist stage while Sukarno's death before institutionalization of a communist power structure would probably soon bring an Army-led counter-revolution.

The PKI final position was perhaps most clearly stated by an obscure PKI Central Committee and Secretariat member, M. Zaelani, whose article commenting on Sukarno's Berdikari speech appeared in Harian Rakjat on April 29. In order to complete the tasks of the national democratic stage "which is a condition for entering the socialist stage", said Zaelani, "we must liquidate the economic positions of the imperialists and the remnants of economic feudalism..." He added "Statements which say that the national democratic stage is almost completed and that we already will begin to enter the socialist stage cannot be regarded other than as 'sweet meat' for us to move quickly and consistently to liquidate those strategic obstacles....to liquidate consistently foreign assets that limit our economic freedom and to strengthen further the state sector of the economy." The peasants must also first be "liberated" from feudalism. Entry into socialism would require not only economic steps but "political steps". Noting that the "working class is not now in the government", Zaelani said that a Nasakom cabinet must be formed "as desired by Bung Karno." (7) A few days later Aidit said that the Indonesian revolution was "already national democratic with a perspective of socialism" but that some were trying to say that the national democratic stage was already completed when Sukarno had merely said it was almost completed.(8) A speech by Rewang, the

Central Java PKI leader and a Politburo candidate member, also sought to refute the idea that the national democratic stage was completed.<sup>(9)</sup> Texts of the PKI Central Committee plenum proceedings that had been held two weeks earlier appeared on this day. Strangely, little was said about such a momentous coming event as entering the socialist stage. Instead there was a curious effort to recite the accomplishments achieved under Sukarno including his ban of the BPS, the ouster of the Peace Corps, the withdrawal under pressure of USIS, the exit from the UN and considerable Nasakomization. The plenum resolution then emphasized the importance of democratic centralism and Party discipline and rejected the criticism by some, "even in the Party Committee", that the revolution was not being led by the Party. Given the apparent turmoil and second thoughts in the Party over Sukarno's proclaimed intention to enter the socialist stage, it would appear that this rare acknowledgement of differences, even at the Central Committee level, was focused on this issue.<sup>(10)</sup> Sukarno himself quit referring to the two stages for some time but did not change his mind. This became apparent in late July and August as will be seen. Whatever its initial hesitation over the wisdom of such an adventurous course, the PKI leadership (and most obviously Aidit and Njoto) was soon committed to hurry with Sukarno toward the socialist stage. The PKI had little choice for it had long proclaimed its belief in a "revolutionary offensive" and was imbued with the spirit of "dare, dare and dare again" or "vivere pericoloso". It was also able to see the increasingly favorable effects of Sukarno's aggressiveness - the



isolation and expulsion of all PNI leaders unwilling to embrace communism, the Army's acceptance of "Tri Ubaya Sakti" and an apparent general buckling to the atmosphere of terror and intimidation. Sukarno's precarious health also meant that the revolution must reach a point of no return within a year or two.

The Army, as noted earlier, had gone along with Tri Ubaya Sakti, the new Army doctrine for cooperation with Asian communism against the West, and conformity with Sukarno's view of the revolution internally. This was mostly lip service although it was a lip service that tended to stress earlier Sukarno slogans such as Panca Sila and Manipol in preference to Nasakom. When Nasakom had to be mentioned, it was often qualified with some expression such as "Nasakom in the spirit of Panca Sila" to imply at least some mental reservations.<sup>(11)</sup> References were also made to "God" or "faith in God" in conjunction with the required obeisance to the slogans of the Revolution, particularly in the statements of army commanders in Sumatra and Kalimantan such as Generals Mokoginta, Darjatmo and Panggabean.<sup>(12)</sup> An image of revolutionary ardor or at least of patriotism was nurtured by threats of drastic action against the imperialists from both Yani and Nasution.<sup>(13)</sup> Sukarno's proposals for a fifth armed force and for Nasakom advisory councils in the armed forces created a more severe problem but essentially the same tactics were employed by Army leaders of not contradicting the President directly but of attempting to give lip service to these ideas while subtly redefining them into more innocuous forms.

The tactics for dealing with Nasakom advisory councils seem to have come from General Yani or at least were enunciated almost entirely by him. They were probably worked out with his small inner circle or "brain trust" that had been formed in January, most of whom were to be killed along with Yani on October 1. Yani's position was first stated in early May and repeated with more clarity thereafter along the lines of Nasakom being in reality a matter of "spirit" and not a scheme for compartmentalization of the Armed Forces. It would be impractical to have commissars from each of the three Nasakom components, he argued.(14) Later Yani said he agreed with the Banting Stir and Berdikari and promised that the Army would seek "self-sufficiency" in accord with the latter. It was already operating on a basis of Panca Sila. As for Nasakomization of the Army, the TNI already had Nasakom spirit in accordance with the spirit of Panca Sila.(15) In a speech to the regional military command in North Sulawesi (Kodam XIII) at about the same time, Yani said that regarding proposals that "representatives of political parties enter as political commissars within the organization of the Army, I consider it is not necessary".(16) As Defense Minister with responsibility for all four of the armed services, General Nasution seemed content to let Yani take the lead although he did express basic agreement with Yani during a press interview. On that occasion, Nasution said he could not answer a question about Nasakom councils since it was up to President Sukarno to decide. He added that he agreed with the comments of General Yani, however, that it would be impractical to have a commander from the PNI, for

example, and deputy commanders from the religious and communist elements of Nasakom.(17) Yani's representation to the President that Nasakom was really "spirit", not compartmentalization seemed well taken, according to Nasution.

The disingenuous but effective Army response, which was in essence that Nasakom advisory councils were unnecessary since Army officers were filled to the brim with Nasakom spirit, was projected in a great many ways at this time. One of the favorite little chants sung by claques (usually organized by the National Front with a strong PKI role) at the frequent political rallies featuring the President was "Nasakom Bersatu" which meant "Nasakom unites". The chant too is instructive. It said:

<b>Nasakom bersatu</b>	<b>Nasakom unites us</b>
<b>Singkirkan Kepala batu</b>	<b>Set aside the stubborn ones</b>
<b>Nasakom satu kita</b>	<b>Nasakom unites us all</b>
<b>Sosialisme pasti menang!</b>	<b>Socialism will certainly triumph!</b>

A new version now came to the fore called "Nasakom Berjiwa" or "Nasakom inspires" (Jiwa means spirit). Of course, no one including Sukarno could very well reject the idea of people, including the Army, having Nasakom spirit. This, after all, is what he and the PKI had been preaching. Sukarno himself and his cronies began using the phrase and demanding that this Nasakom spirit be genuine and proven in actions.(18) This was particularly the case in the final month or two leading up to the September 30 "coup".

Army reaction to the fifth armed force concept was initially to try to ignore it and then to define it as an extension of the existing

Army reservist program called Hansip. Major General Sokowati, a senior member of the Army general staff, discussed the new army doctrine, Tri Ubaya Sakti, before a Hansip conference in mid-May, noting that "Nekolim" was now identified as the enemy and that all Indonesians must be ready to repel that enemy.(19) Given the audience, the obvious impression was that the existing Army Hansip structure was to be strengthened. This was prior to Sukarno's speech to the National Defense Institute of late May in which the President pressed publicly for a fifth armed force and cited Chou En-lai as inspiration.(20) Although Admiral Martadinata had expressed himself in favor a day or two earlier and the Air Force and Police could be assumed to be in favor, the Army said nothing publicly until Defense Minister Nasution said in an aside during an otherwise bellicose anti-Western speech on June 17 that the fifth armed force concept "would be discussed".(21) Although at least five public statements by General Yani were reported by Antara over the next month including those previously cited in reference to Nasakom advisory councils, Yani was silent on the fifth armed force. However, Antara reported on June 30 that the top Army commander in Sumatra had issued instructions to all military commands in his jurisdiction to form armed companies of workers and peasants within the Hansip framework. One company was to be formed in each military sub-district (KODIM). This was precious little given the supposed reservoir of "millions" of would-be workers and peasant volunteers, of course. Furthermore, Mokoginta's order affirmed that there would be a thorough screening process to ensure that the

worker and peasant volunteers were loyal to the Government and to the Army. They would be organized on a military basis, be subject to military discipline and their arms and ammunition would be carefully controlled.(22)

This program was in fact carried out in Sumatra over the next few months in a manner that gave precedence to acceptance of anti-communist volunteers (although not so flagrantly as to undercut an argument that compliance with Sukarno's wishes was intended. The controls over arms were reportedly extremely tight with a complete check-in and inventory at the end of each day's training). It is not clear from the public record that any steps were taken outside Sumatra although it is likely that Sukarno pressed for implementation of his ideas on his terms during a meeting with the military leaders concerning defense organization outside the Mandala commands (meaning Java primarily) during the second week of July.(23)

There is little doubt that the Army leadership was rejecting both Nasakom advisory councils and the fifth armed force, however, while trying to do so as much as possible by indirection and distortion of Sukarno's orders. In a sense, this was a repetition of the tactics employed by anti-communist elements during the earlier Sukarnoism or BPS campaign but with much more control over the results. The other three armed services were all responding much more favorably to Sukarno's demands, as would be expected. Omar Dani of the Air Force did not need to say much since it was clear that he was fully aligned with Sukarno and the PKI already. His

comments were accordingly limited to general assertions of the need for the Armed Forces and Nasakom to work together.(24) He did order that Marxism would be the basis of instruction at the Air Force academy.(25) Dani also not only accepted the fifth armed force idea in principle but began a program of training communist youth at the Halim air base near Jakarta. These units were to be armed secretly through shipments from China brought into Indonesia secretly on Indonesian Air Force planes under the guise of CONEFO contributions. The units were employed in auxiliary roles on October 1 as part of the Untung/Supardjo operation to liquidate the senior leadership of the Indonesian army. Whatever his real feelings, Admiral Martadinata declared the Navy to be fully in support of both Nasakomization and the fifth armed force concept on June 16. Touching all bases, he said the Navy was completely in accord with the geopolitical teachings of Bung Karno and recognized the need to complete the "stages of the revolution". The Navy was already beginning to act on Sukarno's proposals for Nasakom advisory councils and a fifth armed force and was making "Nasakom spirit" an integral part of its indoctrination courses. Volunteer camps were being established to implement the fifth armed force concept and the volunteers would be used in confrontation against Malaysia.(26) Martadinata repeated his support for the fifth armed force a few days later.(27) He then called at PKI headquarters to thank Aidit for his political help to the Navy and particularly for his addresses to armed forces training courses. He told Aidit that he regarded the fifth armed force as a positive contribution to the Indonesian revolution.(28) It

has been suggested that Martadinata had given his support to Sukarno on these issues because of his weakness as a result of the mutiny of junior officers at the Navy's principal base in Surabaya a few months earlier. The mutineers had been critical of Martadinata's leadership so it is possible that the likeable little admiral purchased Sukarno's endorsement of his continuation in office by an agreement to support Nasakomization and the fifth armed force. While this interpretation is possible, it is not necessary to an explanation of Martadinata's conduct, even while acknowledging that he was not in sympathy with the communists and rather weakly sided with Suharto when the chips were down on October 1. Martadinata was a typical product of the Sukarno era, an intellectual light-weight who doted on the glitter and fun-loving atmosphere of the Sukarno court in all its superficial manifestations. He loved diplomatic parties, participated as an enthusiastic drummer (he was an expert performer) and was frequently the last to leave. His heart was with the West because of his life-style but I doubt any profound commitment to any particular set of political ideals or beliefs. His awareness of Sukarno's wishes would have been supplemented, moreover, by a realization that the Navy and, particularly the Marine Corps, were jealous of the Army and loyal to the Supreme Commander, Bung Karno. Martadinata was a man inclined toward following the line of least resistance and that led to acceptance of Sukarno's wishes. It is true that he too might drag his feet in practice on implementation of measures that any military man would consider obnoxious but only if the pressure from his leader was not great. Resistance to any such pressure would be

minimal in contrast to that of the Army; however subservient the Army leaders were to sound in their public statements their will to resist was strong.



## Footnotes - Chapter VIII

1. Harian Rakjat September 9, 1964.
2. Harian Rakjat October 6, 1964.
3. Harian Rakjat Various dates.
4. Harian Rakjat's first report on Sukarno's Berdikari speech on April 13 praised his sharp turn to the left (the Banting Stir) but failed to mention his remarks on leaving the national democratic stage. Also see Aidit's comments on Berdikari in Harian Rakjat of April 30 (a two week delay). A set of formal "theses" issued by the PKI on May 6, shortly before the Central Committee plenum and the party's birthday celebration has remarkably little - and even that is theoretical and formal - on the stages of the revolution. The theses emphasize the need to complete the national democratic stage before going on to the socialist stage. The same approach appears in Aidit's report to the plenum (Harian Rakjat May 12).
5. Sukarno repeated his remarks about beginning to enter the socialist stage several times in April and May but then said little or nothing on this issue from early June until his national day speech on August 17 (Takari). In Takari, Sukarno said Indonesia was still in the national democratic stage and that "it is said that we will duly enter the socialist stage of the Revolution, that is that the imperialist model is finished and the land held by the landlords is returned to the peasants". The same strange phraseology of "it is said that" was used by Sukarno in a

speech on education and character building in mid-September;

"It is said that our revolution is already entering the stage of building socialism". Warta Bhakti September 13, 1965.

6. Harian Rakjat April 30, 1965.
7. Harian Rakjat April 29, 1965.
8. Harian Rakjat June 9, 1965.
9. Harian Rakjat June 21, 1965.
10. Harian Rakjat June 21, 1965. Note the six week delay in printing the plenum resolutions.
11. Warta Bhakti June 18, 1965.
12. Warta Bhakti April 27, June 2, June 19, 1965.
13. Warta Bhakti May 27 and June 18, 1965.
14. Warta Bhakti May 24, 1965.
15. Warta Bhakti June 18, 1965.
16. Warta Bhakti June 18, 1965.
17. Warta Bhakti June 24, 1965.
18. According to Suluh Indonesia of July 21, 1965, Sukarno ultimately ordered that the slogan Nasakom Bersatu be amended to "Nasakom Djiwaktu" which may imply "Nasakom – it's about time" since "waktu" means time. "Djiwaktu" is unclear and a colleague believes that Sukarno's actual words were "Nasakom djiwaku" or "Nasakom is my spirit". See Suluh Indonesia July 21, 1965.
19. Warta Bhakti May 15, 1965.
20. Warta Bhakti May 31, 1965.
21. Warta Bhakti June 18, 1965.

22. Warta Bhakti June 30, 1965.
23. Warta Bhakti July 12, 1965.
24. Warta Bhakti April 29, 1965
25. Warta Bhakti June 5, 1965.
26. Warta Bhakti June 17, 1965.
27. Warta Bhakti June 19, 1965.
28. Warta Bhakti June 25, 1965.



# IX

## Sukarno Decides for a Violent Transition to the "Socialist Stage"

In retrospect, and taking account of information that has only become available in recent years, it appears that Sukarno became at least tentatively committed to a violent rather than a peaceful entry into the socialist stage as early as May 1965. While the details were not yet worked out, the basic decision for eliminating the Army leadership was probably made as soon as Sukarno became convinced that Yani was only giving lip service to Sukarno's revolutionary goals and that the Army would not give in on any measures that would alter the physical balance of power against it. However, this was not entirely clear from the overt record of Sukarno's speeches and actions until later. Indeed, the initial impression was that, after the storm and fury of April and May, a period of relative quiet had set in on the internal front in June. This was partly because Sukarno was preoccupied with his attendance at the Second Non-Aligned Conference in Algiers where he hoped to emerge as the leader - or at least the policy innovator - of a broad anti-Western coalition based on the principles of a global Nasakom. The relative calm probably also reflected a desire to test whether the Army could be induced to

succumb peacefully to his pressures for its Nasakomization - a kind of "one last chance" approach before turning to violence. There may also have been a felt need to prepare the psychological ground further, including the creation of the right climate for securing the fullest commitment of those who would have to execute the para-military operation required.

The political situation could not have been more favorable from all appearances. The media and all segments of the elite had been induced to spew forth unending hysterical revolutionary verbiage and no one was immune from the psychological duress and terror that gripped Indonesia in this period. At the center, all civilian institutions had been taken over, were neutralized, or were about to be, although some stirrings of resistance continued at the grass roots level. These would later turn out to be significant but they were undoubtedly underestimated at the time. Even the Army had been intimidated enough to accept the doctrinal upheaval of Tri Udaya Sakti and to avoid an open confrontation with the Great Leader of the Revolution at all costs. The military balance was another story, however. The PKI had no real military capacity nor could it have had. Those who criticize this lack of military capacity from hindsight fail to understand that even a limited effort to move in that direction earlier would have been incompatible with the Sukarno/PKI program of building a revolutionary situation politically through national front tactics. The PKI could never have developed; it would have been sharply opposed if a case could have been made earlier that it was not a loyal part of the national consensus. The Army remained by far

the largest and most effective military force even though the Navy (meaning mostly the Marines), the Air Force and the Police were a partial offset. If Jakarta had been in Central Java, the situation would have appeared more favorable to the communists but the capital was surrounded by the relatively more Moslem and anti-communist region of West Java and by the crack Siliwangi division.

A direct assault on the Army was out of the question; the only way to overcome its latent power was to neutralize some of its stronger forces, channel the action into a scenario where there would be a local balance of forces against it and surgically alter its leadership. The old leadership would then have to be shown up as a counter-revolutionary, unpatriotic group. The Gilchrist documents were created for that purpose as early as May, 1965. The Siliwangi division had already been weakened by transfer of many of its infantry battalions to counter-insurgency operations in such places as Sulawesi where it was mopping up the remnants of Kahar Muzakkar's Darul Islam movement there and to the standing watch against Malaysia. In July, Sukarno was to move to neutralize the division further through manipulation of its commander, Major General Ibrahim Adjie. If the Siliwangi could be kept out of action, a surgical strike against the recalcitrant group of Army leaders would depend on forces within the capital. The Army component of this local balance consisted of several elements. The most obvious was the Jakarta garrison (KODAM V) under the command of Major General Umar Wirahadikusumah. Its principal troop strength was its First Brigade under the command of Colonel Latief, an officer who

was secretly under the control of the PKI. A second element was a detachment of two battalions of the elite paracommando force known as the RPKAD that had been established a decade earlier at the initiative of Vice President Hatta. It was part of the Army's strategic reserve (KOSTRAD) under the command of Major General Suharto and it was stationed at Cijantung (Tjidjantung) on the southeastern outskirts of the city just off the road that leads to Bogor.

Finally, although it was not strictly Army, mention must be made of the multi-service Tjakrabirawa (this would be Cakrabirawa in current spelling) regiment of Presidential Guards which was now being called a brigade because of recent increments to its strength. The Tjakrabirawa was an impressive appearing force because of its priority position in obtaining sophisticated modern equipment and its ability to obtain elite personnel from the services. The new commander of its First Battalion, Lt. Col. Untung, was a top hero of the West Irian campaign, for example. Like Latief, he was responsive to the PKI and he was fanatically devoted to Sukarno who had personally awarded him his medal for the West Irian operation several years earlier. The Tjakrabirawa's movements escorting Sukarno were something to behold (and I beheld a number of them); masses of armored vehicles with impressive discipline and precision clearing the path for the Great Leader as he left a speech at Senayan Stadium and ringing his presence whenever he required official movement. Also on hand in Jakarta was part of the Police Mobile Brigade, some KKO (Marine) units and some Air Force ground troops to protect the Halim air base. Of all these troops, the two



battalions of RPKAD were considered the most effective and were to become the decisive element on October 1 through a series of unforeseen circumstances. But it is too early to get into that, the point of this review having been to help the reader keep in mind the ever-present background of available military force which Sukarno as well as others had to think about as they planned their moves.

Before bringing in and evaluating the behind-the-scenes moves that have come to light from the post-coup testimony of participants, it is well to look at the overt record of Sukarno's speeches and actions, as well as those of others, from June through the end of September. This overt record alone clearly demonstrates, in my opinion, Sukarno's intention to take violent action against the Army in order to clear the way for entry into the socialist stage in the near future. This is not merely a matter of hindsight, I might add. I believed strongly in the significance of Sukarno's talk about entering the socialist stage from his first statements on the subject. I later argued Sukarno's responsibility for the September 30 affair to Indonesian friends long before they were prepared to believe it and I thought that Sukarno's July 25 speech to the PNI was a signal that he had shifted from a course of peaceful to violent entry into the socialist stage long before the evidence from interrogated participants came to light. My point in saying this is not to show my clairvoyance; it is to indicate that a strong case can be made for demonstrating Sukarno as the initiator of the September 30 affair on the basis of the overt historical record alone even if one were to discount all trial and other testimonial evidence as the work of Army

manipulation and duress. This "clairvoyance" was not really very difficult, in any case; it only required a willingness to take Sukarno seriously as a man committed to a communist Indonesia and to analyze his increasingly open and clear rhetoric in that light. Unfortunately, all those experts who had become wedded to a view of Sukarno as a "bourgeois nationalist" and a playboy whose reliance on the PKI was simply a mistaken concern with "balancing forces" were, and often still are, unwilling to examine this record without blinders.

Sukarno's speech of July 25 to the PNI was ostensibly on the scale of his May speech to the PKI. Like the latter, it was held in the large sports stadium at Senayan, not the small basketball facility where he gave most of his speeches. The large stadium reportedly had a capacity of 100,000 compared to about 10,000 for the small location. The stadium was full of PNI cadres for the occasion and one may assume that most of the PNI leaders, except for such communist infiltrators as its Secretary General, hoped that their leader and the founder of their party in 1927 would at least show even-handedness.<sup>(1)</sup> They were aware, of course, of his demands that the PNI purge its false Marhaenists and they were in the process of compliance. What happened instead was that Sukarno increased the pressure to expel the false Marhaenists "now", not later, and to conclude with a peroration that focused praise not on the PNI but on the PKI as the shining example for the Indonesian revolution.

The nature of Sukarno's peroration is an essential element in understanding what happened in Indonesia in 1965 - it ranks with

Sukarno's earlier decision to enter the socialist stage in the near future and his specific actions to purge the PNI and politicize the Army as key steps toward launching the September 30 movement. Sukarno began by praising the 1926 PKI revolt. He described briefly how the 1926 revolt broke out in West Java and later in Sumatra. One of the PKI leaders arrested by the Dutch was held in jail at the town of Ciamis (Tjiamis), said Sukarno, and this man smuggled a letter to the then young Sukarno to carry on the struggle. This, Sukarno implied, is what he had done ever since (the story of a message from the Ciamis jail was repeated in Sukarno's remarks at the PSII anniversary in mid-September with even more emphasis and a vague version is also to be found in Sukarno's "autobiography" by Cindy Adams).(2A) Some people thought that the 1926 PKI revolt was a mistake, he continued; they wanted to cooperate with the Dutch and gain independence gradually. However, freedom could not be achieved by simply asking for it, freedom must be seized. Sukarno asked scornfully whether the means for seizing power was water. No, he responded, power had to be achieved with arms - "with the rifle, with artillery, ships, arms and bombs". Only power and physical force could defeat the class enemy. The above summary is based on the account of the speech in the PNI newspaper, Suluh Indonesia, of July 26 and it reflects that paper's version of the speech except for the "class enemy" at the end.(?) I attended this speech and sat a few feet in front of Sukarno and his large and conspicuous uniformed bodyguard, a man who stood just below Sukarno with folded arms and gazed with flitting eyes to and fro among the

audience. This Tjakrabirawa guard officer was none other than Colonel Untung, the subsequent nominal leader of the September 30 Movement. While I cannot be certain of the exact words almost two decades later, my impression was strong that Sukarno either said or implied more than a need to defeat the Dutch by force of arms, and was referring to the present internal or class enemy. Sukarno noted rather ominously that Indonesia had managed to avoid class warfare during its continuing revolution thus far but added that class warfare was becoming an increasing possibility due to the recalcitrance of conservative elements.(3)

There is no reason to believe, in any case, that Sukarno's purpose was limited to imparting a history lesson to his nationalist PNI audience about the PKI, particularly when this audience could reasonably expect to hear something about its own glorious history - that is the history of the nationalist movement after the PNI came on the scene in 1927 following the failure of the 1926 PKI revolt. It seems clear that Sukarno had in mind the parallels he saw between 1926 and 1965. He was saying in effect that the 1926 revolt was correct, despite its failure, because a successful revolutionary step could only be taken by violent action. By whom? By the same PKI was the obvious message. I believe that the July 25 speech demonstrated that a decisive judgment had been made by Sukarno - a judgment that a peaceful transition to the socialist stage was not possible given the degree of high level Army opposition, however much lip service the Army leaders were paying to Sukarno's rhetoric. Sukarno may still not have decided on a detailed scenario for

effecting his violent entry into the socialist stage - the seizure or liquidation of anyone standing in the way of a communist Indonesia - but he had made the decision in principle. Given his lack of attention to the details of implementation that had always characterized his style of leadership, it is unlikely that he directly supervised the planning that would be required to execute his decision such as the details of how Yani, Nasution and the other Army leaders were to be removed; that was a matter for subordinates, not for the Great Leader of the Revolution. But his green light was necessary. This was not a green light being forced on him by an aggressive PKI, by such Machiavellian subordinates as Subandrio, or by restive elements in the Army; it was Sukarno's initiative just as Sukarno had pressed almost single-handedly from March onward for an early entry into the socialist stage, for purging the "false Marhaenists" and so on. The July 25 speech showed clearly, in my view, that Sukarno was not only totally committed to the PKI and communism but that he was intent on effecting final revolutionary change leading to an open communist state through violent means.(4) This theme of identification with the PKI was to be repeated in even clearer form in mid-September in his little publicized speech to a small Moslem party, the PSII.

The next steps in the drama, as far as the PNI was concerned, unfolded rapidly. The removal of PNI Deputy Chairman Hardi, Deputy Secretary General Isnaeni, former Central Java leader Hadisubeno and several other top PNI leaders (Osa Maliki, Karim Mohammed Durjet, Sabilal Rasjad, and Mohammad Achmad) was

announced on August 6.(5) Sukarno then underwent an apparent medical setback of some sort in early August which stopped his speech making for about one week. This alleged medical setback has been greatly overplayed and, in my view, misunderstood but it will be examined shortly. While rumors of Sukarno's illness swept Jakarta, Aidit returned hurriedly from a visit to China with several Chinese doctors in tow. Njoto had already been summoned by Sukarno from travels abroad to work on the forthcoming August 17 national day speech. Sukarno did begin making public appearances again in the week before his major August 17 speech and that speech itself was equivalent to the previous year's TAVIP speech in length and was delivered with all the usual Sukarno fire. The acronym of Takari (year of standing on one's own feet) was based on his April speech to the MPRS (Berdikari) concerning a sharp turn to the left and it strongly reiterated the themes of that speech.(6) Sukarno again declared his intention to enter the socialist stage but emphasized the need for a proper understanding of the two stages along lines being promoted by the PKI. He also distinguished between the need to be "creative, supple, flexible and clever" in tactics to complete the revolution while remaining absolutely firm on the strategy of the revolution which must remain principled. The internal situation was declared to be good for the revolution. Any forces that were no longer revolutionary would no longer live in Indonesia, he said. Making clear whom he had in mind, Sukarno turned to the armed forces and said that they, in particular, must be revolutionary armed forces. He referred to "Peta generals" (Yani was the most famous

Peta general - that is an officer of the military group formed in the Japanese occupation) that were of use in the 1945 period "but if they now oppose national revolutionary unity, if they now break the Nasakom front, if they are now enemies of the volunteers of the revolution, then they have become reactionary forces and would be left behind".(7) Referring to the Fifth Armed Force idea, Sukarno said he would study it further and come to a decision. The implication was clear, however, that it was only a matter of time and of deciding how it would be effected. Takari was, of course, hailed by all the clique and the press.

Aidit promptly demanded wide distribution of the Takari speech and declared that "Indonesia is still in the national democratic stage" but "has already achieved important successes in this stage. Indonesia will build socialism, that is the imperialist model is already finished and the property of the land is already given to the people".(8) Asmara Hadi of the Partindo Party was even more enthusiastic, declaring that the "whole world would be socialist by the year 2000".(8) Such a cowed non-communist as Ruslan Abdulgani was hailing Takari as "rational and scientific".(9)

In a speech on August 25, Minister Oei Tjoe Tat noted that Indonesia was still "only in a stage of completing the national democratic revolution" but since the transition was near, the speech concentrated on the tasks of "building socialism" in the new stage.(10) Sukarno continued speaking regularly, mostly to PKI front groups. He talked to the PKI scholars affiliate, the HSI, at the end of August about the importance of Marxism-Leninism as a guide to

action but praised Mao's leadership of the Chinese Revolution in particular because of its adaptation to Asian conditions.(11) On September 1, Sukarno spoke to a Police Conference with the heads of the four armed forces present. With Yani's tactic of citing Nasakom "spirit" to evade Nasakom advisory councils clearly in mind, Sukarno conceded that the idea of Nasakom unity was a matter for the political parties and did not apply directly to the armed forces since members of the armed forces were not able to enter political parties. However, they could have genuine Nasakom spirit, he said, and genuine Nasakom spirit did not mean an intent to eliminate the Nasakom parties. Sukarno then addressed the four service commanders one at a time. Speaking to Omar Dani, Sukarno said that the Air Force was a good revolutionary organization because it was studying Marxism-Leninism. The Navy, he told Admiral Martadinata, was now a revolutionary force as well, in spite of its problems earlier that year (the mutiny). He told Police Minister Sutjipto that the police were also becoming a good revolutionary force. But then Sukarno turned to Yani and said "But the Army is not a revolutionary force. It is still blocking me. I will use my charismatic power and turn the people against you. The people will crush you". Yani was reported to have laughed (although this may have been more of a nervous giggle given the atmosphere at the time).(12) Only one day later, Subandrio told an audience in Northern Sulawesi that the people had the right to take power from the corrupt capitalist bureaucrats and "it is you who will determine the destruction of the corruptors". A week later Subandrio told



another audience to "smash the exploiters and capitalist bureaucrats, annihilate the pilferers of the state's wealth". On September 21 Subandrio said that some of the heroes of earlier days had become traitors and on September 25, he said that an operation was imminent to eliminate the capitalist bureaucrats.

Sukarno himself followed up his pointed attack on General Yani and the Army with a little publicized speech to the PSII (the small political party that claimed descent from the old Sarekat Islam), a speech that has been alluded to in an earlier chapter. It will be recalled that Sukarno had spoken in the past of five generations of Indonesian revolutionaries: (1) the Sarekat Islam, (2) the 1926 PKI, (3) the post-PKI generation that consisted of the PNI and its offshoots, (4) the '45 Generation of the immediate post-war independence struggle and (5) the present generation. Sukarno now condemned the third generation as collaborators with the Dutch and claimed that he had always been a member of the second generation which he had just identified as the 1926 PKI. He had, he said, been passed the word by an imprisoned PKI leader in Ciamis to carry on the struggle by other means. This speech was, in a sense, merely an extension of his peroration to the PNI anniversary celebration in July, but he was even more explicit in identifying himself with the early PKI and in implying that he had been an underground communist during all the intervening years. As noted in an earlier chapter, this speech was carried only in the small circulation PSII newspaper, Karya Bhakti, and then only in watered down form, presumably because the message was considered indiscreet. It was

heard by much of the cabinet, however, as well as by the PSII audience and it undoubtedly contributed to the sense of impending crisis that gripped Indonesia in September, 1965.

The PKI leaders were also making vague allusions to some kind of impending action using the metaphor of a mid-wife waiting with her instruments to deliver a baby. On September 15, Aidit told the Communist labor organization, SOBSI, that "if we wish our Revolution to develop healthily, we must eliminate the economic dynasty, bureaucratism, and city devils from the whole political economic state machinery". With a clear reference to an impending entry into the socialist stage in mind, the Jakarta city PKI leader and Politburo candidate member, Anwar Sanusi, told an audience on the afternoon before the September 30 movement struck that "we are now in a situation where our country is expecting a child. The midwife is ready with all her instruments necessary for the safe delivery of the child, which was long expected. There is a handful of devils who threaten the safety of the country and the child to be born. The midwife, therefore, first should drive these devils away".(13) At least in retrospect, the allusion to impending violence aimed at a change in the fundamental nature of the system is clear. This was the last PKI public statement before Untung struck that very night. But that blow was not exclusively a blow of the PKI anymore than it was exclusively a blow by dissident officers; it was a blow by Sukarno and his entire revolutionary front.

It may be useful to examine some of the other public statements and actions in September for the insight they give concerning the

drift of events and some degree of apparent foreknowledge by a wide circle of Sukarnoists. Labor Minister Sutowo told a judges conference on September 6 that there was now a need for a single "vanguard party". He noted that the CPSU played this role in the Soviet Union as did the CCP in China.(14) Chairul Saleh told the same judges that they must be "subjective" on the side of the Revolution. The pro-communist chairman of the Journalist Association was haranguing for a further purge of Radio Indonesia.(15) Sukarno's senior active wife, Hartini, who was widely regarded as sympathetic to the PKI, told an audience in Sumatra that Nasakom had been the basis of "our life" since 1926, implying that it was a necessary tactic resulting from the failure of the 1926 PKI revolt. In mid-September, Sukarno gave Aidit and MPRS Deputy Chairman Wilujo Puspojudo one of Indonesia's highest medals in a ceremony before the entire cabinet. It was clear that Aidit was the main recipient and was being further legitimized by the President with the entire cabinet compelled to participate.(16)

Chairul Saleh gave a press conference in Makassar about this time that showed awareness of "coup" possibilities. Responding to a question, Saleh spoke of a coup d'etat "against" (that is to pre-empt) a coup d'etat managed by the imperialists. The Antara report is not very clear but Saleh said something to the effect that a coup against a coup is always found in a state that is being led by imperialists and was for the benefit of imperialists. Presumably, he was turning aside a question that fit the Indonesian situation perfectly by relating it to a theoretical situation in another kind of country. The important point

is that all three - Saleh, the questioner, and Antara - were speaking of a "coup against a coup", which was to be the supposed rationale for the September 30 movement and that they were doing so two weeks before the event.(17) The next day, Saleh had to listen to Sukarno and Subandrio lectures to the 45 Generation on how the "pendobrok" generation (the fourth of Sukarno's "five generations" and the one in which Saleh was prominent) must not become "revisionist" but should take up the tasks of the revolutionary present. Saleh was not the only one to mention coup possibilities publicly. The Journalist Association chairman, Karim D.P., warned on September 27 that any attempt to launch a coup would fail. He was not speaking of PKI intentions, of course, he was alluding to a possible Army coup.(18)

Asmara Hadi of Partindo had meanwhile invented a slogan of "Marxism-Sukarnoism" to describe the application of Marxism to Indonesian conditions. He also described the PKI, not his own party, as the "best" (terbaik) party in Indonesia.(19) Sukarno told the students at Bogor Agricultural Institute on September 27 that Indonesia was not only completing the national democratic stage but that the students would be "good cadres for building socialism" as soon as they finished their studies.(20) In other words, Indonesia would have already progressed beyond the national democratic stage. Ruslan Abdulgani was on a tour of Central Java, meanwhile, for the purpose of explaining the great PNI purge to that party's faithful. He told a crowd of "300,000 Marhaen" (an example of the gross exaggeration of numbers in Indonesia) that "contradictions among the revolutionary forces" must be worked out peacefully in the spirit

of Nasakom. In other words, the PKI line must be accepted. As for "contradictions between the Marhaen people and ABRI" (the Armed Forces), Ruslan said that "all enemies of the revolution can be crushed and annihilated".(21) This does not mean that Ruslan was a party to the September 30 Movement nor is one sure of exactly what he said from the Antara coverage. The point is that impending violence was in the air and was considered a revolutionary "good". The Great Leader of the Revolution had set the tone, after all, and the Great Leader was to be followed and obeyed unquestioningly for the sake of "the Revolution". Yani's last speech before his murder, given on the same date, spoke of the need for vigilance by all the Armed Forces, but especially by the Army, although this was cast in the language of vigilance against the external "imperialists".

As the "coup" date neared, Sukarno gave more speeches right up to the end. The very last of these was significant because Sukarno left the platform for what some in attendance thought was another illness but which later evidence has shown was a respite to receive a report from Untung as a tactical head of the September 30 Movement. When he returned, Sukarno told a story from the Ramayana that can be interpreted as a reference to the violence about to be launched. Another speech delivered a bit earlier to the communist university students, the CGMI, should be addressed, particularly because some writers have taken it as a warning to the PKI. This interpretation is clearly incorrect, in my view, and would require an extremely strained interpretation given the context of Sukarno's posture both before and after the "coup". The remarks

related to a Moslem university student organization, the HMI, which had been allowed to continue although it had once been associated with the banned Masjumi party. The HMI and the NU youth group, Ansor, had both been involved in physical clashes with PKI youth, especially in East Java. The HMI was vulnerable because of the ex-Masjumi connection while Ansor was not, so the PKI had whipped up a strong campaign in the press to ban the HMI. The CGMI had been in the forefront of the PKI effort. Toward the end of his speech, Sukarno praised the CGMI and noted that it contained non-communists (although progressive ones) as well as communists. His point was the need to have a united front of all Nasakom elements who were genuinely favorable to the revolution. Sukarno then said that there were also some students who were not progressive revolutionary and they must be banned. He was clearly referring to the HMI, in my opinion, although he did not come out and ban that organization on the spot (why stir up trouble the day before the assault on the army leadership?). Sukarno next made some rhetorical comments that he would ban any group that was not progressive revolutionary even if it should turn out to be the CGMI. Some non-communist Indonesians who were always grasping at straws to absolve the President and show that "at last" he had seen the light and discovered how he was being manipulated by those nasty communists (and the Machiavellian Subandrio), claimed that he was warning the PKI. However, Sukarno had often made similar comments in the past that were designed to show his fairness to all groups and this was nothing more. The whole thrust of this speech

earlier had been on the importance of understanding Marxism. The Communist Manifesto, he said, had been addressed to the proletariat of all countries and was the property of the world. The 1926 PKI revolt had been launched on the principle of Nasakom (presumably because the PKI had tried, rather narrowly and unsuccessfully, to mobilize a wider front through the Sarekat Rakjat). Nasakom was a "theory of struggle of Marxism, combining all revolutionary forces". Nasakom was now accepted by 95% of the Indonesian people. "To be a communist is not an easy thing", Sukarno said, "To be a communist one must produce and think".(22) His later comments, then, were made in the general context of that theme and were in no way extraordinary; indeed the whole thrust of the speech showed again Sukarno's persistent association of himself with the pre-1926 PKI and his apparent belief that he, more than anyone then living, wore its mantle. Some may not want to believe the underlying validity of Sukarno's identification with the pre-1926 PKI but everything the man was saying pointed in the direction of his own belief in that fact, or myth, however one may wish to regard it. As for myself, I must admit that I prefer to believe Sukarno on the nature of Sukarno rather than those Western academicians and Indonesians who insist that Sukarno is what they say he was, however difficult it might seem to continue the effort to reconcile that image with the reality of 1965.

## Footnotes - Chapter IX

1. Ali Sastromidjojo's speech, which followed Sukarno's, acknowledged the role of the ISDV and the early PKI in the history of Indonesia's struggle but it did not refer to the 1926 PKI revolt. Unlike Sukarno, Ali dwelled at length on the rise of the PNI in 1927 and thereafter. Suluh Indonesia July 27, 1965 and August 3-4, 1965.
2. Suluh Indonesia, July 26, 1965, and August 2, 1965, Warta Bhakti July 26, 1965.
3. See, for example, Sukarno's national day speeches in 1964 and 1965. (Tavip and Takari). Sukarno's drift toward violence was manifested in other ways. The Army captured Kahar Muzakkar's successor as head of the South Sulawesi Darul Islam guerrilla movement about this time, an ex-army officer named Gerungan and a man personally known to General Yani and other senior officers from an earlier time. A trial was set but, according to a number of Indonesian sources of the Embassy in that period, Sukarno demanded that Gerungan be shot without any trial. This was done - and there were rumors that Yani visited the man on the night before his summary execution.
4. Suluh Indonesia August 6, 1965.
5. Warta Bhakti, August 18, 1965.
6. The press accounts of the speech used the term "Djenderal Petak" which means bald-headed generals. Dick Howland, the



Embassy officer who recorded the speech, says Sukarno clearly used the word "Peta", not "Petak". This makes sense as none of the generals were bald and the reference to Peta Generals would have been a clearly direct warning to Yani to get in line or else.

7. Warta Bhakti, August 22, 1965.
8. Warta Bhakti, August 19, 1965.
9. Warta Bhakti, August 23, 1965.
10. Warta Bhakti, August 26, 1965
11. Warta Bhakti, August 31, 1965.
12. Warta Bhakti, September 1 and 2, 1965. Also see Indonesia - 1965, The Coup That Backfired, p.240. This is a massive CIA Intelligence report completed in 1968 that was originally classified but was later declassified in the 1970s. This report was based on all available sources including regular Embassy political reporting, intelligence sources, Indonesian Army interrogation reports available at the time, and the standard open sources of the press and radio.
13. The Coup That Backfired pp. 240-243.
14. Warta Bhakti, September 7, 1965.
15. Warta Bhakti, September 9, 1965.
16. Warta Bhakti, September 13, 1965.
17. Warta Bhakti, September 15, 1965.
18. Warta Bhakti, September 27, 1965.
19. Warta Bhakti, September 17, 1965.
20. Warta Bhakti, September 27, 196~.
21. Warta Bhakti, September 29, 1965.

22. Warta Bhakti, September 30, 1965, Harian Rakjat October 1, 1965.

# X

## The Pyongyang - Peking - Jakarta Axis and Dreams of a World Nasakom

Before examining the specific planning and preparation of the September 30 Movement and Sukarno's role in it on the basis of what is now known about the behind-the-scenes developments, one other aspect of the public record of the time should be addressed, particularly since the almost euphoric view then being taken by Asian communism of its prospects contributed to the enormity of the sense of failure that promptly followed the destruction of Indonesian communism. The cataclysm visited upon an Indonesian communism about to achieve total victory in the world's fifth largest country was felt not only by the stunned Indonesian communists themselves, but by the Chinese who were equally anticipating a victory that would outflank the Western position in the Far East and spread (they hoped) through the rest of Southeast Asia. As noted in an earlier chapter, Sukarno's anti-Malaysia campaign had gradually developed during the course of 1964 into a broader campaign against "imperialism" in general and then into a campaign focused particularly on the United States as the principal bastion of world imperialism. Growing US involvement in Vietnam during the course of 1964 and 1965 made

such a shift more reasonable and there was undoubtedly great emotional resentment of the US role in addition to the calculated advantages for the stirring of revolutionary ardor. It will be recalled, however, that substantially increased US involvement in Vietnam was inspired or developed because of the movement of North Vietnamese forces into South Vietnam, changing the war in South Vietnam from a Vietcong insurgency into a larger-scale war. This major change of commitment reflected the general revolutionary offensive throughout East Asia. My purpose here is not to argue the rights and wrongs of US intervention in Vietnam, however, but to relate that intervention to Indonesian revolutionary developments, the Indonesian alliance with China, and the common Asian communist sense of impending victory for the communist cause. I personally believe that these communist expectations of their inexorable march toward victory in Southeast Asia to have been highly unrealistic from the beginning, but there is no question in my mind that Sukarno, the Indonesian communists, the Chinese, and other Asian communists did have a strong belief in the inevitability of their triumph and in the impending retreat of the West from East Asia under the blows of the aroused revolutionary masses.

This is not to assert that there was to be a physical Chinese invasion or other Chinese takeover of Southeast Asia. It is rather that indigenous communist or quasi-communist movements were expected to be victorious in the not too distant future since the Asian communists were convinced that they had momentum on their side. The revolutionary momentum of the Vietnamese communists was an

important reason for these high expectations but it was, in my view, of secondary importance to the belief in an overwhelming communist triumph in Indonesia - a country that might be backward in Western eyes but which had a population, an area and natural resources roughly comparable to all of Indo-China, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Burma combined. Indonesia's geographic position astride the trade routes between the Indian Ocean (or as Sukarno called it, the Indonesian Ocean) and the Pacific Ocean and sitting on the southern flank of all the small and seemingly weak non-communist states of Southeast Asia, was also significant. The US, preoccupied with Vietnam because of its agonizing direct involvement, never really focused on Indonesia as a potential communist country. True, it was disturbed by Sukarno's trouble-making but this tended to be regarded as the annoying but not really serious antics of a not very serious man. Sukarno's jargon was considered pretentious and silly as was his talk of creating a vast bloc of "new emerging forces" against the "old established forces". The Chinese and other Asian communists may have had their reservations about some of Sukarno's personal failings too but they took him much more seriously and, above all, they recognized Indonesia's importance as a significant potential communist state and major ally.

Relations with China developed on two complementary levels as in most things Indonesian - at the level of the PKI and at the level of government. By late 1963, the PKI had become closely identified with the Chinese and was increasingly critical of the Soviet Union

although its internal approach to power was regarded as quasi-parliamentary and non-confrontational with the government - a line generally associated more with Soviet worldwide tactics than with those of the Chinese. The essential themes of disagreement with the Soviets were over the Asian communist view that the revolutionary situation was highly favorable in the former colonial world and in Southeast Asia in particular, that the leadership of the world revolutionary movement was passing from Russian to Asian hands, that the peasantry should be given relatively more weight compared to the industrial proletariat under Asian conditions, and that greater militancy was needed vis-a-vis the Western powers. More esoteric analyses of the Sino-Soviet conflict exist and they have their value but the underlying causes of conflict lay in this inter-related basket of issues, I believe, not in the ideological Talmudism (to use an old Soviet epithet) that served as the formal structure of debate.

These differences with the Soviets and identification with the Chinese also characterized the attitudes of Sukarno and the Indonesian government. The views of the Indonesian Government under Sukarno and those of the PKI were, in fact, virtually identical although there were rare occasions when a somewhat differentiated product was offered to public view. The Chinese, incidentally, were not really critical of PKI "peaceful" tactics vis a vis the Indonesian Government despite their general theoretical stance in favor of armed struggle. There was no reason to be since a leader committed to a communist future for Indonesia headed its government and was

gradually expanding his power to shape the course of events. Sukarno was also prepared - at least rhetorically to be as militant against the "imperialists" and their Asian "lackeys" as anyone and Sukarno ultimately proved to be even more militant internally than the PKI bureaucracy as a whole (although perhaps not more than Aidit and Njoto who were personally close to their Great Leader) in pressing for an early entry into the socialist stage.

By 1963 Sukarno had already come up with his theory of the "new emerging forces" or the "NEFOS" against the "old established forces" or "OLDEFOS". The latter were identical with "NEKOLIM" or neo-colonialism/imperialism and their leader was the United States. The jargon, like Nasakom, seemed peculiar to intellectual purists but it was similar to the communist world view that there are only two competing camps in the world; the Western and neutralist view of a "third world" between the West and the communist East was not a Soviet or Chinese view nor was it the view of Sukarno. This is not to say that Sukarno (or the Chinese) viewed the structure of the progressive camp in the same manner as the Soviets; he did not. But the general complexion of the two opposing camps was the same. Sukarno saw the NEFOs as consisting of all the communist countries, the former colonial and neo-colonial countries and "progressive" forces in the West including the United States. While this latter group was never specifically defined, it would consist of communist parties in the West, fellow travellers and all groups or individuals who opposed US support for the opponents of communist expansion. It also included forces that appeared disruptive of

Western society. Like Nasakom, the doctrine was flexible since the goal was to unite as wide a coalition against the United States and countries friendly to it as possible including groupings that would eventually be discarded into the OLDEFO category as the world revolution progressed. The concept was essentially that of a world-wide Nasakom although it was not called that until 1965.

Although relations had been generally friendly earlier because of parallel militancy against the West, the real blooming of Sino-Indonesian relations into a virtual partnership dates from the latter part of 1964. One reason for a certain distance earlier was that foreign policy parallelism was largely offset by chronic Indonesian mistreatment of its large indigenous Chinese population of several millions and the capacity of conservative elements in the Army or the Islamic-oriented segments of the elite to mobilize latent anti-Chinese feeling among the population as a brake on Sukarno's policies of alliance with Maoism. This had still worked during early Guided Democracy (and was to be a factor again after the failure of the September 30 movement) but the revolutionary momentum had become so strong and the non-communists so intimidated by 1964 that it could now be ignored. Malaysia and US involvement in Vietnam had also permitted a shift in identification of scapegoats on a massive scale. PKI-led demonstrations and book-burnings against US installations coupled with continuous hounding of any intellectual ties to the West by the BPI intelligence network were increasing in intensity and in their effect.<sup>(1)</sup> Following the Tavip speech of August 17, 1964, pressures on the US had mounted



steadily. The Peace Corps was already on the way out and the Jefferson Library in Yogyakarta had already been smashed three days before that speech on August 14. The Surabaya Consulate General had been attacked on September 9 and remained a steady focus of demonstrations thereafter (as did the Embassy in Jakarta and the Consulate in Medan). The USIS Cultural Center in Jakarta was seriously damaged on December 4 and the Surabaya cultural center was closed on December 7. The Indonesian-American Association, long beleaguered, closed in April, 1965. The Ford Foundation was forced out about the same time. The Embassy's utilities and mail service were periodically shut off from early 1965 on, ostensibly by PKI controlled unions but with the open support of the government. USIS was closed on March 5 and AID departed shortly thereafter except for a small residual staff required by statute to monitor utilization of AID funds. American businesses were being taken over, limited only by the difficulty of finding sufficiently qualified Indonesian specialists to handle the more technical aspects of often complex technologies. The new American Ambassador, Marshall Green, was insulted by Sukarno on his presentation of credentials in July and his house was surrounded by a mob of communist-led youth who harangued him on his return from the ceremony. Billboards lined the roads depicting America as the enemy of mankind in general and of Indonesia in particular and no speech was complete without an anti-US tirade.

Association with the West had become so dangerous that I told one of my best Indonesian friends in August not to see me anymore,

to save himself if he could. This man, Abu Bakar Lubis, was one of the bravest men I have ever known. He replied in terms I shall never forget. "I too expect Indonesia to be communist in a short while. But I will live my life, however short, as a free man. I will see whom I want to see, I have nothing to hide. If you don't come to see me, I'll come to see you and will do so openly," Lubis had been one of the lesser known student leaders who had applied pressure on Sukarno in 1945 to declare independence and, though PSI rather than Murba-oriented, was sufficiently respected by Adam Malik to become one of the latter's principal professional associates in the Foreign Ministry less than a year later. During the intervening months, his life, like that of many others, was often to be in great danger. On one occasion around October or November, 1965, I learned by accident that a PKI attack on Lubis' life was to be staged from a house down the street from his. I walked in pitch dark for half a mile through the curfew to his house but his wife told me that he had already received a warning and found temporary sanctuary with an Army officer relative.

To return from the atmosphere of terror at the personal level to the macro-political plane, the isolation and pillorying of the United States was only the opposite side of the coin to the development of the Chinese alliance. This alliance had already become of great value to China at the party level since the support of China by the third largest and most important communist party did much to overcome China's minority position in the world communist movement. Several Aidit theoretical positions had been adopted by the Chinese

and their allies - mainly North Vietnam and North Korea - as part of the emerging Asian communist ideology beginning with Aidit's categorization of four kinds of communist parties in September, 1963 and his invention of the concept or label of "modern dogmatists" which he applied to the Soviet side of the dispute.(2) This latter term had the advantage of supplementing the label of "modern revisionists" being applied to the Soviets by the Chinese and thereby countering the Soviet claim that its ideological enemies were "dogmatists". It implied a centrist or "correct" position that displayed neither the errors of leftist nor rightist deviation from the holy tenets of Marxism - Leninism. The most important Indonesian invention was yet to come, however, and that was the concept of the world countryside encircling the world city (Europe and America) that became Chinese gospel with the Lin Piao speech of September, 1965, a speech that seems clearly related to the anticipated early victory of communism in Indonesia. The Chinese themselves have noted that the Lin Piao concept came from Aidit formulations earlier in the year but it would be fair to add that Aidit's statements were essentially a restatement of Sukarno's concept of the New Emerging Forces overcoming the Old Established Forces. The innovative Marxist thinker, as usual, was Sukarno in spite of his tactical need and apparent joy in dressing up his ideas in novel language that would not subject him to a charge of being a communist at a premature stage of the Indonesian Revolution.

The Tavip speech in August, 1964, which marks the beginning of the final drive toward communism and alliance with China, had

been followed shortly by a Sukarno trip to Europe including the USSR and to several East Asian countries including Japan, North Korea, and China. Subandrio met with Chou En-lai at Shanghai in November, 1964 shortly after China's first successful nuclear bomb explosion in mid-October. As the Dutch writer, Antonie Dake, has correctly noted, some kind of arrangement must have been reached at this time for cooperation in the nuclear arena since Indonesia immediately began talking about its ability and intention to explode an atomic bomb in 1965. These remarks, which were stated most frequently by the Army chief of logistics, Brigadier General Hartono, were greeted with a great deal of amusement by Western officials at the time; it just seemed to prove again the ridiculous posturing of Sukarno's Indonesia which could not be taken all that seriously. In fact, this talk of a nuclear capacity demonstrated the remarkable closeness that was developing between the two countries. It also appears that the Chinese first broached the idea of arming the PKI, that is the development of an Indonesian fifth armed force, at this time and they may have given preliminary indications of a willingness to equip such a force. In any event, this trip was soon followed by a trip to Jakarta of Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi. This was still in November, 1964. The Chen Yi trip resulted in an offer of a 50 million dollar Chinese credit but undoubtedly covered a variety of subjects including nuclear cooperation and supplying arms to the PKI. Subandrio followed up with a well publicized visit to Peking in late January, 1965 accompanied by Njoto of the PKI. The public statements on both sides projected effusive praise of each

other and claimed that the United States was increasingly isolated in Asia.(3) More important, it appears that Indonesia was offered an additional 30 million dollars in economic assistance to go with the 50 million dollars from the Chen Yi trip and that China also made a concrete offer to supply 100,000 small arms for a fifth armed force.(4) Implementation was worked out over the succeeding months, largely through secret trips to China by the Air Force commander, Omar Dani. According to Robert Shaplen, Subandrio told a group of Indonesian diplomats in New York in mid-December that Indonesia's strategy was one of alliance with China, separation of the United States and Great Britain to the degree possible and elimination of all Western bases in Southeast Asia. Vietnam was also seen as a means of access to the Malay peninsula, according to this presentation.(5)

The gigantic celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Bandung Conference offered another opportunity for top level meetings to be held in Jakarta between Chou En-lai and Sukarno, Subandrio and Aidit (as well as other Asian communist leaders such as Kim Il-Sung and Pham Van Dong). Sukarno's speech dwelled on the anticipated retreat of imperialism from East Asia, lauded the Dien Bien Phu victory that had preceded Bandung ten years earlier, predicted a new Dien Bien Phu in the offing, and launched the idea of a Conference of New Emerging Forces (CONEFO) for the following year, a conference that would build on the momentum from the second Afro-Asia Conference scheduled for mid-1965. Chou praised Sukarno as a great revolutionary leader and lauded his

concepts of Nasakom and Panca Sila. Several private meetings between Chou and Sukarno over a period of a week were reported in the Indonesian press at the time and it seems likely that China's approval of the CONEFO idea was obtained at that time. Chinese material support for the Conference was promised and shipments of Chinese building materials were alleged to be intended as a vehicle for introducing supplies of arms to the fifth armed force. Despite rumors at the time, it is not clear that this actually took place before September 30.

Sukarno's plans and those of the Chinese suffered a momentary setback in late June of 1965 when the sudden overthrow of Ben Bella in Algeria required postponement of the Second Afro-Asian Conference until November 5. Since many of the principals including Sukarno and Chou En-lai had already gathered in Cairo enroute to Algiers, where the conference was to be held, the last minute coup d'etat by Boumedienne wrecked hopes for rousing the Afro-Asian nations into support for the Sino-Indonesian revolutionary offensive and for isolating the moderate non-aligned countries led by India and Yugoslavia. Some observers at the time believed that Sukarno was not very happy with the idea of such a second Bandung Conference in another country because it might divert attention from his Conference of the New Emerging Forces for the following year. This view appears erroneous, however. The Indonesians themselves had continually asserted their support for both events and had claimed that there was no conflict between them. Indeed, one of Sukarno's main objectives at Algiers was to

have been a drumming up of support for CONEFO. A major conference where he was present to exert his personal influence would have been ideal to that end, particularly since he expected to be one of the principal figures in Algiers and would have been supported in that role by the Chinese and their allies. The latter included Ayub Khan of Pakistan, still an ally of the United States to some degree. While there was no ideological affinity between Pakistan and China, their common enmity toward India made them allies of convenience. The outbreak of war between India and Pakistan in September, a war in which Indonesia as well as China passionately supported Pakistan, was evidence of the practical basis for these affinities. The postponement of the Second Afro-Asian Conference was followed by a joint communique by Sukarno, Chou, Ayub and Nasser in Cairo and then by a lengthy trip of Subandrio through Africa to solicit support for a radical "New Emerging Forces" bloc and for CONEFO, in particular.

The presence of Sukarno, Subandrio, Aidit, and Njoto in Cairo at the same time as Chou En-lai and his Chinese delegation obviously provided an opportunity to discuss not only the Afro-Asian Conference (which was rescheduled for October, 1965 but never held) but their common revolutionary strategy in Southeast Asia. There would also have been an opportunity to apprise the Chinese of Sukarno's thinking about how and when to enter the socialist stage including the way to deal with the specific problem of recalcitrant generals. There is no evidence to this effect, however, and it would be surprising if there were. Aidit alone went on to

China but only after a rather prolonged visit to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (he attended a Romanian Party Congress). While in the USSR, Aidit reportedly engaged in some acerbic exchanges with Suslov, the chief Soviet ideologue and a key figure in the overthrow of Khrushchev in late 1964. Aidit's assessment of the prospects for some movement by the new Soviet leaders toward Asian communist viewpoints may have been one motive; another was undoubtedly the joint desire of Sukarno and Aidit to maintain some kind of relationship with the Soviets as a future source of material assistance, as a still useful political ally of sorts against the United States, and, ultimately, as a hedge against China in unforeseen future circumstances. These were very secondary considerations in the atmosphere *of* mid-1965, however, and Aidit left his restrained reception in the USSR to bask in the warmth of the Chinese embrace. His sojourn in the Asian communist countries was cut short, however, by a summons from Sukarno, whether because of the latter's medical problem alone or, more likely, because of a need to consult as well on the major internal developments that were soon to unfold. However short the stay in China, collaboration must have been intense on both the general political/military offensive against the West and on the specific Indonesian plans for bringing the national democratic revolution to an early successful conclusion.

Close connections were also proceeding at the governmental level. A Chinese parliamentary delegation was in Indonesia in early August, giving rise to a renewed statement by its official host, parliamentary speaker Arudji Kartawinata, that Indonesia would



soon explode an atomic bomb.(6) Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi came to Jakarta for the annual Indonesian national day and met with Subandrio and other Indonesian leaders.(7) The exchange of delegations between the two countries was to reach a crescendo on the eve of the September 30 affair largely because of the desirability of showing a considerable Indonesian presence at the Chinese national day celebration on October 1. Twelve separate Indonesian delegations were in China at that time including an MPRS delegation headed by its Chairman and Deputy Prime Minister, Chaerul Saleh, and including Ali Sastroamidjojo and Wilujo Puspojudo (there were also several ministers including Brigadier General Sukendro who was reportedly on the September 30 Movement's hit list (8) and the Minister of Light Industry, a general named Andi Jusuf known for his earlier effectiveness in dealing with the Darul Islam rebel movement in Sulawesi). Other visiting government groups included a delegation from the new Indonesian National Defense Institute headed by Wilujo Puspojudo, a 61 member Air Force Academy group and a parliamentary delegation. The PKI delegation was large but curiously was headed by a man well below Politburo rank, Sidik Kertapati (a Politburo member, Jusuf Adjitorop, was also present but only because he had been living in Peking for more than a year). Given past levels of PKI representation and the obvious current euphoria over Sino-Indonesian relations, the absence of any top PKI figure can only be explained by a PKI decision to have its entire top leadership available in Indonesia for the critical events about to unfold. It is also inconceivable that the Chinese leadership would not

be told the reason for Aidit's absence on October 1, or assuming that could be explained, for the inability to send a leading deputy. It should be quite clear, however, that the Chinese knew what to expect. In fact, as the September 30 movement struck on the morning of October 1, the Chinese leadership showed itself to be remarkably well informed in passing along information to the top Indonesian delegations. The Chinese national holiday was to have been not only a celebration of the past victory of communism on the Chinese mainland; it was to coincide with a far-reaching new victory that would add Southeast Asia's largest nation to the ranks of revolutionary communism. Unfortunately for the celebrants, initial elation was to turn to the despondency of impending defeat long before that day was to pass.

The Sino-Indonesian alliance was more than that, of course. It was the core of a league of all the Asian communist parties and states plus kindred souls who could be brought into the anti-Western front on the basis of their perceptions of the interests of their states. Norodom Sihanouk's Cambodia was thus proclaimed by Sukarno to be one of the five members of the Pyongyang-Peking-Hanoi-Phnom Penh-Jakarta axis that became a major new tenet of Sukarno's speeches in the final period of 1965 leading up to the abortive effort to enter the socialist stage. Sihanouk had apparently become convinced that the only hope of salvaging an independent or relatively independent Cambodia under his leadership in an East Asia that seemed to him to be destined for a communist future was accommodation with the Vietnamese and Chinese communists. His

anti-Western diatribes of this period were scarcely distinguishable from those out of Hanoi, Peking and Jakarta and he later provided facilities and sanctuary to North Vietnamese forces fighting in South Vietnam. He did not favor accommodation with the Khmer Rouge, however, and seemed to look with secret favor on a counter-balance to the North Vietnamese. Whatever Sihanouk's real thoughts, Phnom Penh was deemed a worthy member of the new communist-oriented axis, perhaps in part because it provided some "Nasakom" flavor. Pakistan, it will be noted, was not labeled a member of the axis but a great effort was made to court that country, primarily through Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then somewhat rakishly leftist Foreign Minister, rather than through Ayub, but this relationship was clearly based on the enmity for India being expressed by all the "axis" members, but especially by China and Indonesia.

The axis, nevertheless, was more than a matter of convenience, it expressed Sukarno's strong identification with a radically anti-Western Communist China and his own belief that the Indonesia of the "socialist stage" would at last be free to proclaim openly its communist orientation, albeit an eclectic and Indonesia-centric communism that would simultaneously be both Marxist-Leninist and Marxist-Sukarnoist, to use the new slogan of Asmara Hadi.

## Footnotes - Chapter X

1. When USIA was withdrawn in early 1965, the departing Cultural Attache asked me to maintain a liaison between some of Indonesia's leading intellectuals and counterparts in the United States and Western Europe. These exchanges were in no way political or illegitimate by any normal standard but they had to be conducted through a diplomatic intermediary or the Indonesians would be cut off entirely from Western thought. I soon found that my new Indonesian intellectual contacts wanted the exchange to go on but were afraid to invite me to their homes or to be seen with a foreigner. Our meetings soon took on a semi-clandestine character which was necessary to protect these people and to allay their fears. It is paradoxical that, in totalitarian societies, legitimate Foreign Service officers are compelled by the environment to appear as furtive as intelligence officers if they are not to be reduced to office-bound ciphers while, in the West, KGB intelligence officers can take on more of the aura of straight forward diplomats because of the openness of their host societies. The line between the normal diplomat and the intelligence officer is imprecise, in any case. Both seek information or "intelligence" about what is going on and would like to influence developments in ways favorable to their country. The intelligence officer is prepared to obtain that information through agents who become clandestine employees with formal

reporting responsibilities generally determined on a contractual basis while the diplomat seeks the information through interviews; normal business contacts, social friendships, etc., and through attention to public speeches, the press, etc. Journalists tend to be closer to the latter category in methodology although there are important differences. Their access to confidential information may often be less since an interviewed party may fear disclosure more but the journalist may also receive information precisely because of the desirability of a leak to the public rather than to a friendly government. Journalists may also appear at some events where a diplomat's presence would be politically unwise. On the other hand, they may be excluded from events where a diplomat is welcome.

2. Cited by Dake, pp 257-258.
3. Harian Rakjat, January 27, 1965.
4. Dake, p. 333. Also Brackman, p 46. Both based on trial testimony. Earlier Indonesian Army interrogation reports to the same effect are cited in the CIA report "The Coup That Backfired".
5. Robert Shaplen, Time Out of Hand (New York, Harper and Row) 1969 p.80
6. Warta Bhakti, August 9, 1965.
7. Warta Bhakti August 19 and 21, 1965.
8. General Sukendro, a member of Yani's small "brain trust", was regarded widely as a politically sophisticated anti-communist

officer who had once been close to Nasution. An intelligence officer, he had been a leading figure in organizing the Democratic League in 1960 and was more or less exiled abroad to an attache job soon thereafter. Sukendro was brought back to Indonesia by Sukarno in 1964, a rather curious development, and began to play a role in the leadership of the IP-KI party which, it will be recalled, had been placed under the authority of a prominent communist stooge, Mrs. Aminah Hidajat. Sukendro was then given a minister without portfolio assignment. Although Sukendro appears to have been able to stay in the good graces of Sukarno by playing something of a double game, he presumably remained primarily an Army loyalist who had the confidence of General Yani.

9. Indonesia, The Coup That Backfired, p.2 46.

# XI

## Testimony and Reports

### Concerning the Plotting of a Coup

In the previous four chapters, I have reviewed the overt record of developments in 1965 that led up to the so-called September 30 Movement coup. I believe this open public record of the period provides the best basis for an understanding of what the so-called coup was all about - an essentially limited operation designed by Sukarno to get rid of a few recalcitrant generals in order to clear the road for entry into the socialist stage. Once successfully accomplished, Sukarno could have proceeded with a Nasakom cabinet, established a commissar system and a "fifth armed force" to gain full control over the military and proceed with his external alliance with radical Asian communism, as exemplified at that time by Peking. How soon he would have proclaimed entry into the socialist stage after the successful purging of the army leadership is unclear but it would have been soon since Sukarno's speeches had shown an impatience to do it "soon" and to come out openly with a commitment to a communist future for Indonesia. The evidence embodied in the "Mahmilub trial testimony, other confessions or alleged confessions, and the reports and rumors that were received by myself and others, must also be examined in addition to the public record that has been analyzed in the preceding chapters. The validity

of this kind of information must obviously be questioned by the reader as well as by the author since the motives for its dissemination are varied. The Army and other political elements certainly wanted to paint as black a picture of the PKI as possible and every effort was made to demonstrate PKI complicity. That was not difficult, however, since the public record clearly demonstrates such a complicity in spite of a belated PKI cover story that was too eagerly accepted by some outsiders. Some of these outsiders were, at least subconsciously, more sympathetic to the PKI and Sukarno than to the Indonesian army. Their motivation was sometimes a matter of political affinity but often it was something else - either a feeling that a lifetime of intellectual and professional investment in an important subject had gone down the drain or the unfortunate tendency in some quarters to applaud any foreign political movement that castigated the United States, however totalitarian and oppressive it might be. The fact that there was an Army interest in pinning the blame on the PKI should be taken into account but that proper skepticism should not serve as an excuse to ignore investigatory evidence when it supplements and helps to shed light on what transpired.

The role of Sukarno should be treated somewhat differently in the examination of this material since the dominant trend of Army thinking was to protect Sukarno's reputation. Although his sympathy for the September 30 Movement and his hostility to the Army leadership was undisguised, the Army leaders initially hoped to retain Sukarno as a national symbol and to cover up his involvement to the degree possible. Indeed, they did not want to believe it at first



since, infected as they were with the propaganda that had increasingly infused the society since 1957-58, their opposition was like that of the Sukarnoism movement of 1964. They wanted to redefine Sukarno to be the Sukarno they wanted, that is the leader of a non-communist Indonesian nationalism based on "Panca Sila". If only Sukarno would have complied, even after his assault on the Army leadership, he would have gladly been retained as the pre-eminent national hero and "father" to them all. It is true, of course, that the victorious non-communist camp was not monolithic and that certain elements, both civilian and military, would like to have discredited Sukarno once they began to suspect his involvement and his vulnerability. That did not begin to manifest itself at first, however, and the trial testimony generally suffers from distortion in the direction of protecting Sukarno, rather than the contrary, in my view. Testimony or purported testimony that was never officially released but which has leaked out is logically subject to stronger suspicions of being unfairly aimed at Sukarno, perhaps by a more "hard-line" anti-Sukarno clique in the military. This could apply, of course, to the testimony of Marine Colonel Bambang Widjanarko, who was Sukarno's principal military aide and who figures strongly as a witness on the degree of Sukarno's involvement in this chapter. My own view is that this testimony basically rings true for it generally coincides and supplements what is otherwise known. It is true that there is an air of bragging and therefore possible overstatement as to how much Bambang could have known. Perhaps this was caused by his own desire to inflate his importance and

perhaps it also reflected an effort by the interrogation team to add material gathered from other sources or to make a better case. Even with these potential drawbacks, the material must be considered as invaluable evidence because it does shed additional light on the proceedings and the motives and it comes from a source who was in a unique position to observe Sukarno at close range.

Bambang Widjanarko's testimony and that of many others indicate that talk of a "general's council" was already rife in Palace circles in the first half of 1965 and that Sukarno questioned Yani on this point in May.<sup>(1)</sup> Yani supposedly responded that there was indeed a general's council that dealt with senior Army promotions but he said there was no political body aimed at opposing Sukarno. This was somewhat disingenuous (and also typically Javanese) in that Yani must have known that Sukarno was aware of Yani's "brain trust" and had that in mind. Since it does not appear that the "brain trust" contemplated action against Sukarno but was simply trying to deal with Sukarno's revolutionary offensive, Yani may have felt that his response was honest enough. Certainly there is nothing surprising about the leader of an organization seeking political advice under the conditions of massive political upheaval then underway. It does seem likely that the "brain trust" decided to maintain the existing Army policy of playing for time - of keeping the PKI in check to the extent possible until Sukarno should pass from the scene but to do nothing overt against him or his political course as long as he was there. This would explain their ready verbal acceptance of the new Tri Ubaya Sakti doctrine and of their lip service to Nasakom and the

"revolution" as well as their later decision to hold firm in practice against the imposition of Nasakom advisory councils and a fifth armed force but to do so by indirect means. Their whole posture was defensive and aimed at holding the line only on what was absolutely essential for maintaining the Army's integrity and capacity to resist in the more distant future when they could deal with a PKI unprotected by Sukarno.

This same testimonial material also confirms what was in the press about Sukarno and Subandrio presenting the Gilchrist document material to the four military commanders (Yani, Martadinata, Dani and Sutjipto) in May, at the same time, incidentally, as Sukarno's public embrace of Aidit and the PKI at the latter's 45th anniversary celebration. However, the trial material adds nothing of real importance other than raising the question of whether Sukarno and Subandrio were claiming that the document was found in the British Embassy in 1963 or at Bill Palmer's house in 1965. Bambang's testimony is probably correct that the first version was being told to the Army leaders since it was at least somewhat more credible while the other version was purely fuel for the propaganda campaign against the United States. The fact that this imperialist "plot" was supposed to be aimed at the assassination of Yani as well as Sukarno and Subandrio also supports a view that Sukarno was still hoping to get Yani to go along at this point and that Sukarno was not yet committed to a violent solution. The same testimony indicates that Sukarno was already particularly angry with Generals Parman

and Soetojo of Yani's staff. Both were to be victims of the September 30 Movement.

The next act in the drama, if we are to believe Bambang Widjanarko's testimony, is a meeting in Bali on June 6 which was Sukarno's birthday.<sup>(2)</sup> The interrogation report implies that there was a great deal of other testimony from Sukarno's entire staff and coterie that has never come out since the interrogators refer to information from other sources and ask Bambang about its validity. In this case, Subandrio, Saleh, Leimena, Jusuf Muda Dalam (the pro-PKI President of the national bank), General Sabur and several minor characters were present for a Sukarno meeting with General Sjafiuddin, the regional military commander for Bali and the Lesser Sunda Islands. Not only Sjafiuddin, but the Governor of Bali and the police chief of the region (who were also at the meeting) were all well-known as pro-communist officials. Sukarno, according to Bambang's testimony, began with a discourse on the Jakarta-Peking axis and solicited Sjafiuddin's comments. The latter was supportive, of course, but then noted that different foreign policy themes seemed to animate the top Army leadership which made it difficult for subordinate commanders (like Sjafiuddin) to know what to do. Under Sukarno's encouragement, Sjafiuddin soon allowed as how there were some groups in the Army who were loyal to the President and his policies and some who were not. If that were true, observed the Great Leader, some changes would have to be made in the Army's top command. Sukarno then charged Sjafiuddin with investigating and reporting to him further while Subandrio chimed in

that Yani should be summoned and questioned. Bambang Widjanarko says that Sjafiuddin subsequently called at the Palace several times in the weeks and months that followed for personal discussions with Sukarno. On one occasion, Sukarno indicated that Yani would need to be replaced and solicited Sjafiuddin's views on a successor. The latter reportedly proposed General Mursjid, Yani's principal deputy but a man not in Yani's "brain trust". I should note at this point that I have seen an unrelated report concerning a meeting of Yani with the regional Army commanders a couple of months earlier in which Sjafiuddin had rather smugly spoken about his warm personal relationship and occasional meetings with Sukarno whenever the latter came to Bali. Sjafiuddin asked Yani's views on such meetings with the President. Yani was obviously annoyed. However, he had little choice but to say that he had no objection but he added that he wanted "full reports" from subordinates on their meetings with the President.

This reported meeting in Bali appears plausible to me since its timing accords with the public record and it also reflects the known attitudes of the participants. This account would appear to show, however, that Sukarno was already thinking of replacing Yani about six weeks before his July 25 speech to the PNI at which he praised the commitment of the 1926 PKI to violence as the only way to achieve revolutionary success. In Bali, Sukarno was obviously leading Sjafiuddin on in a way that encouraged this leftist general to say things that Sukarno was already thinking. No mention was made of the means by which Yani would be removed but I believe the drift

of this conversation shows that Sukarno was already thinking of some kind of surgical strike against Yani and other non-communist Army leaders even though the thinking may not have gone very far in detail at this point. It is somewhat surprising that such a conversation would be carried on in such a large company (and this is true of the other Bambang observations) but it was Sukarno's established habit to deal with people in a large court-like setting. There was much of the medieval Javanese sultan in Sukarno's makeup and style and he also appears to have acquired a certain sense of omnipotence and belief in his own destiny. The entire course of events smacks of a belief that nothing could possibly go wrong; a belief in his own destiny as the heaven - ordained messianic Ratu Adil of ancient Javanese prophecy meshed perfectly in this respect with the Marxist belief in the inevitable progress of history from lower to higher stages. Now there was to be the glorious entry into the building of socialism fulfilling the historic mission of a man who was simultaneously the voice of the common people, the Great Leader of the Revolution, the embodiment of Javanese quasi-religious tradition and the Indonesian Lenin.

Another interesting behind-the-scenes event reportedly occurred in July. This was a meeting between Sukarno and General Ibrahim Adjie, commander of the famous Siliwangi Division in Bandung. The report, which was said to be "unconfirmed", appears in the early CIA study called "The Coup that Backfired".(3) It says in essence that Sukarno approached Adjie and told him that Yani and other generals were plotting a coup against him. Sukarno then promised

Adjie that he could have Yani's job as commander-in-chief of the Army if Adjie helped to preserve order after Yani and the other generals were arrested. There was no mention of PKI involvement (Adjie, it will be recalled, had the reputation of being fanatically devoted to Sukarno but strongly opposed to the PKI) or of any intention to kill the generals. Adjie reportedly agreed and the deal was settled. Adjie was given a medal and the Siliwangi Division came in for praise in Sukarno's August 17 speech. Adjie stated publicly at this time that he would obey Sukarno no matter what happened. I never saw the above mentioned report prior to reading the CIA study some years later but I had always believed that Adjie had been bought off somehow and that the plot logically had to be based on an assumption that the Army's crack division, which surrounded Jakarta, would not move against the September 30 Movement. The Siliwangi division did not move, in fact, until the issue had been decided by local forces and Sukarno had fled from Halim air base to Bogor on the night of October 1. My suspicion that Adjie and the Siliwangi division had been neutralized in the September 30 affair was also based on reports that reached the Embassy in October 1965 that Sukarno had followed up the Army's refusal to accept the pro-communist Pranoto as Yani's replacement by advancing the name of Adjie as a compromise. This proposal was reportedly made during Sukarno's meeting with the surviving Army leadership on October 2 but was rejected by Suharto. It is also known that Adjie refused Suharto's orders to send Siliwangi units to the capital at first, arguing that he would have to get the President's

permission first. Adjie was certainly never trusted by the Army after this but was eventually sent off to Europe as an Ambassador. It should also be noted that pro-communist officers had been infiltrated into certain senior staff positions in the Siliwangi as a further guarantee of its neutralization. The CIA study holds that this reported conversation "is about the best evidence we have that Sukarno was genuinely concerned about the possibility of an Army coup". I believe the reported conversation to be likely since it or something like it must have occurred before any detailed planning could proceed to eliminate the Army leadership. Otherwise, the whole effort would have been foredoomed from the start since a Siliwangi loyal to the Army command could have crushed a local capital coup easily. However, I do not believe this conversation would demonstrate that Sukarno was "genuinely concerned" about an Army coup. On the contrary, it seems to me that Sukarno had determined to get rid of the recalcitrant generals for his own reasons - to impose his commissar system, create a fifth armed force, and, in general, to remove the impediments toward entering the socialist stage. For Sukarno, the obvious approach to Adjie was to provide the best rationale possible for taking such drastic action against the Army leaders and to base the contemplated action on alleged disloyalty against the head of state. This was the natural follow through to the Gilchrist documents ploy, the whole burden of which had been to allege foreign "imperialist" plotting with dissident Indonesian generals. The timing of the meeting with Adjie is not given but it was presumably sometime between Sukarno's return from Cairo on



July 8 and his speech to the PNI on July 28. The emphasis in the latter speech on a violent solution to revolutionary problems may very well have reflected Sukarno's belief that his recent success in managing to get Adjie on board meant that he could now turn to more realistic planning for the physical removal of the Army leadership that stood in the way of his commitment to enter the socialist stage in the near future.

The next two developments that were unpublicized at the time occurred on August 4, that is about ten days after the PNI speech. I regard these two developments as related. One of them, though unpublicized, was widely known on the Jakarta rumor mill circuit at the time and it forms the basis for considerable trial testimony as to PKI motivations. This was the reported illness of Sukarno on or about August 4 (there is some confusion on the exact date among the sources and authorities). The second event has only been reported in the testimony of Bambang Widjanarko but, if true, it is of the utmost significance since it ties Sukarno to direct plotting with Untung before or during Sukarno's supposed illness, before Aidit's return from China and before the various contacts between the PKI Special Bureau headed by Sjam and the September 30 group including Untung. As discussed in more detail later, the PKI Special Bureau, a clandestine unit under Aidit's direct control for infiltration of the Indonesian military, was to become the channel for operational control of the strike forces under Untung and Supardjo. Sukarno's reported illness will be discussed first.

Sukarno was supposed to have suffered a mild stroke on the evening of August 3 and rumors abounded that he was near death.(4) Aidit returned abruptly from China on August 6. He had been scheduled to remain abroad another week and the rest of his delegation did go on to Hanoi and at least a portion of it went on to Tirana. Aidit came back with a team of Chinese doctors in a special plane supplied by the Chinese. Accompanied by the Chinese doctors, he met with Sukarno in Bogor on August 9. Sukarno had travelled to Bogor that day and returned to Jakarta on August 10. Most of the trial testimony indicates that Aidit met with the PKI Politburo shortly thereafter and told them that Sukarno was in grave condition and that the PKI would have to act before he died. Politburo approval was obtained and everything was left to Aidit to implement, making use of Sjam and his Special Bureau. The latter supposedly then mobilized the Untung group only in early September.

As will be seen, there is considerable question as to whether Sukarno was sick at all on this occasion or, if he was, whether the illness was not intentionally blown out of all proportion as part of the PKI/Sukarno tactics to provide a rationale for action to the bit players. The illness story later fitted into the Army interest to focus the blame on the PKI while covering up the degree of Sukarno's involvement. In my judgment, it has also been misinterpreted by many Western writers as the key factor that propelled the PKI to take action. All of this is not to say that Sukarno's health was not a factor in a deeper and broader sense. Sukarno had a major chronic kidney problem, having lost one kidney already and having the remaining

kidney in potential serious trouble. He had visited a prominent kidney specialist in Vienna in the fall of 1964 and was told that a large stone would have to be removed soon from his remaining diseased kidney or that he would die within a year or two.(5) This information must have had a powerful effect on Sukarno and his leading followers back in Jakarta since Subandrio made some curious comments at this time about Sukarno's health which he later attempted to disavow. Sukarno did not agree to the recommended operation, however, perhaps because of a fear that he would die in surgery (It has been suggested by some observers that Sukarno's fear was based on a mystical prediction many years earlier that he would ultimately die by the knife; while such an explanation accords with the significance of mysticism in the Javanese psyche and may have served as a rationalization for inaction, the underlying cause of that inaction was probably a more basic physical fear which could have inhibited anyone and particularly someone like Sukarno who never had much of a reputation for physical courage). The Vienna diagnosis in late 1964 probably influenced Sukarno toward speeding up the revolutionary process and thus may account in part for his eagerness a few months later to "enter the socialist stage" soon. The validity of this general impact of the health question is not the same as the narrow question of an alleged stroke in August, however.

I recall that the reaction of several of us in the American Embassy when we heard the health rumors at the time was one of profound skepticism. We noted that there was a tendency to leak health rumors about Sukarno when he was applying great pressure

for political change on the theory that any inclination of the Army to act would be undercut, by the Army's chronic posture of waiting until after Sukarno's departure before making a move. The rumors of illness would thus reinforce the Army's predisposition toward procrastination. We were right to be skeptical but for reasons that were more profound than we thought. According to the limited information available, Sukarno complained of chest pains on the evening of August 3 and claimed to have such pains on three occasions that evening and twice on August 4.(6) He was examined by his Indonesian doctor and given an electrocardiogram that evening and another on August 4. These reportedly "showed no evidence of coronary thrombosis ....(and) the physicians treating the President concluded that he had had five attacks of coronary insufficiency but no coronary infarct". This verdict was apparently given after consultation among Sukarno's full medical team which comprised both Indonesian doctors and a resident team of four Chinese physicians (Aidit brought two additional Chinese doctors on his return two days later). There was also no apparent evidence of kidney complications although Sukarno's Viennese kidney specialist, Dr. Fellingner, was informed. Antonie Dake reports in his book, In the Spirit of the Red Banteng, that he interviewed Sukarno's principal Indonesian doctor, Dr. Rubiono Kertopati and former Deputy Prime Minister Johannes Leimena, a medical doctor by training, some years later. They stated that the Indonesian doctors diagnosed the attack as not of lasting effect.(7) Nasution said that he thought the symptoms reported to him (sudden onset, vomiting, aches and pains and

tiredness) sounded like an attack of severe influenza that was going around in Jakarta at the time.(8) Sukarno was reportedly still in bed on August 6 but was active on August 8 and went to Bogor on August 9 where he met Aidit and the new Chinese doctors. Sukarno's national day speech on August 17 was long and physically demanding but it was delivered with his usual vigor and fire.

The significant bit of information from Colonel Bambang Widjanarko raises great questions about the illness, particularly when we see the vagueness of the reported symptoms, the lack of confirmatory medical evidence from the doctors, and the quickness of Sukarno's recovery (he was never more active than he was to be over the next six weeks). Bambang Widjanarko was asked by his Army interrogators about information they had received from three other Palace sources (Suratni, Sukarti and Amanda Jacobs) that Untung had visited Sukarno in his bedroom on August 4. Bambang confirmed this visit and said that Untung had been accompanied by General Sabur, Untung's superior as commander of the Tjakrabirawa Regiment of palace guards. According to Bambang's testimony, Sukarno asked Untung if he were "prepared to accept orders that measures were to be taken against disloyal Army generals". Untung is said to have agreed.(9)

There are no further details but, if valid, this evidence has sensational importance. It shows that Sukarno was directly involved with Untung at an early stage (before Aidit and Sjam, the head of the PKI Special Bureau). It also strongly implies that the whole Sukarno illness story was a convenient cover for the early planning and

consultations for the plot to get rid of the generals. These were, of course, busy times for Sukarno and the PKI leaders, especially Njoto, who also had to prepare Sukarno's major annual national day speech less than two weeks in the future. I do not feel absolutely certain that Bambang Widjanarko, as Sukarno's adjutant, would have had access to such an important meeting as this and one that would presumably require great secrecy. But I do feel that the document would reflect the army investigation's conclusions about the affair even if they were putting words in Bambang's mouth. Furthermore, Bambang Widjanarko was extremely forceful in making this point; after the first day of interrogation, the point was repeated twice in subsequent interrogation sessions.(10) Neither the Army nor anyone else has attempted to exploit this testimony. It was never released publicly but only leaked to Dutch contacts who published it in the Netherlands and who did not seem to perceive the doubt it cast on the whole illness story. Dake cites it in his book but believed that the illness only occurred on August 4 sometime after the Untung meeting.(11) He concluded that Sukarno's alleged illness was brought on by stress over such a heady meeting.

The whole business of the timing of the illness is rather confused, moreover, and this causes further doubt as to whether it really occurred. The CIA report sets the timing of its occurrence as the evening of August 3 and shows much more detail than the other accounts, thereby indicating that it was based on considerable detailed information from supposedly good inside sources. Several others in addition to Dake report the attack to have occurred on

August 4 while the official Indonesian chroniclers of the "coup", Nugroho Notosusanto and Ismail Saleh, say that Sukarno collapsed on August 5.(12) One would have thought that they, more than anyone else, would have had access to precise information. Rex Mortimer puts the date of the attack as August 6.(13) My conclusion is that the Indonesian sources didn't have their story straight for the simple reason that there was either no attack or that it was so minor that it was not medically significant.

It was significant politically, however, for here, I believe, we have the beginning of Sukarno's first concrete steps toward actually launching the September 30 movement. Aidit, and the PKI were then brought into the plot and I am quite prepared to believe that much of the liaison, detailed planning, etc. was carried out through the Special Bureau of the PKI. (Actually it appears from the Subandrio Trial testimony that both Aidit and Njoto were sent telegrams on July 31 at Sukarno's order to return at once from abroad. Njoto did so but Aidit delayed for several days. Sukarno claimed that he had only recalled Njoto at that point but Subandrio insisted that instructions were sent to Aidit as well). Use of the PKI as the channel for executing the plot is understandable because that channel was regarded as highly secret and skilled in clandestine operations. It is neither the first nor the last time that excessive faith was placed in the competence of an organization specializing in clandestine operations, of course. Sjam said later at his trial, and said it with great pride, that he had been the principal figure. Whether based on ego gratification or his own limited knowledge of the grand design,

Sjam was seriously in error. He was a supporting player who came into the performance well after the first act had been completed. Like Untung, Supardjo and the others, he was a professional executioner under a plan that was highly compartmentalized but which was executed on the instructions of what Dake correctly calls the "Dalang" or puppet master, the Great Leader of the Revolution himself, Sukarno.

Before turning to the evidence concerning the involvement of the PKI in the plot which followed shortly after Aidit's return from China, a digression should be made concerning another practical aspect of Sukarno's drive to enter the socialist stage, namely the grand purge of the PNI. Rex Mortimer's book speaks of growing resentment in the Central Java PNI led by Hadisubeno against PKI inroads and particularly against the communist led land reform agitation.<sup>(14)</sup> He says this stand of Hadisubeno was supported by "a determinedly anti-Communist group around former Deputy Prime Minister Hardi". Mortimer notes past Sukarno impatience with the PNI's lack of radicalism and loss of mass backing and says he then put pressure on the PNI to purge this group in "mid-1965". Noting testimony by PKI Politburo member Sudisman at his trial in 1967 that the army leaders met in June, 1965 with the PNI leadership in an unsuccessful attempt to gain PNI cooperation against the PKI, Mortimer held that this consultation "may well have triggered Sukarno's counteraction". Mortimer also cites a Dutch journalist's interview in August-September, 1965 to the effect that Hardi acknowledged that "he had been assured that the Army would act in



time to crush the PKI". I do not find it unreasonable to believe that the specific facts are true as stated, that is that some efforts took place around June, 1965 on the part of Army leaders to encourage PNI resistance to the PKI. Mortimer's conclusions that Sukarno decided to purge the PNI because of any such Army-PNI meetings in June, 1965 are erroneous, however. This view overlooks the fact that Sukarno had begun his campaign to expel the "false Marhaenists" three months earlier, that is in March, 1965 during his two presentations to a gathering of PNI cadres at that time (and in conjunction with the beginning of his campaign to enter the socialist stage). Indeed, Hadisubeno had already been informally deposed by June although his final legal expulsion did not take place until August. Furthermore, Hardi and Isnaeni, the two main PNI figures in the central PNI apparatus who were purged, hardly sounded like they were "determinedly anti-Communist". Isnaeni, in particular, had been one of the more radical sounding PNI leaders throughout 1964 and early 1965 although his radical rhetoric may have been protective coloration, of course. They were purged primarily because they opposed the ouster of Hadisubeno and what would have amounted to the destruction of the Nationalist Party's Central Java base. Even Hadisubeno, as I have indicated earlier, kept telling friends in mid-1965 almost up to the day of his final expulsion in August, that Sukarno just couldn't be intending to include people like him in his attacks on "false Marhaenists". Hadisubeno professed to believe that Sukarno must have communist infiltrators (like Surachman) in mind. The importance of this diversion from the main

story is that it is essential to understand that all the initiative was coming from Sukarno as part of his plan to enter the socialist stage and that occasional efforts of the non-communists to find some way to stop this drive toward their impending destruction were not only defensive but largely ineffectual. There was no "triggering" of a Sukarno reaction; he was simply being relentless and consistent in his pursuit of his revolutionary objectives. He did not even display much hatred or other emotion toward the victims; they were simply impediments in the path of the revolution and were treated almost mechanically as inanimate objects to be brushed out of the way. Sukarno even appointed Mrs. Hardi to a position as Deputy Minister of Culture in mid-year, a sign that no personal animus against Hardi was involved, if he would only agree to the revamping of the Central Java PNI into a pliable tool of the Ali/Surachman leadership and hence an echo of the PKI. Sukarno even showed his capacity for humanity in a non-political setting when he arranged about this time for a critically ill Sutan Sjahrir, his old political enemy who was still being vilified as a political symbol in the PKI press, to be transported from the Madiun prison camp to Switzerland for treatment.

Following the meetings between Sukarno and Aidit after the latter's return, Aidit reported to the PKI Politburo that Sukarno was terribly ill and that the "General's Council" was preparing a coup, according to the Mahmilub trial testimony, that is the official Indonesian Government version. Aidit apparently got the Politburo's endorsement of his proposal to operate through the Party's clandestine Special Bureau to carry out the tactical military side of

the operation although Njono, the former labor leader who had become the head in 1964 of the Jakarta Regional Committee (or CDB as it was known by its Indonesian initials), was designated to organize PKI involvement with the Air Force in the military training of some 4,000 communist volunteers at the edge of Halim Air Base near a village called Lubang Buaja (crocodile hole). Njono subsequently sent out secret instructions to the capital's Party sections for volunteers who were assembled in batches at Halim for the Air Force's instruction. This operation was confirmed by Njono at his trial and there were numerous witnesses to this program after the Communist collapse. There is no reason to doubt this side of the story anyway; it is a logical, compartmentalized step in the tactical execution of the plan.(15) There were reports, which we even knew at the time, that PKI cadres in Jakarta had been instructed in mid-September to take extensive security precautions such as sleeping in different houses on different nights.(16)

Sjam was briefed by Aidit on August 13 concerning Sukarno's supposed critical condition and the supposed plotting of the Council of Generals, according to the Sudisman trial testimony. The timing is the logical consequence of what had already taken place at much more senior levels. Aidit later met with the three top PKI Special Bureau people, Sjam, Pono, and Walujo (their real names were Kamarusaman, Marsudidjojo, and Subono), on August 25 where a decision was made, according to Dake, to prevent a coup d'etat by the Generals' Council.(17) Actually, the underlings were being told the cover story and what they needed to know to play their role. This

role flowed from the fact that each was a "control" for Supardjo (by Sjam), Untung (by Walujo), Latief and Sujono (both by Pono) and for other tactical military participants in what was seen as a limited tactical surgical strike. The PKI, according to all this mass of interrogation testimony, also controlled General Pranoto while a few other senior generals were apparently pro-communist. These senior people were not used in the military operation. That job was for tactical commanders like Supardjo and Untung because the troop levels to be maneuvered amounted to several battalions only; this was an operation to be conducted by an Otto Skorzeny equivalent, not by a Rundsted or a Rommel.

The PKI Special Bureau operation really only commenced on September 4 when Untung had one of his regular meetings with Walujo and was told by the latter that he was to meet with two officers he did not know, Colonel Latief and Air Force Major Sujono on September 6. All the early interrogation material and the trials present this sequence as the first notification of Untung who was simply being ordered as a PKI pawn to enter a coup conspiracy. (The other Jakarta-based players were being informed by Pono while Supardjo was being given the word long distance by Sjam).(18) Actually, if Bambang Widjanarko's testimony can be believed, as I believe it can on this point, Untung had already been informed by Sukarno a month earlier to expect something of this sort so that the smug Sjam's belief that he was informing a previously ignorant Untung for the first time was misplaced. Each participant was

undoubtedly sworn to keep what he knew to himself as part of the plot's compartmentalization.

Even the PKI leadership below Aidit, Lukman and Njoto was apparently being informed only on a need to know basis. Sudisman and Sakirman, who were members of the Politburo's Standing Committee, were probably more fully informed than others like Njono and Peris Pardede but the trial testimony appears to show considerable gaps in the knowledge of the Politburo members who survived long enough to be tried. They were given the aforementioned cover story of Sukarno's illness and a prospective Army coup and all apparently agreed at the Politburo meeting on August 28 to authorize Aidit to do whatever he judged to be necessary through his clandestine arm. There have been some hints from the trials of a difference in the Politburo over the degree and nature of the involvement but there does not appear to have been any significant opposition and what little there was probably became magnified later in the eyes of the survivors because of their desire to blame the failure on Aidit's adventurism in order to partially vindicate themselves and to make it easier for a future PKI to separate itself from the mistakes of the past.(19) In any case, the PKI was a monolithic highly disciplined party wedded to the concept of democratic centralism and there is no doubt whatsoever that the entire party would have loyally carried out whatever duties were assigned in the follow-through phase. Some apologists for the PKI have tried to distinguish between a few guilty culprits like Aidit and Sjam and a largely innocent Party structure otherwise but this view

does not hold water. Those who knowingly join a communist party and accept democratic centralism as a fundamental moral principal are also responsible to some considerable degree for the consequences of that party's decisions. Lukman and Sakirman were dispatched by Aidit to Central Java on September 29, for example, to supervise the Party's anticipated follow-through if the September 30 affair had been successful and other Central Committee members also fanned out across the country for that purpose (however much they specifically knew of the details). Of those who were called upon to act because they had roles in the early stages of the planned action, a few figures, like Major Sigit in the next chapter, backed out of their planned roles but most figuratively saluted and performed their allotted duties. I do not mean to condone the mass killing of communists that began in late October but it is not legitimate to say that the PKI cadre structure was innocent. They and Sukarno bear great responsibility for their contributions to a national tragedy that flowed from their policies and actions.

As the PKI and the military side of the September 30 Movement went about their assigned tasks of planning and preparation in-September (the military scenario is covered in the next chapter), Sukarno continued to be involved with overall direction. He consulted with senior generals loyal to him and his plot such as Omar Dani, General Mursjid, and General Sabur, often in the presence of such top civilian deputies as Subandrio and Leimena although the latter was almost certainly a silent and uninvolved bystander on this issue. The President undoubtedly continued to

work closely with Aidit on the plot although the specific content of such meetings can only be surmised (although such surmise is no difficult task given the total context) and he even met with Supardjo on the eve of the action and apparently was in direct communication with Untung according to Bambang Widjanarko's testimony.(20) There is no evidence that Sjam and Pono knew of these contacts between their two leading military agents and the President; as minions they did not need to know.

Omar Dani is known to have been sent on a secret mission to China by Sukarno in mid-September to speed up the shipment of the promised Chinese arms for the fifth armed force. Some of these arms had allegedly already arrived by ship in crates labeled as building materials for the CONEFO conference scheduled for 1966, an allegation that may not have been true. However, it does appear that arms were brought back on Dani's return flight, in any case. Chinese arms were supplied to the PKI volunteers training at the Lubang Buaja adjunct to Halim airbase. Dani has been extensively reported to have seen first Subandrio and then Sukarno privately on his return from China on September 21 and again to have met with Sukarno on the morning of September 29. The latter meeting followed immediately after a meeting between Dani and General Supardjo who had arrived from Kalimantan the day before to take effective military command of the operation. Some of the interrogation material holds that Supardjo had told Dani of a loyalist group of officers anxious to foil a General's Council plot and that Dani was conveying this to Sukarno.(21) Whether that version reflects a

Sukarno/PKI cover story or one of the phases in a somewhat doctored Army version designed to protect Sukarno while focusing on the PKI is not clear. (It might also indicate that Supardjo was honestly telling Dani what he believed to be true since he too had been brought in on a compartmentalized basis that was geared to the same cover story that had been fed to Sjam). What is clear is that such a rationale for the meeting is nonsense. Dani had to have been aware for weeks of the massive training of PKI volunteers at Halim and Sukarno's foreknowledge at this point should also be evident from all that has been said before. The details of this conversation need not concern us greatly, however; it was obviously connected with Supardjo's arrival, with the tactical military arrangements and probably with Sukarno's planned movements and actions after the generals were successfully abducted. Both the Dani trip to China and Supardjo's arrival in Jakarta were kept secret from people who had a right to know; Nasution as Defense Minister, Yani as Army Chief of Staff and, in Supardjo's case, General Suharto as chief of Kostrad since Supardjo was Commander of the Fourth Combat Command of Kostrad in West Kalimantan.(22)

Sukarno was also continuing to meet with high-level advisors about the forthcoming action, according to the testimony of Bambang Widjanarko, and the reports of these conversations clearly show Sukarno as the driving force behind the preparations while the other players simply seem to be going along with the forceful personality of the Great Leader of the Revolution. Bambang's interrogation report shows a meeting between General Mursjid,



Yani's estranged deputy, and Sukarno at 7:00 on the morning of September 23. The questioning of Bambang was reportedly based on previous interrogations of Sukarnoist cabinet minister Yusuf Muda Dalam and two Palace aides named Djamin and Henny. Omar Dani, Subandrio, Saleh, Leimena, and Generals Sabur, Sunarjo and Sudirgo were all present as well as the ubiquitous adjutant, Bambang. Mursjid is said to have reported to Sukarno that the targeted Army generals were still not loyal while Sukarno replied that he would then take action against them. Sukarno then asked General Sabur, the commander of the Tjakrabirawa regiment and Untung's direct boss, as to the status of preparations for the actions to be taken against the generals. He ordered that General Sudirgo, who was not present at the beginning, be called to the meeting to participate in the discussions. Sukarno is quoted as saying on this occasion "Sabur, the measures against them must be carried out," while Omar Dani piped in that "AURI (the Air Force) is at the ready and is behind you Bapak (Father - a common address toward Sukarno)". General Sudirgo was the head of the Army's Military Police and was one of several "loyal" generals who were reporting to Sukarno regularly about the purported disloyalty of such officers as Yani. Sukarno reportedly told Sudirgo that he had already ordered Generals Sabur and Sunarjo to take measures against the disloyal generals and ordered Sudirgo and the Military Police corps to give them support.(23) Sukarno was probably continuing to meet with other generals he regarded as loyal. Bambang Widjanarko reports that he met with General Pranoto sometime in September and that he

had discussions with Police General Sutjipto Judodihardjo about the identity of police generals who were regarded as disloyal and would have to be removed at a later stage.(24)

Bambang Widjanarko's testimony contains a report of another meeting of Sukarno with Generals Mursjid, Sunarjo and Sabur plus some members of his entourage such as Yusuf Muda Dalam and the adjutants on September 29. This is the point where the interrogation data relating to the PKI Special Bureau and Untung levels show that a decision had just been taken to act on the night of September 30-October 1 after a previous postponement of one or two days. Sukarno reportedly asked Sabur about the status of the preparations and Sabur responded that the operation was being prepared and would be carried out when ready. Sukarno reportedly asked for speed. General Mursjid said something about an army unit (not identified) that could be kept in reserve. Dani chimed in that the Air Force was ready. Sukarno then ordered Chief Commissioner (of Police) Sumirat to summon General Yani and some other officials to appear on October 1 and an appointment was apparently set up for that time at Merdeka Palace. Sukarno then told General Mursjid that he wanted Mursjid to replace Yani.(25) Bambang Widjanarko and two other Palace officials (Henny and Djamin) reportedly testified that Sabur called on Sukarno on September 30 with a file that supposedly contained a letter of appointment of General Mursjid as Commander of the Army and that Sukarno signed it. Bambang further testified that on the night of September 30 a letter from Untung was delivered to Sukarno at the Senayan stadium where

Sukarno was delivering a speech. A messenger gave the letter to a bodyguard who gave it to Colonel Bambang who in turn gave it to Sukarno. The latter put the letter in his pocket and then left the stage to go to the toilet. When Sukarno got to the outside gallery, accompanied, of course, by his retinue of guards and aides, he read the letter and returned it to his pocket. The contents were not revealed to anyone. (The issue of the Untung letter appears again in the events of mid-October 1 when the "coup" began to go sour).(26)

A final point from the Bambang Widjanarko testimony is that Sukarno reportedly met with General Supardjo on the morning of September 29. This was presumably after the meeting with Mursjid discussed three paragraphs above and, again presumably, a result of Omar Dani's separate meeting with the president shortly after Dani's initial meeting with Supardjo when Sukarno reportedly asked that Dani return with Supardjo. The Supardjo meeting allegedly took place at 11:00 A.M. The fact that there was a lot of scurrying back and forth during the day on September 30 should not be surprising. Furthermore, it appears well established that Supardjo's secret presence in Jakarta between his return on September 28 and his appearance before the world on October 1 was known to only a few people including Sukarno, Subandrio, Omar Dani, Aidit and Sjam (as well as Untung and company). Such a meeting would seem essential for Sukarno to get a feel for the man with whom he was to deal so extensively over the next few days and who was to be the real military professional of the operation.

Before examining the Bambang Widjanarko testimony which is fascinating but which raises questions of validity and interpretation, mention should also be made of a reported conversation on September 30 between Sukarno and General Sughandi Kartosubrotot, a cabinet minister with a reputation for dogged faithfulness to the President (he had been in Bambang Widjanarko's job a few years earlier). Sughandi had spoken to PKI Politburo member Sudisman on September 27 and had been asked by Sudisman to "join us". Sudisman had argued "whoever begins and strikes the first blow will win". Later the same day Aidit approached Sughandi and, referring to the earlier Sudisman conversation, told Sughandi that "we will start in a short time, in two or three days", that Bung Karno knows all about it and that Sughandi should join them. Sughandi claims to have reported these conversations to Sukarno on September 30 as a warning that the PKI was plotting a coup. Sukarno reportedly told Sughandi not to be a "communist-phobe" and that he should realize that there was a Council of Generals that had to be dealt with. Sughandi claimed to have questioned the existence of a Council of Generals on the basis of assurances from Yani that the only Generals Council was one that had to do with promotions (this appears to be a blatant effort by Sughandi to ingratiate himself with the victorious Army leaders later) but Sukarno told him to shut up and not to meddle. The President added that "in a revolution a father can eat his own children" and finally threatened to strike Sughandi. This conversation has been cited by General Nasution as evidence that

Sukarno was at least aware and supportive of the September 30 movement before it was launched.(27)

With all this evidence of Sukarno's meetings in late September on the table, what are we to make of it? Again, I believe it basically rings true. It fits with the general course of developments for one thing and it helps to make sense of what otherwise seems like nonsense. The interrogation report's allegations that a multitude of well known people were present, including some who have not been arrested, adds to the credibility since someone like Leimena could not be guaranteed not to denounce such a story if it were patently untrue. Another point is that the material raises new questions of no apparent advantage to the Army if it were not to be pursued. One of the strange aspects of Bambang Widjanarko's testimony is the role played by General Mursjid and Sukarno's apparent decision on September 29-30 to name him Army commander. Yet Sukarno turned around and appointed General Pranoto, the supposed PKI puppet, to the same position on October 1 and still later tried to name Adjie on October 2 after Suharto and the Army rejected Pranoto. Mursjid's name simply disappeared from consideration after the events of September 30 - October 1. In the absence of further information, I can only speculate that Sukarno was promising several "loyal" generals the same job to encourage their cooperation but another possibility is that Mursjid may have backed out when he learned that Yani and his other colleagues had not just been arrested but had been killed. There were rumors at the time that Mursjid was one of several senior generals who helped Suharto on October 1.

Perhaps Mursjid told Suharto about his conversations with Sukarno which could have shed early light on the terribly confused situation unfolding on the morning of October 1. Or perhaps Mursjid and Suharto were personally close in contrast to the former's apparent estrangement from Yani. But all of this speculation relates to an intriguing peripheral issue but only a peripheral issue. The very existence of such a loose end tends to show the authenticity of the total information available to the Army if not to Bambang Widjanarko as the sole source (I do not mean to imply that I disbelieve the latter point, I simply feel that even if one were to grant some tampering, there would still remain a strong case that the information itself was a composite from numerous sources and reflected the evidentiary conclusions of the investigators).

Another interesting point is the indication that Sukarno was dealing with General Sabur to carry out the operation. This makes sense given Sabur's logical role in the direct chain of command from Sukarno through the Tjakrabirawa to Untung. This implies that the Sjam operation was not the only channel of instruction to Untung and the other military conspirators. I must confess that I also believe it casts some doubt on the whole elaborate story of the operation being directed through the Special Bureau of the PKI. It is at least conceivable that this side of the affair was fabricated or expanded for the sake of a show trial scenario that would cover up the degree of Sukarno's direction of the "coup" operation while providing the rationale for liquidation of a party that the Army despised. Even in 1966 there was still a lot of feeling among anti-communist

Indonesians that Sukarno was just a poor misguided nationalist who had been cruelly manipulated by the insidious PKI and that terrible Machiavellian scalawag, Subandrio. To believe otherwise raised questions as to why all these insiders and beneficiaries of the Sukarno era had gone along with the Bung as long as they had. However, I do not wish to carry this argument very far. The material on the Special Bureau of the PKI is vast, the detail is extensive and it does not carry the scent of fabrication. I also know it was thoroughly believed to be valid by the US Government and by knowledgeable Indonesians whose integrity I trust. On balance, then I regard the Special Bureau operation as one of two channels of instruction to the Untung/Supardjo group, a set-up rendered necessary because of PKI operational involvement as auxiliaries at Lubang Buaja and as convenient because of the felt need for clandestine handling and the ability to apply pressure through the existing relationships between officers previously recruited by the Special Bureau and their handlers.

The reported delivery of an Untung letter to Sukarno at 10:00 P.M. on September 30, a few hours before the September 30 movement assassination squads were being assembled at Halim air base, is also a fascinating indication of who was the real boss and driving force of the operation. Sukarno's sudden departure from the stage that night had been observed by the one or two foreign diplomats present and interpreted as some kind of physical collapse even though Sukarno soon returned to conclude his speech (at least two American Embassy officers were listening to the speech on the

radio but no Americans were present). Such was the power of suggestion lingering from the rumors of Sukarno's purported "seizure" in early August. This report of Bambang's concerning a message to Sukarno from Untung also seems logical enough from all that had gone on before. Surely Sukarno would have been informed that the staging of the strike forces was underway when he was expected to play a role in the later stages (that were never reached) and this is particularly so if one believes that Sukarno had given the order for the whole operation.



## Footnotes - Chapter XI

1. Bambang Widjanarko, The Devious Dalang (The Hague, Interdoc Publishing House)(no date given) pp 9-11.
2. Bambang Widjanarko, pp 14-17.
3. The Coup That Backfired, p. 238.
4. The Coup That Backfired, pp 218-221.
5. See CIA Office of National Estimates Special Memo *No.* 4-65 "Principal Problems and Prospects in Indonesia" January 26, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
6. The Coup That Backfired, pp 218-221.
7. Dake, p. 388.
8. The Coup That Backfired, p. 221.
9. Bambang Widjanarko, p. 19.
10. Bambang Widjanarko, pp 57 and 76.
11. Dake, p. 384.
12. Nugroho Notosusanto and Ismail Saleh, The Coup Attempt of the September 30 Movement in Indonesia.
13. Mortimer, p. 385.
14. Mortimer, pp. 378-379.
15. The Coup That Backfired, p. 268; Njono Trial testimony.
16. This is mentioned in The Coup That Backfired, p. 224.
17. Dake, p.394.
18. The details of the Special Bureau contacts with the military members of the September 30 movement were covered in great

detail in the CIA study, The Coup That Backfired, pp. 97-159. Portions of the same interrogation material appear in the writings of such post-coup writers as Brackman and Dake who were using trial testimony that generally follows the same interrogation reports, many of which were widely available in Jakarta as early as 1966.

19. Some differences (a three to four split of the seven members) are mentioned by a former PKI Central Verification Committee member and a leader of the Communist Scholars Front (Himpunan Sardjana Indonesia), Ernst Utrecht, in his book, Indonesia's Nieuwe Orde (Amsterdam, Van Gennep NV) 1970, p.33.
20. The Supardjo meeting with Sukarno is mentioned by a number of secondary sources and is based on interrogation literature. It is also confirmed by Bambang Widjanarko who was very specific in setting the time as 11:00 A.M. on September 29. (p. 170). The existence of an Untung written message to Sukarno on the eve of the killings is known only through Bambang Widjanarko's interrogation report.
21. The Coup That Backfired, p. 256, discusses this as do other sources. It is also in the Dani trial material.
22. The CIA study (The Coup That Backfired, p. 257) is technically incorrect in saying that Supardjo had no legitimate reason to report to Dani. While it is clear that Supardjo's presence in the capital was improperly being kept from his direct commander, General Suharto, and other Army leaders, Dani was Chief of

Staff of the Mandala Command (for operations against Malaysia) and Supardjo's Fourth Combat Command of KOSTRAD was operationally under the Mandala Command. The confused chain of command had purposely been instituted by Sukarno to undercut Yani's authority by that of Dani in some respects just as he had earlier played off Yani against Nasution by making Yani Chief of Staff of KOTI (the Supreme Operational Command) and thus responsible to Sukarno directly rather than through Defense Minister Nasution.

23. Bambang Widjanarko, pp. 11-14. General Sunarjo, like General Sudirgo, was from the Army's Military Police Corps but was serving as Deputy Attorney General where his main function was to handle Sukarno's secret and illicit "commissions" and other financial transactions as well as those of his wives. He had been personally close to Sukarno for some time. Despite the ties of these two military Police officers to Sukarno, it should be said that the military Police corps as a whole was neither pro-Sukarno nor pro-PKI and many of its officers were involved in the post-October 1 process that led to Sukarno's progressive loss of power. I base these comments on my personal acquaintanceship with some of these Military Police officers.
24. The Pranoto meetings are mentioned by Bambang Widjanarko on pp. 196-197. According to this account, Pranoto had been summoned by Sukarno to direct preparations for the Oct. 5 Armed Forces Day parade. The Sutjipto discussions with Sukarno are cited on pp. 124-125.

25. Bambang Widjanarko, p.14.
26. Bambang Widjanarko, p.21.
27. The Coup That Backfired, pp. 261-264. This conversation also appears in Ambassador Howard Jones' book, pp 322-383 and is mentioned by Brackman's The Communist Collapse in Indonesia, p. 69. John Hughes has a similar account based on his interview with Sughandi. Hughes, pp 15-16. The Indonesian magazine, Tempo, on October 6, 1984 carried a short account by Sughandi (who had become Chairman of President Suharto's Golkar Party in the meantime) on this meeting between him and Sukarno the day before the "coup". It shows Sukarno defending the PKI when Sughandi told him of PKI coup plotting, Sukarno accusing Sughandi of "communist phobia" and, finally, Sukarno becoming angry and ordering Sughandi to leave.

## XII

### The Military Planning

The normal military presence in Jakarta has been mentioned in an earlier chapter. Although the Marines, Air Force and Police Mobile Brigade had some units in the capital that could be used as ground combat forces (infantry) at the time, they were not numerous nor were they apparently considered as a significant factor that should be considered in the planning of the September 30 Movement. This may have been because they were not considered as effective as the Army units for this kind of operation or it may have been that Sukarno wanted to portray the operation as a purely internal Army affair to cleanse its own ranks of senior officers deemed disloyal to the continuing revolution.<sup>(1)</sup> The Tjakrabirawa bodyguard regiment, which was, of course, a major factor on the Sukarno/PKI side, did have some non-Army components including a Marine battalion but the significant units that came into play on both sides were all Army and the real dirty work was accomplished largely by elements of Untung's First Battalion of the Tjakrabirawa with some small units from other Army forces attached. Among the other standing forces was the Jakarta garrison, most of whose combat-ready forces, that is the First Infantry Brigade, were commanded by Colonel Latief, a coup ringleader. There were also two battalions of the elite Parakommando force (the RPKAD) under

Colonel (later Brigadier) Sarwo Edhie which was part of the Strategic Reserve under the command of General Suharto. However, the perpetrators of the coup also believed that the local military balance in Jakarta was to be further drastically altered by the transfer of the two battalions of RPKAD (the Third Paratroop Brigade) to Kalimantan in connection with the anti-Malaysia confrontation. I was informed by excellent high level Indonesian sources in November, 1965, and periodically thereafter, of the RPKAD story and its decisive effect on the failure of the September 30 movement. It seems, according to this information that the two battalions were supposed to have departed shortly before the "coup" but that they failed to leave for the rather mundane reason that there was a shipping tie-up in Jakarta's port of Tanjung Priok. This fact was probably known to General Suharto, the Kostrad commander, but it apparently did not filter through the chain of command in a way that caused it to become known to the coup plotters.(2)

Meanwhile, the military forces in the capital were to be augmented by three additional paratroop battalions for the annual Armed Forces Day parade on October 5. One battalion each was to come from the three regional military commands on Java, the Siliwangi division (West Java), the Diponegoro Division (Central Java) and the Brawijaya Division (East Java). The units selected were the 328th or Kujang battalion from the Siliwangi, the 454th battalion from the Diponegoro and the 530th battalion from the Brawijaya. There have been reports that President Sukarno had assigned Colonel Untung and General Sabur responsibility for

planning the Armed Forces Day parade and that they may have had considerable voice in selection of the units to be introduced into the capital.(3) The two battalions from East Java and Central Java were commanded by secret communists responsive to the PKI Special Bureau (Major Sukirno of the 454th and Major Bambang Supeno of the 530th). These became the units that surrounded three sides of Merdeka Square in front of the Palace and embracing or abutting such key installations as the Radio Station (on the West side of the square) and the Telecommunications Center (on the South side). These installations were actually across their respective streets from the square itself and thus just outside the main perimeters of the 530th battalion. Also facing the square on the south but outside the perimeter were the American Embassy, the National Front, the Partindo Party headquarters, and several other installations.

The two Javanese battalions had arrived in Jakarta near the end of the day on September 25. It appears that the 328th battalion of the Siliwangi division did not arrive until the afternoon of October 1 although I am not sure of this (Robert Shaplen's book gives this arrival time).(4) There would have been an argument for the more distant 454th and 530th battalions to arrive earlier than the 328th because of a greater need for their officers to familiarize themselves with logistic and other preparatory arrangements. There were numerous rumors just after the coup that there had been some kind of plot for Armed Forces Day on October 5 to position the three battalions in a way where the Siliwangi unit could be faced down and disarmed by the two pro-communist battalions as well as rumors

that a plan to this effect was countermanded by another plan that would have positioned the Siliwangi battalion in such a way that it would have had the upper hand. These rumors gradually disappeared and their validity is unknown to the writer but they reflect what turned out to be correct perceptions of the loyalties of the units (or actually of their commanders) on the fateful day of October 1, 1965.(5) On the other hand, it may be that the plotters even believed that the Kujang battalion could also be manipulated on their side to some degree. Bambang Widjanarko's testimony mentioned at one point that General Sabur reported to Sukarno on the morning of October 1 that the forces available to the Untung group consisted of the 328th, 454th and 530th battalions as well as the Tjakrabirawa regiment.(6) Sabur could have been mistaken, of course, since he was probably not involved in detailed operational planning but merely passed on Sukarno's desires to others. Aside from the Kujang battalion, the bulk of the Siliwangi division, whose territory surrounded Jakarta, was to be immobilized by Sukarno's arrangement with General Adjie, as well as by backup manipulation of several other Siliwangi officers through the PKI Special Bureau.(7)

The "coup" plan also envisaged manipulation of the Diponegoro division in Central Java in support of the September 30 Movement. General Surjosumpeno, the division commander, was not informed and was initially surprised when much of his general staff announced themselves as leaders of the September 30 Movement in Central Java, headed by his intelligence chief, Colonel Suherman. These officers had been recruited to the communist cause by the Central



Java branch of the PKI Special Bureau, headed by one Sudarmo. Similar manipulation had been accomplished in the various major cities of Central Java by local branches of the Special Bureau. Of seven Diponegoro battalions available in Central Java at the time, three were committed to the coup through their commanders, two through other senior officers and only two were unaffected.(8)

The temporary military balance accordingly looked extremely good for the communist cause, at least for the short period required, particularly since many of the combat battalions of the major Java-centered regional commands had been deployed to Kalimantan in connection with confrontation against Malaysia. Arnold Brackman states that some 68 Army battalions were stationed in Kalimantan at this time and it was known that Yani and the Army leadership had been concerned for some time that the stripping of infantry from Java to reinforce the outer islands could weaken the Army position against a possible PKI coup.(9) The Army leaders apparently did not anticipate the degree of PKI infiltration of Army cadres, however, nor did they regard Sukarno himself as being completely tied in with the PKI in spite of all the evidence that was available to anyone not blinded by the conventional wisdom of a purely "nationalist" President interested only in his personal authority. The Army leadership had received a report through its intelligence chief, General Parman, on September 14 about an alleged PKI plan to assassinate the Army leaders on September 18. It took precautions but nothing happened. A later report was received by General Haryono on September 30 of an impending coup but the report was

greeted with laughter at a senior Army staff meeting that day. General Sughandi told a group of senior military officers at the home of Admiral Martadinata on the evening of September 30 that "something may happen tomorrow", apparently on the basis of his angry conversation with Sukarno about PKI plotting earlier that day.(10) Although the situation was tense politically, neither Yani nor other senior generals took any particular precautions.(11) As October 1 approached, the Sukarno/PKI forces felt they could count on an overwhelming balance of forces in their favor in Jakarta itself, immobilization of the Siliwangi and effective domination of the military balance in Central Java. Above all, they would have the advantage of surprise, decapitation of the potential opposition's leadership, and Sukarno's early announcement of support against an alleged nest of traitors.

The "coup" strike forces in Jakarta were to be divided into three segments or "commands"; the relatively small group that would seize the targeted generals (called "PASOPATI") under the command of another PKI-controlled officer from Untung's First Tjakrabirawa battalion, Marine Lt. Dul Arief, the much larger group for control of the city ("BIMASAKTI") under a Captain Suradi, and a Base command ("PRINGGODANI") under a Major Gatot Sukrisno.(12) All three commands reported to a Central Command headed by Untung, Latief, Air Force Colonel Sujono and, of course, the ubiquitous Sjam and Pono. The central command assembled shortly after midnight on the morning of October 1 at the Aerial Survey Office which was located between Halim Air Base and the center of

the city and which had been procured for the operation in advance by Sujono. This headquarters was to move to Halim later in the morning of October 1.

The "Pasopati" strike force under Lt. Dul Arief had at its disposal about four companies of troops including companies from Untung's Tjakrabirawa battalion and Latief's First Infantry Brigade. The accounts vary slightly as to the exact composition of this force which may have included detached companies from the 454th and 530th battalions and Air Force paratroops but there is no question that it was either entirely or primarily a professional military force.<sup>(13)</sup> The PKI volunteers that had been trained at Lubang Buaja were retained as a reserve force but, except for the possibility of a few in the background at the homes of Nasution and Yani, they were never committed to action until late afternoon on October 1 when it was too late. The "Bimasakti" group consisted primarily of the 454th and 530th battalions and had the more traditional military assignment of holding the Merdeka Square area adjoining the Palace including the radio broadcasting facilities, the telecommunications center across the street from the south side of the Square and various military commands that fronted on the square. While this included the Ministry of Defense and Army headquarters, the coup forces did not seize Kostrad headquarters on the East side of Merdeka Square. They also did nothing to interrupt Army communications through the Supreme Command (KOTI) network.

The "Pringgodani" command stayed at Halim Air Base and provided a staging point for the strike forces, a secure base area to

receive the captured or murdered generals, a PKI reserve force to assist in the disposal of the victims and a back-up headquarters area to which Sukarno, Aidit and other leaders could be accommodated for such time as might be required. It was clearly anticipated that the whole affair would be brought to a smooth and speedy conclusion, that Sukarno would endorse the suppression of the nefarious efforts of traitorous generals to depose him (the cover story), that a Nasakom cabinet would follow soon after, and the road would be open to the "socialist stage" Sukarno so ardently desired. The interrogation reports describe in great detail the tactical planning by the Sjam/Untung group in a series of meetings that began only on September 6.(14) The initial group consisted of Sjam and Pono of the PKI, Untung, Latief and Sujono, a Major Agus Sigit who commanded a battalion of the First Infantry Brigade under Colonel Latief and a Captain Wahjudi, who was acting commander of another battalion of the First Infantry Brigade, an air defense unit. Wahjudi was reportedly dropped at Sjam's initiative because of some kind of dissatisfaction with his performance. Sigit, on the other hand, appears to have withdrawn on the basis of personal excuses after becoming convinced that the operation lacked adequate planning and sufficient military resources to ensure effective execution. Both Sigit and Wahjudi were otherwise responsive to PKI control, however, and apparently offered no danger of premature disclosure. Lt. Dul Arief, who was not a member of the planning group, was reportedly in contact with Untung for detailed planning of the kidnapping as early as September 7 after being contacted first by his PKI control.

Further meetings of the central command group took place on September 9, 13, 19, 23, 25 and 28.

The September 13 meeting marked the beginning of concrete discussion of what troops would be required and it was also the scene of a dispute between Major Sigit and Sjam over troop adequacy. This meeting is also interesting because Sjam told the group that "the Great Leader of the Revolution has his own role also. The Bung will later on obtain a separate settlement."<sup>(15)</sup> Major Sukirno, commander of the 454th Battalion of the Diponegoro Division, had been contacted by Untung on September 15; Untung had previously commanded this battalion as late as early 1965 before his transfer to the Tjakrabirawa. Untung was reportedly informed by Sjam at the September 19 meeting that he would be the designated leader of the movement, primarily because of his role as Sukarno's personal bodyguard. The CIA study says the fact that Untung was a battalion commander of the Presidential guard "was doubtlessly a consideration in the PKI's selection of him". This statement is correct if the expression "PKI" includes Sukarno, as it should, for Sukarno's reported meeting with Untung on August 4 had already settled this question, whether Sjam knew it or not (he probably did not as he was limited to a particular tactical role and was operating within the need-to-know framework being conveyed to him by Aidit - who, in turn, was merely one of Sukarno's senior henchmen). The September 19 meeting also reportedly decided on the identity of the generals to be targeted on the basis of a list conveyed by Sjam.

The September 23 meeting was informed by Pono of the PKI that the participation of both the 454th and 530th battalions had been assured and that a unit of 30 armored cars would be provided from Bandung (from the Siliwangi division). This latter contribution never materialized. The group was also informed at this time about General Supardjo and his prospective role as liaison between the group and Sukarno. The September 25 meeting set September 29 as the tentative date for the strike but this was later postponed, primarily because of Untung's desire for further preparations and briefings after the scheduled arrival of the 454th and 530th battalions. Untung visited both units after their arrival in Jakarta on September 25 and subsequently checked out the base facilities at Halim along with Dul Arief and a number of subordinate officers who were to be involved in the operation. The group met on September 28 at Sjam's house where last minute details were discussed and again on September 29 when the precise timing for the strike was set for the following night of September 30-October 1. September 29 was also the date when Subandrio and Njoto departed for North Sumatra, Lukman and Sakirman for Central Java and other PKI leaders for various minor provincial capitals, apparently to guide and lead the country-wide acclamation that was to follow the news that a nefarious, imperialist-organized plot of traitorous generals had been uncovered and suppressed.(16)

## Footnotes – Chapter XII

1. Omar Dani was reportedly offered leadership of the purge operation but refused on the grounds that an Army commander was needed for what should appear to be an Army operation. Notosusanto and Saleh, p.37 (based on the Heru Trial testimony).
2. The intended transfer of the RPKAD battalions and their actual availability on October 1, probably the single most important reason for the failure of the so-called coup, is noted in The Coup That Backfired, pp 34-35. This was based, of course, on Embassy reporting. John Hughes in his Indonesian Upheaval, says he was told by Colonel (later Brigadier General) Sarwo Edhie, the RPKAD commander, that General Supardjo had requested in August that these units be sent to reinforce Supardjo's forces in North Kalimantan. Sarwo Edhie told Hughes that the scheduled departure date was October 1 and that Edhie cancelled the departure on hearing the news of that morning's stirring events. Actually, this was probably a re-established date after a postponement.
3. Shaplen, p. 98 and Hughes, p. 19. As noted in the previous chapter, Bambang Widjanarko mentions a role for Pranoto as well.
4. Shaplen, p.106.

5. Hughes says there had also been a plan to carefully place Tjakrabirawa troops behind other troops in the parade. Hughes, p.19
6. Bambang Widjanarko, p. 71.
7. Ambassador Jones mentions a meeting in Bandung on August 25 between Sjam of the PKI and General Rukman, a former chief of staff of the Siliwangi, General Supardjo (the military leader of the September 30 movement who came from a Siliwangi Division background) and Colonel Sukardi, the Mayor of Bandung. A source is not mentioned but the former Ambassador had access to US Government reports for his book. Several years later it was discovered that about ten officers of the Siliwangi division, including one of Adjie's leading aides, were under the control of the PKI Special Bureau.
8. Notosusanto and Saleh, p. 58.
9. Brackman, The Communist Collapse. p. 226.
10. Tempo, October 6, 1984 (Sughandi article).
11. The Coup That Backfired (preface). Jones, p. 374.
12. The Coup That Backfired p.160. Also Notosusanto and Saleh.
13. The Coup That Backfired, p.2, says there were four companies in the Pasopati group: one from the Tjakrabirawa, one each from the 454th and 530th battalions and one from the First Infantry Brigade. The Notosusanto/Saleh account, which was the semi-official version of the Indonesian Army, specifies a slightly different breakdown that included one company of Tjakrabirawa, one company each from the 454th and 530th



battalions, two platoons each from the First Infantry Brigade, the Air Force "Quick Action" troops (the PGA) and the Cavalry. This breakdown was given on the basis of availabilities several days before D-Day. The cavalry (armor) and PGA troops were not available at the last minute according to the CIA study which is also emphatic that no PKI youth were involved in the actual strikes. However, Notosusanto and Saleh give a precise breakdown for the forces used at each General's house and this includes a platoon of Pemuda Rakjat (PKI youth) and a platoon of Air Force troops (in addition to one squad of Tjakrabirawa and one platoon each from the 454th and 530th battalions). It lists two squads of Pemuda Rakjat and one squad from the Air Force at Yani's house in addition to the larger contingents (one platoon each) from the 454th, 530th and First Infantry Brigade plus a squad of Tjakrabirawa. Haryono and Sutojo were struck entirely by Tjakrabirawa units, according to this version.

14. These meetings were covered at considerable length in The Coup That Backfired, pp 110-155 and in John Hughes, Indonesian Upheaval. These and other such accounts are based on the material in the Indonesian Army interrogation reports and the trial testimony.
15. The Coup That Backfired, pp 121-122.
16. The Army appears to have had some information which it was attempting to confirm that a meeting took place in the Palace on September 26 for a division of territorial responsibility between Sukarno, Subandrio and Leimena in the second stage of the

plan. Subandrio was to handle Sumatra, Leimena to remain in charge in the capital and Sukarno to operate from Central Java or Bali. This appears in the Bambang Widjanarko interrogation reports (p.72) but is not further explained since the adjutant knew nothing of such a meeting.

## XIII

### The Day of the Generals

Dul Arief's Pasopati strike forces moved into Jakarta from their staging area at the village of Lubang Buaja on the outskirts of Halim Air Base in Air Force trucks at about 4:00 AM on the morning of October 1. Units of a platoon or more surrounded each targeted house but the actual approach was made by a uniformed Tjakrabirawa officer or non-com who purported to have a message from the President. Generals Yani, Harjono and Pandjaitan were killed resisting capture while Generals Suprpto, Sutojo and Parman were overpowered and taken to Lubang Buaja where they too were later killed by order of Colonel Latief. Although General Nasution, the biggest prize, was assigned a raiding force of about 100 men, he managed to escape in the darkness over the back wall into the yard of the Iraqi Ambassador where he remained hidden behind a water barrel. A search for Nasution was terminated quickly when the raiding party mistook Nasution's aide, Lieutenant Tendean, for Nasution in the darkness. The younger officer, who physically resembled Nasution, had purposely donned the General's jacket and cap and gone outside in the turmoil. Nasution's younger daughter was shot and eventually died, one of many incidents that added pathos to the murders and helped to contribute to the Army's subsequent determination to destroy the PKI that it held responsible

and to the wave of public indignation that supported that decision. Nasution, who injured his ankle in going over the wall, remained in hiding until 6:30 AM when he recognized one of his adjutants among the army personnel called to the scene after the attackers' flight to Halim. Nasution was then taken to a safe place near the headquarters of the Strategic Reserve Command, Kostrad.

Another of Nasution's aides, Namdan Mansjur, had contacted the Jakarta garrison commander, Major General Umar Wirahadikusumah on the Armed Forces communications net about 5:15 A.M. and Umar came immediately to Nasution's house, arriving at 5:30 A.M.. Joined by five armored vehicles he had ordered to the spot from the 7th Cavalry Battalion of his command, General Umar tried to catch up with the raiding party but was unsuccessful.(1) One of the many mistakes made by the plotters was to leave the special Armed Forces communications network undisturbed in spite of their seizure of the regular communications center. The Strategic Reserve commander, General Suharto, was not attacked and his swift reaction that day was to save the country from a communist destiny. Suharto was informed about 5:30 A.M. that shooting had taken place by his neighbor, a civilian named Mashuri who was to become a cabinet minister after Suharto became head of the government six months later.(2) Soon thereafter Suharto was informed by General Umar that a number of Army Generals had been seized by unknown people. Confusion was obviously rampant and was to remain so for some time. Suharto conferred at his home with others for an hour or so and then drove to Kostrad headquarters, arriving between 6:30 and 7:00

A.M. He has said later that he had already decided to assume command of the Army until such time as General Yani's fate had been determined. Although General Mursjid, as Yani's senior deputy, would appear to have been a logical successor, General Suharto had previously been designated by Yani to act in his stead during Yani's absences and had done so in the past.

Soon after Suharto's arrival at Kostrad headquarters, General Umar reported and readily agreed to Suharto's decision to assume command. Umar had been busy over the previous two hours. He had given up the fruitless chase after Nasution's raiding party to go to the homes of several other abducted generals (all but one lived in the same general area) and then to Merdeka Palace where he had not found the President in. He had seen General Supardjo there, however, which was surprising since Supardjo was supposed to be in Kalimantan. This news also had a profound effect on Suharto who was Supardjo's commander and knew nothing of this visit. Merdeka Square was also surrounded on three sides by numerous troops which Umar had already identified as the 454th and 530th battalions. They were armed and wearing special scarves for identification purposes, apparently prepared by the PKI women's affiliate, GERWANI. At this point little was known to Suharto. He was aware that a hostile operation was underway, that Supardjo was at the Palace where he shouldn't have been, and that at least two regular battalions and all or part of the Tjakrabirawa Regiment appeared to be operating under unknown leadership for dubious purposes. The

killing and kidnapping of a number of senior officers obviously made the situation ominous.

Six or seven months later, I had an interesting conversation that was arranged for me with a man who was a member of a small group of people who were friends of Mashuri, the man who had first alerted Suharto. He said that four or five members of this so called Gajah Mada group (named after Gajah Mada university in Yogyakarta where they had been colleagues) were quickly assembled by Mashuri at Suharto's house and all of them were trying to reach a conclusion as to what was taking place on the basis of the meager information at hand. The early assumption was that Sukarno must have died and that a hostile pro-communist group around the President was trying to seize power. This was also the early assumption at the American Embassy; since the Embassy was located on the south side of Merdeka Square, we had all passed the road block at its southwest corner and seen troops along the street leading the rest of the way to the Embassy. Reports of shooting had already been phoned in to the duty officer early that morning from personnel living in the Kebayoran suburb; this was the attack on General Pandjaitan. My Gajah Mada source, who also had a position of some significance at the time, said that an early idea was to reach the prestigious Sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamenku Buwono, who was living in Jakarta at the time, and take him to Bandung to become the nucleus of a rival government. The Sultan was reached but, after being told of the fuzzy information available, demurred from the plan because he suspected some devious move by Sukarno himself. The Sultan,

according to this version, would act only if it could be confirmed that Sukarno was indeed dead and an illegitimate seizure of power was underway.(3) Arnold Brackman reports in his post coup book that former Vice-President Hatta told him in an interview that he too had suspected Sukarno's hand behind the peculiar events from the beginning.(4) I was also told by this Gadjra Mada source that an all-out effort was then made to ascertain the fate or whereabouts of Sukarno and that the fact that he was alive and at Halim was first learned from Sukarno's Japanese wife, Dewi, about 10:00 A.M. on the basis of a message she had just received from Sukarno. In a brief and carefully worded statement in an Indonesian magazine in 1984, Dewi claimed that she heard "by telephone" at 9:00 A.M. that there had been an attack on the homes of Nasution and Leimena. She said she had received a fuller account from an aide at 1:00 P.M. at which she was told that a PKI coup was underway against Sukarno. She added that she received a letter from Sukarno that afternoon telling her he was in good health and at a safe place. This would appear to contradict the account given above as to timing although it is also possible that Dewi knew more than the article implied since her careful specification of a letter from Sukarno in the afternoon did not rule out earlier knowledge by telephone, whether through the 9:00 A.M. call (which may have been from Sukarno) or otherwise.(5) Sukarno had spent the night at Dewi's house. Each of his wives had her own residence; the spurned Fatmawati lived in the Kebayoran suburb; her successor as Sukarno's senior wife, the pro-communist Hartini, lived at the Bogor Palace; Dewi was in south central Jakarta

in an area called Slipi; and Harjati was in the Chinese district of Grogol after a recent move from the diplomatic and ministerial central residential area. Sukarno had returned to Merdeka Palace from his speech to the National Conference of Technicians at Senayan stadium (where he had reportedly received Untung's written message) about 11:00 P.M. and had then gone to Dewi's house where he had spent the night. She was out and had to be summoned so Sukarno probably did not get to bed until fairly late. However, he rose early and left for the palace at 6:30 A.M. according to a later account by his bodyguard.(6) He was undoubtedly expected to be there fairly early since Supardjo and the commanders of the two battalions around Merdeka Square were there before 7:00 A.M. waiting to see him. It appears that Sukarno's bodyguard received a report on his car radio over the Tjakrabirawa network advising them of reports that the Tjakrabirawa headquarters had already received from the Jakarta police that shootings and kidnappings had taken place. Sukarno now went to the home of his other Jakarta based wife, Harjati, instead of the Palace. He was advised to do so by Colonel Saelan, the Deputy Commander of the Tjakrabirawa. Saelan was acting on the basis of information that the Palace was surrounded by unknown troops (the 454th and 530th).(7) Saelan also went to Harjati's house and advised Sukarno of Nasution's escape, the news of which he had learned in the meantime. The fact of Nasution's escape was not known by Supardjo or by the Untung group at its command center in the Aerial Survey Office near Halim. Sukarno's diversion from Merdeka Palace appears to have resulted from



another failure of coordination that was a by-product of the secret, conspiratorial handling of the entire action and the high degree of compartmentalization. Neither Saelan, nor Police Commissioner Sumirat who had told Saelan about the unidentified troops around the Square, nor Sukarno himself, were aware that these troops were on their side. Bambang Widjanarko, when asked this question, said that Sukarno had given his orders to General Sabur and Colonel Untung of the Tjakrabirawa and had expected that the whole affair would be executed by Tjakrabirawa forces. It is not clear whether Bambang was told this or whether he was guessing; if the latter, it sounds like a reasonable conclusion.(8) As for Colonel Saelan, this would hardly be the first time that a deputy (to Sabur) was not informed of what was going on. Both Sumirat and Saelan had been in the background at some of the Palace meetings described by Bambang Widjanarko but they were probably not cut in on the detailed operational planning being conducted through the PKI Special Bureau meetings with Untung and the other tactical military commanders. It would seem that the left hand did not know what the right was doing and that Sukarno himself was not aware of the specific deployments but was counting on his military professionals for this.

The escape of Nasution, which Sukarno now learned from Saelan, must have upset Sukarno greatly. He was aware of this information some time before Supardjo at the Palace or Untung and his comrades at CENKO headquarters were to realize they had missed the biggest fish. Sukarno commented to Supardjo when they

met later that morning at Halim that Nasution's escape would have grave consequences. He had also sent an Air Force intelligence officer to Nasution's house to inquire solicitously about the General in the hope of learning something more concrete about his fate. In any case, Sukarno decided to go to Halim Air Base about 9:30 A.M. following some discussion among Police Commissioner Sumirat, Assistant Attorney General Sunaryo and Col. Saelan of a possible alternative of a house in the Kebayoran suburb under Tjakrabirawa control. (9) In his later cover-up effort, he (or others on his behalf) said that he wanted to be near an aircraft for quick flight if his security required it but he also made it plain that he went to Halim of his own free will and that he was very much aware of the fact that this was the central base of the entire September 30 Movement operation. Before continuing with the critical events of that day, a day that exposed monumental blunders of planning and judgment, a narrowness of approach that was unable to deal with unforeseen contingencies, and an apparent failure of physical courage on the part of the Great Leader, one must address the question of Suharto's availability and also that of others such as Umar. There are, in fact, some haunting unanswered questions as to why the commander of the Strategic Reserve and a man who had been authorized by Yani to take over in his absence was not struck down with the rest. These questions were exacerbated by the failure of Suharto or those around him, to come forth with a clear coherent statement early on. It was implied for a long time that Suharto was on the list too but somehow had miraculously escaped. Several contradictory versions floated

around Jakarta for months. One said that raiders had come to the home of another much more junior general (Ibnu Subroto) in the same block because they had the wrong address and then left when they discovered their error. Another said that Suharto was at the hospital with his sick child all night. Still another, and by far the most persistent, claimed that this mystically oriented general had been told by his dukun, or spiritual advisor, to sit at the confluence of two bodies of water and meditate on this particular evening (the date had significance for Javanese and was being observed by others including much of our Embassy at an all-night Wajang or Javanese shadow-play performance). An offshoot of this story was that Suharto had gone fishing. The source I mentioned earlier, who told the story of planning to take the Sultan of Yogyakarta to *Bandung*, answered my question on this subject with the already ancient third version above and this was at least six months after the night of September 30/October 1. It was clarified later that Suharto had indeed visited his sick child at the hospital on the evening of September 30 and had then gone home. His performance on October 1 suggested a sufficiency of sleep. In any case, Suharto was simply not on the hit list. Strangely, Suharto and his sick child were visited at the hospital on the evening of September 30 by no less a figure than Colonel Latief. This story, which Suharto later confirmed, was well known among knowledgeable Indonesians and diplomats at an early *point*. Both Latief and *Untung* had served under Suharto in the past and Suharto had even attended Untung's wedding earlier that year.

Certain severe foreign critics of the Suharto regime (American and Dutch) have tried to explain these anomalies by *hinting* that Suharto sucked everyone else into an incredible plot with the intention of causing it to go awry and thereby providing an excuse to seize power. The Suharto-Latief meeting has been shrugged off by Suharto as, in retrospect, an effort to see what Suharto was up to. The explanations for Suharto's exclusion from the hit list and the Latief meeting were inadequate or poorly presented but the effort to portray Suharto as a diabolically clever plotter who sucked everyone else into a plot that he would then foil to achieve power is simply too wild to be taken seriously. For one thing, Suharto's subsequent conduct was not only one of swift military action but a constant effort to get Sukarno to act as a president and father figure who would disown the PKI but continue to lead the nation along nationalist lines. Suharto also offered command of the Army to Nasution when the latter escaped but Nasution was unable or unwilling to accept. Suharto had to be pushed and prodded by the student movement and his own more hawkish subordinates to act against Sukarno and even that was delayed for more than six months.

A more reasonable explanation may be derived from recalling that President Sukarno did not want to launch a civil war against a large group of people. He simply wanted to clear the path to the socialist stage by eliminating what he saw as a very small group at the top of the Army who visibly opposed his program for Nasakomization of the military. If the whole Army were taken on, the Army had the physical power to win but the wave of the

revolution was considered so powerful in a political and psychological sense, and Sukarno's prestige so high, that a surgical strike to eliminate a clique alleged to be in league with the imperialists to kill the President would appear plausible and would also intimidate everyone else. Suharto was viewed, not without reason, as an essentially apolitical professional inclined toward Javanese mysticism and a man who was not in the inner circle around Yani.<sup>(10)</sup> Furthermore, he was probably thought to lack any significant troop strength of his own in the Jakarta area since the RPKAD was believed to be in Kalimantan or on the way. It also appears that *Untung* and Latief had a genuine regard for Suharto as a former chief and they probably also saw him as a largely un-westernized fellow Javanese who unconsciously projected an image of being in the same general Sukarnoist camp from the standpoint of cultural values. He was one of the few top Indonesian generals, moreover, who had not been trained in the United States and who did not speak English. Whatever the reasoning or, more accurately, a lack of reasoning, the failure to include Suharto on the hit list was a mistake as grave as overlooking the presence of the RPKAD (although the two points are closely related). The escape of Nasution was also important but more in the psychological effect on Sukarno than on the practical level of the local military balance. As will be seen, other significant errors followed such as the failure of the 454th and 530th commanders to stay with their troops and, above all, the vacillation, self-centeredness, and even cowardice of Sukarno when the chips were down.

The first radio announcement of the September 30 Movement was made at 7:20 A.M. Although brief, this broadcast made it clear that a "Revolutionary Council" had taken military action for the alleged purpose of preventing a coup by a "Generals Council" scheduled for October 5 and thereby had saved the President. The first specific word from the radio about the President came only at 1:00 P.M. when a message from General Sabur, as Tjakrabirawa commander, announced that Sukarno was safe and still leading the country. This announcement points to a regular chain of command from Sukarno through Sabur to the coup leaders and thence to their troops at the radio station. The first decisions of the Revolutionary Council were announced around noon and repeated periodically over the next two or three hours.

All of these announcements gradually provided Suharto and others with some clues as to what was going on but the picture remained very confused. Suharto moved swiftly and decisively after hearing the report from Umar and coming to understand from the initial radio broadcast and Supardjo's presence at the Palace some of the broad outlines of what was happening. As early as 9:00 A.M., a courier was sent from the Commander of the Third Paratroop Brigade of Kostrad (which may indicate contact already with the RPKAD) to the 454th and 530th battalions ordering them to report to KOSTRAD. As parachute units from the regional commands, these battalions could be considered under the operational command of the Third Regiment and of KOSTRAD, i.e. Suharto, while in Jakarta.(11) This is presumably why Suharto had actually reviewed

the 454th and 530th the previous day. This effort was unsuccessful but further efforts to induce the deputy commanders to report to KOSTRAD continued. It should be noted here that the more junior officers and the troops themselves had no real understanding of their role. They had been briefed to some extent on the cover story of a "General's Council", an alleged plot, and the need to protect the President but they had no firm idea of who was friend or foe either. This presumably explains why KOSTRAD headquarters was able to operate virtually alongside the opposition forces and why emissaries from Suharto were received with confusion. The problem was compounded by the failure of Sukarno to go to Merdeka Palace where he was expected by Supardjo and the two battalion commanders. Supardjo soon left by helicopter for Halim but the two commanders remained at the Palace for the apparent purpose of better communication with Supardjo and Untung. The result was to leave their troops under the direct control of their deputies who were not part of the plot but were simply obeying orders from their immediate commanders. It was not long before the senior officers gathering around KOSTRAD, some of whom had intimate prior connections with these units, began to sense the vulnerability of the subordinate commanders in these battalions to persuasion.

Meanwhile, Sukarno arrived at Halim Air Base sometime shortly after 9:30 A.M. where he was welcomed by Omar Dani and Dani's deputy, Leo Wattimena. During the preceding three hours at Haryati's house, the president had ordered the head of the Tjakrabirawa intelligence section to go to Nasution's house to inquire

about his safety and thereby learn whether he had indeed escaped. This intelligence officer, Lt. Col. Ebram, then went with Sukarno to Halim. The head of the Pasopati kidnapping force, Lt. Dul Arief, reported to Untung at the Aerial Survey Office about 8:00 A.M. that his mission had been successfully accomplished and all seven generals, including Nasution, had been captured or killed. After listening to the initial radio broadcast and believing that all was going exceptionally well, the headquarters group moved from the Aerial Survey Office to Halim about 9:00 A.M. All the principals were now soon located at Halim although in three different places. Sukarno's headquarters was at one place, the home of Commodore Susanto, his pilot, Untung/Supardjo's at another and Aidit of the PKI at a third. Aidit had arrived at 2:00 A.M. that morning. Supardjo was to act as the connecting link.

After Supardjo had been brought from Merdeka Palace to Halim by Omar Dani's intelligence officer, Lt. Col. Heru, (named as one of Untung's deputies on the Revolutionary Council), Supardjo and Dani reportedly congratulated each other on their success.(12) Supardjo met with the recently arrived Untung group and after being fed, reported to Sukarno about 10:30 A.M.. The trial reports indicate that Supardjo was congratulated by Sukarno, who appeared at that time to consider the operation basically successful, but that Sukarno also questioned Supardjo as to whether Nasution had indeed been captured or whether he had escaped. Supardjo was reportedly patted on the back and told he had done a good job. I was advised of this latter point by a very well placed Indonesian in whom I had great



confidence long before the interrogation reports began to emerge, apparently on the basis of his inside information as to the course of the interrogations while in progress. This was a man who had initially disbelieved my repeated early statements that Sukarno must have been involved and his coming to me with this report was in surprised acknowledgement. I am accordingly convinced of its basic accuracy.(13) Sukarno also reportedly commented that incidents like the killing of the generals happened and were but a ripple in the Revolution. The subject of a new commander of the Army apparently came up at this meeting with several names being mentioned. According to some reports, Supardjo asked to consult with his comrades and eventually returned with the name of General Pranoto. This version would imply that the Pranoto choice was cleared with Aidit. Other versions attribute the decision to Sukarno himself. Hughes cites the Omar Dani trial testimony that the names of Mursjid, Suharto, and Basuki Rachmat were all mentioned along with that of Pranoto but that Sukarno dismissed the other names saying that Suharto was "stubborn", Mursjid "always fighting" and Basuki Rachmat "often sick".(14) Adam Malik, who was close to Suharto at the time, told American Ambassador Marshall Green in December that Sukarno had appointed Pranoto to replace Yani at 11:00 A.M. and that this was a strong argument for assuming that Sukarno already knew that Yani was dead, a fact that would be known only to those in on the plot at that time.(15) If the appointment was made at 11:00 as stated by Malik to Green, a referral to Aidit seems doubtful, at least by way of Supardjo as the

liaison, since there is no indication that Supardjo had two meetings with Sukarno between 10:30 and 11:00 A.M. as would have been necessary. In any case, the version given by Malik to Green seems more likely to me as Sukarno was not taking orders from Aidit and would feel no need to clear such a non-technical decision. Emissaries were then sent, in any case, shortly thereafter to summon Pranoto and General Umar to the Palace but the emissaries were referred to Suharto who refused to let them go on the grounds that "too many generals had already been lost". Bambang Widjanarko was to play a role in a second effort to fetch Pranoto but his understanding appears confused~ probably because he had arrived at Halim after the morning discussion of Pranoto. His interrogation says or implies that the Pranoto appointment had been deferred to an afternoon meeting which broke up at 5:00 P.M. Sabur then came out of that afternoon meeting and sent Bambang into the city to get Pranoto. The fact that Bambang was sent on such a mission and returned with a negative message from Suharto is clear but the adjutant appeared wrong in assuming that his mission was original. That second mission will be mentioned later.

To pick up another important thread of the story now, the Revolutionary Council issued a decree and two decisions which were signed in the flush of apparent victory in the morning but which were broadcast at noon and early afternoon as doubts began to set in. The decree, which was signed at 10:00 by Untung, Supardjo and Air Force Lt. Col. Heru, was first broadcast at 12:00 noon and repeated three more times over the next two and one half hours. It announced

the decommissioning of the existing Dwikora cabinet (which could still operate temporarily on a caretaker basis), the assumption of power "for the time being" by the Revolutionary Council, and the intent to form provincial revolutionary councils at several levels. It was stated that a new cabinet would be formed in due course by the Revolutionary Council.

Much has been made of the fact that this decree did not mention either the office of the President or the person of Sukarno and it is true that this omission caused many to assume that a coup was underway which was anti-Sukarno in nature, whatever else it may have been. The trial evidence, particularly the testimony of Untung, is clear that there was no intention to set Sukarno aside and all the actions of the President, before during and after these events, should make it clear that Sukarno was both sympathetic and involved. The reasons for the omission are not entirely clear. There has been some indication that an earlier version of the Revolutionary Council's first decree was signed by Sukarno but then torn up because of a loss of nerve.<sup>(16)</sup> This allegation may well be true but it has never been confirmed. An equally plausible possibility is that there was never any intention for Sukarno to be a signatory. It would have been a logical plan to have the original action appear as an emergency rescue action by brave and loyal followers intent on saving the revolution and its leader from a counter-revolutionary plot as stated in the early morning broadcast and then for Sukarno to come into the affair with a public statement of support when a stunned and immobilized Army and nation had to accept the fait accompli. This

expected statement would be buttressed by a powerful propaganda campaign to downplay the violence and to emphasize the necessary removal of a grave threat. The dismissal of the existing cabinet was considered a necessary step to pave the way for the Nasakom cabinet that both Sukarno and the PKI had long desired. Even that would have been but a way station toward a full communist regime. There is no indication that Sukarno disapproved of this decree or was surprised by its contents. Surely the non-communist but opportunistic members of his sizable entourage that day would have said something in the aftermath if he had disapproved and even the Army would have found it convenient to cite any such evidence as part of its effort to pin everything on the PKI and exonerate the President if only he would cooperate.

This decree was followed by two decisions which were signed by Untung alone around 10:00 A.M. and broadcast several hours later. The second "decision" is of minor significance but curious since it established Untung's rank of Lieutenant Colonel as the highest rank in the armed forces. This was clearly a smoke screen to support the image of a group of young officers taking action to save the revolution while underlining the egalitarian thrust of their supposed thinking. The fact that the real tactical commander, Supardjo, was a general and Latief was a colonel, exposes the contrived nature of this announcement. It is also clear that Untung himself was a disciplined obeyer of orders who hardly appears as a forceful politically-motivated figure in the drama. He is largely a symbol of what this Indonesian shadow play was trying to project.

The first decision purported to be more meaty; it announced a 45 member revolutionary council with a five member leadership group that seemed rather peculiar at first glance. Actually, its symbolism and its leftist cast were readily apparent. I recall, for example, that the Political Section of the American Embassy was able to analyze the composition rather quickly and to cable Washington that it appeared to signify communist direction in spite of a smokescreen of other names. This analysis was possible in spite of the fact that the Embassy could know little or nothing about the purported leaders of the Council or some of the other obscure figures. In spite of the red herrings and non-entities, the overall composition of the 80% or so of the names that were known plainly reflected the previous directions of Sukarno's leftward bias. Based on present information, the composition of this Council is even more clear. The announced leadership was more symbolic than real. The Chairman (Untung) was there as a symbol of the multi-service Presidential guard. The four deputies represented the four armed forces (Supardjo from the Army, Heru from the Air Force and two obscure names from the Navy and Police). Latief and Sujono, who were the two key September 30 Movement figures beyond Supardjo and Untung, had to be relegated to mere membership in the Council along with Colonel Suherman, the head of the "movement" in Central Java, in order to provide the desired symbolism of balance between services. Given the supposed egalitarian thrust of the second "decision", one might have expected to see a name like Lt. Dul Arief, who commanded the real dirty work of seizing the "General's

Council" members but there was no room on the list for officers that junior. Instead, the military composition of the Revolutionary Council was led by Omar Dani followed by the seemingly compliant existing heads of the Police and Navy (an accurate ordering of the three in their willingness to go along with Sukarno's pro-PKI views). The list otherwise included names like Generals Basuki Rachmat (East Java Commander), Umar Wirahadikusumah (Jakarta commander), Amir Machmud and Solichin (commanders in the outer islands) as well as a few others in the Army and Air Force. The Army generals were neither leftists nor strong Sukarnophiles such as Pranoto, Mursjid, Sjafiuddin and Adjie, nor were they well known anti-communists like Mokoginta, Panggabean and Kemal Idris. They appear, instead, as commanders whose apparent apolitical and traditional Javanese inclinations did not seem to require their removal but who held key commands that would require some "stroking". Suharto's name is not included despite the reported respect for him by Untung and Latief. According to Brackman, Suharto was reportedly disliked by Sukarno dating from Suharto's command of the West Irian confrontation two years earlier, a possible, if highly speculative, indication of Sukarno's personal involvement with the Revolutionary Council list.<sup>(17)</sup> On the other hand, Suharto may have been omitted because he was thought to be of less consequence than Umar, for example, due to his supposed lack of troops.

Neither these officers nor most of the other Revolutionary Council membership, including the PKI members, were consulted.

Bambang Widjanarko reports for example, that the Sukarnoist Police Minister, Sutjipto, was openly upset when Sukarno showed him and others the list at Halim because of the failure to consult him beforehand and because an unknown field grade officer named Anwas Tanumidjaja was above him on the list as a Deputy Chairman. According to Bambang, Sutjipto soon agreed to leave it all in Sukarno's hands, however.(18) The civilian composition of the Council included Subandrio and Leimena but not Chairul Saleh - an obvious clue as to its orientation given Saleh's informal linkage to the banned Murba Party and his image as a PKI target. The Council was especially heavy on pro-communist leaders of parties other than the PKI (Surachman for the PNI, Siradjuddin Abbas for the Perti Party, and Arudji Kartawinata for the PSII), and other leftist front leaders (Zaini Mansjur of the PNI youth, Mrs. Suryadarma of peace front notoriety and also the wife of Omar Dani's pro-communist predecessor, and Karim of the Journalist Association). There were no members of the PKI Politburo but there were a large number of second level PKI figures (Tjugito, Sukatno of the Pemuda Rakjat, Hardojo, Siauw Giok Tjhan and Mrs. Suharti Suwartiof Gerwani).(19) The Marine Commander, General Hartono, and a pro-communist Jakarta police official, Sukarto, were included. The list proceeded by categories or "functional groups" with representation on an apparent Nasakom basis. While the complexion is clear, it is even more clear to anyone knowledgeable about Indonesian politics at the time that the whole exercise was symbolic. This symbolic purpose was confirmed later by the trial testimony but

the latter is not needed to support the conclusion. One other announcement drafted at 9:30 that morning was that of Omar Dani. It was broadcast in mid-afternoon and expressed support for the September 30 Movement. This statement would be used as early evidence of Dani's complicity in the so-called coup as would the similar message of support in Harian Rakjat the next day implicate the PKI beyond redemption.

Although hopes did not die for the September 30 Movement until late afternoon, they began to wane before the end of the morning. Sukarno had learned by this time of Nasution's escape and of Suharto's efforts to rally the Army. He had apparently also learned that Suharto had significant forces at his disposal in the RPKAD. The CIA study says that Sukarno was reported to have shown great interest in the RPKAD that morning and "according to a very reliable source, he protested to Supardjo at one point, 'you told me the RPKAD would not be in Jakarta'".(20) Supardjo reportedly tried to reassure Sukarno that this fact would not be material. The President may also have felt that things had been bungled in other ways such as the killing of the generals and the omission of Suharto whose already forceful role must have come as a surprise. As a colleague has pointed out, Sukarno may have been reassured by Latief on the basis of the meeting at the hospital that Suharto would be no problem. If so this would have been another shock and reason for Sukarno to lose confidence. In any case, Sukarno told Supardjo at noon to stop the movement, saying that he wanted to prevent further bloodshed and adding something to the effect that if the movement



could not be stopped, it would be butchered.(21) According to Bambang Widjanarko's account, and he was steadfast in maintaining this testimony in several interrogation sessions, Sukarno sent an aide named Suparto to Dewi's house to retrieve his uniform of the previous evening. The uniform was brought to Sukarno in a plastic bag between noon and 1:00 P.M. Sukarno then ordered Bambang to retrieve a letter from one of the pockets which Sukarno took and destroyed. Bambang said he did not see the inner contents of the envelope at any time but that it appeared from the envelope to be the letter from Untung of the previous evening.(22) While the President did not reject the movement, he was clearly trying to pull back from this point on. He did not announce his support for the September 30 movement as had obviously been expected but authorized a statement to be made in the name of General Sabur that "Sukarno was alive, safe, in good health, and still in control of the state and the revolution." This message was broadcast by the radio still controlled by the September 30 movement at 1:30 P.M.

Returning to the Suharto side of the drama, Suharto had quickly notified the Navy and Police of the apparent coup and secured promises of cooperation from Martadinata and Sutjipto or their representatives. The Navy promise of support was apparently urged on Martadinata by his deputy, Admiral Sri Muljono Herlambang, although the latter ran into difficulty with Suharto later over his subsequent loyalty to Sukarno. Omar Dani and the Air Force did not respond to these earlier overtures but the contacts helped to enlighten both sides as to the structure of the crisis. The commander of the

Jakarta police district, General Sawarno, who was the initial contact point in the Police, did not cooperate with Suharto in practice, however. In the course of the day, Sawarno sought to arrest police personnel cooperating with Suharto and he was accordingly forced to resign in November because of Kostrad pressure.

Meanwhile, Suharto had sent another courier to the deputy commanders of the two "rebel" battalions around Merdeka Square at 11:00 A.M. without results. Efforts continued, however, as Major General Basuki Rachmat, the commander of the Brawijaya Division from East Java, who happened to be in town for consultations with Yani, and Brigadier General Sabirin Mochtar succeeded about 2:00 P.M. in convincing the deputy commanders of the 454th and 530th Battalions to go to Kostrad. They were then briefed by Suharto who told them that their units were being used by a coup movement and that the whole story of a Generals Council and a plot against the President were lies. The fact that Sukarno's name was not on the Revolutionary Council list was one of the powerful arguments that the units had been tricked. The 530th Deputy Commander, Captain Suradi, returned with General Sabirin, and briefed the subordinate company commanders. The entire unit (except for "B" Company which was with Lt. Dul Arief) then went to Kostrad and became available to Suharto. This was about 4:30 P.M. The 454th might have followed except for the fact that its commander, Major Sukirno, had left Merdeka Palace to visit his troops and promptly resumed control. Suharto now had available to him the two battalions of the RPKAD, the 328th Kujang (raider) battalion of the Siliwangi

Division, the 530th battalion and various other elements including much of Colonel Latief's First Infantry Brigade of the Jakarta garrison which was apparently being salvaged by General Umar and other officers. In the face of Suharto's now real threat of attack, the 454th withdrew without a fight to Halim Air Base. Shortly thereafter, some 2,000 communist youth from the reserve unit at Halim, which were being sent into the city to bolster a deteriorating situation, gave prearranged passwords to their supposed comrades of the 530th battalion and were promptly disarmed to their great surprise. Suharto now sent the RPKAD to take up positions near Halim with the intention of launching an assault if more subtle tactics did not prevail.(23)

Another emissary was now sent in the late afternoon from Halim to Kostrad with instructions to fetch Pranoto and Umar. This courier was Bambang Widjanarko, the Presidential adjutant. Bambang says in his interrogation report that he was in a hall at Halim outside of a meeting that took place about 4:00 or 5:00 P.m. between Sukarno and his senior advisors including Deputy Prime Minister Leimena, Admiral Martadinata, Police General Sutjipto, Omar Dani, Generals Sabur, Sunarjo and Supardjo. Bambang believed that the final selection of Pranoto was made in that meeting. After the meeting broke up around 5:00, Bambang was instructed by Sabur to take the news of Pranoto's appointment to Kostrad headquarters and to summon both Pranoto and Umar Wirahadikusumah to report to the President at Halim. Failing to locate the two generals, Bambang said he met General Suharto about

7:00. Suharto refused to allow either general to go, however. Suharto made clear to Colonel Bambang Widjanarko that he was now in command of the Army pending information on Yani's fate and that he was ready to launch an assault on Halim in the near future. He asked the colonel to get Sukarno out of Halim quickly before such an attack would be launched.

Bambang Widjanarko now returned to Halim about 8:00 P.M. where he reported Suharto's reply to Sukarno that Suharto had taken temporary command of the Army and would not let Pranoto appear. He also reported his visual observations which were equally or more significant. He had seen Nasution at Kostrad and heard him say that the army should restore order in a way that implied military action was imminent but that a political solution should be left to the President. He had seen RPKAD troops occupying the south and west sides of Merdeka Square and he had observed other troops with scarves in trucks on the Jakarta bypass road. The last must have been the 454th Battalion retreating to Halim. Bambang says he voiced his military opinion to Sukarno that an attack on Halim was imminent and he urged Sukarno to leave the Air Base. General Supardjo was reportedly among those present during this discussion. According to Bambang's account, Sukarno was furious at Suharto's message, disagreed with his assumption of the army command and his refusal to allow Pranoto to leave in spite of the President's direct command. Omar Dani intervened to say that a plane was ready to take Sukarno to Yogyakarta or Madiun in Central Java. The discussion was then interrupted by the arrival of Dewi and Sukarno went with her into

another room. In her 1984 article in Tempo, Dewi noted her arrival at Halim where she found the discussion to revolve around proposals for a Sukarno flight to Central Java. Dewi said she tried to talk Sukarno into returning to Merdeka Palace in central Jakarta but that Sukarno refused because he regarded it as too dangerous (because of its proximity to Kostrad). She attributed Sukarno's attitude to his receipt of "one-sided information". Dewi says she then advocated his going to Bogor which would have placed her on the Leimena side of the debate.(24)

Bambang Widjanarko says that he made strong representations to Deputy Prime Minister Leimena in the interim to convince Sukarno to leave and that he was supported in this by Colonel Saelan of the Tjakrabirawa and by the head of the bodyguard detail. Actually, Leimena had probably argued for a Sukarno departure already but was able to use these additional pressures from the security professionals to get Sukarno to at least consider going to Bogor rather than to Central Java. Various accounts hold that Omar Dani wanted the President to go with him to the air base near Madiun. Although Sukarno had apparently considered going to Central Java, either with Dani, with Aidit or both, he was now persuaded or compelled to go to Bogor or perhaps some combination of the two. In a 1984 statement on the public record (as distinct from the less established testimony in the Devious Dalang), Bambang Widjanarko asserted that he and Leimena (and two aides) got into a vehicle with Sukarno followed by a vehicle with Dani. The issue of whether Sukarno would fly to Central Java with Dani, and perhaps

Aidit, or go to Bogor was apparently still not decided as Bambang says that Dani thought they were going to the airstrip. However, Bambang claims that at the third crossroad he (Bambang) ordered the vehicle to continue straight ahead rather than turning off to the airstrip. Sukarno then reportedly asked where they were going and repeated the question three times until Leimena signalled Bambang to respond at which Bambang "finally" informed the president that they were going to Bogor. At Sukarno's prodding, the adjutant supplied various reasons associated with Bambang's responsibility for assuring the President's security including a strained rationale for not relying on the aircraft.(25)

In this connection, there were persistent reports in Jakarta in 1966 about an alleged plane-side meeting between Aidit and Sukarno at which an angry Aidit was reportedly seen to throw his coat on the ground. There was clearly no such meeting but there may have been some basis for this confused account in that Aidit was reported by flight personnel to have cast his coat on the ground when preparing to leave by plane for Yogyakarta himself about two hours after Sukarno's departure. Aidit would undoubtedly have been furious if he had expected Sukarno to go with him. Perhaps Sukarno, Aidit, and Dani originally planned to go together at a later hour but the pressure of an imminent attack from Suharto's forces caused Dani and a wavering Sukarno to opt for a quicker departure by air without Aidit, who was at another location at Halim irrespective of whether the omission of the PKI leader was caused by inadvertence or by intention. On the other hand, it seems likely that some kind of word

would have gone to Aidit as to the situation and Sukarno's plans before his departure including the President's intention to pursue a political strategy of trying to restore the status quo ante. It is clear that Aidit subsequently operated on a basis of almost total reliance on the President to provide protection for the Party and to provide another of his magical solutions. This adds to the impression that Aidit regarded Sukarno as the virtual supra-organizational head of the Party based on Sukarno's acknowledged leadership of "the Revolution" that both saw in similar terms.

The ride to Bogor with Leimena and Bambang Widjanarko appears to have been uneventful although Sukarno seems to have been in something of a daze from Colonel Bambang's interrogation report. After their arrival around midnight, both Sabur, who was presumably in another vehicle of the convoy, and the Colonel telephoned Suharto to report the President's arrival. Not trusting either, Suharto reportedly sent another officer to the Bogor Palace to confirm Sukarno's arrival. This was apparently Colonel Sarwo Edhie of the RPKAD.

Suharto now directed the two RPKAD battalions to begin infiltrating Halim Air Base and they succeeded in capturing it by the next morning after a minor skirmish with remnants of the by now demoralized 454th Battalion, many of whom had quietly slipped away. Suharto had already denounced the September 30 Movement on the recaptured Radio Indonesia the previous evening and was now in undisputed military control of the capital. Much of Central Java was to remain in "rebel" hands for the next day or two but the news

of Suharto's triumph in Jakarta soon demoralized the September 30 Movement leaders there and the regional commander of the Diponegoro Division, Brigadier General Suryosumpeno, was able to re-establish his control in Semarang after escape from early arrest by the "coup" forces. Yogyakarta and Solo remained in hostile hands for another day and were politically if not militarily insecure for some time thereafter. The days and months that followed are important to this story and Sukarno even appeared at times to have had an outside chance at a comeback but, in retrospect, the decisive turning point had occurred sometime in the late morning of October 1 when Sukarno decided against continuing with the September 30 Movement.

The CIA study, the Coup That Backfired, holds that Sukarno's decision was made in the early afternoon on the basis of the return of the initial group of couriers from the President to Kostrad with news that General Suharto had refused to allow Pranoto and Umar to come to Halim. It further says that Suharto instead "decided to send one person - Deputy Prime Minister Leimena - to Halim to negotiate with the President" and that Leimena delivered an ultimatum for the President to leave Halim by 4:30 P.M. or Suharto would attack. The attack did not take place at that time, of course, although it is true that Leimena played a key role in convincing Sukarno to go to Bogor.

I believe this account is somewhat inaccurate.(26) It seems unlikely that Suharto delivered an ultimatum through Leimena or that Leimena took a very forceful approach with the President that



early. It would also appear that Sukarno's basic decision to begin backing away from close identification with the September 30 Movement was taken earlier, probably between 11:00 and 11:30 if we are to believe he told Supardjo to stop the September 30 Movement around noon and particularly if he tore up the Untung letter about this time as claimed by Bambang Widjanarko. Of course, there may well have been a steady progression in Sukarno's loss of nerve starting with the early morning mix-up over the identity of troops around Merdeka Square (6:30) followed by unconfirmed but gradually more certain indications of Nasution's escape (7:00-10:00) followed by news of the RPKAD presence in Jakarta (11:00-11:30?), followed by more definite word of Suharto's vigorous assumption of command (2:30 or earlier). Even if there was no early exchange over Pranoto, it is clear that Martadinata came to the Palace from KOSTRAD and conveyed a report about Suharto's actions.(27) While Sukarno was backing off, he had not given up all hope even in mid-afternoon, it would appear, since Bambang Widjanarko's account has him showing the list of the Revolutionary Council to Leimena and the others when they arrived at 2:30 and as the renewed effort to summon Pranoto would indicate. However, Sukarno did order the evacuation by helicopter of his three children from Merdeka Palace, which occurred at 4:00 or 5:00 P.M.(28) After their arrival at Halim, the children were subsequently flown to Bandung. The return of Bambang Widjanarko about 8:00 P.M. with news of RPKAD deployments around Merdeka Square and of Suharto's intention to attack Halim must have shown that any hope of a military triumph was finished, however.

Furthermore, word of all these developments must have been coming in from other sources. The 454th battalion's arrival at Halim would have been reported immediately and well before the Colonel's return, for example. Furthermore, the entire city was open to travel back and forth all day so that messengers and agents almost certainly were going and coming. It is noteworthy, for example, that American embassy officers including myself were able to move around the city all day trying to get some kind of feel for what was taking place and having no trouble in moving about (while not learning much that would clarify the confusion), the only excluded area being that which was held by the two battalions immediately in front of the Embassy.

I have expressed a rather conventional view that Sukarno "chickened-out" whether it was in the late morning or sometime thereafter although one could argue that he was only reflecting a very perceptive analysis that his military and PKI lieutenants had badly mishandled the whole affair in a number of ways, that the military balance in Jakarta would be against him in contradiction of everything that had been assumed, and that the only hope now lay in fudging his role and trusting to his mesmerizing oratory to bluff his way to a political solution, citing at every opportunity his prestigious positions as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, President for Life, Great Leader of the Revolution, etc. He may also have counted on the nature of General Nasution, whose reluctance to stand up to Sukarno was well-established. Unfortunately for Sukarno, Suharto was to be much more resolute than Nasution for all his Javanese politeness and political vagueness. Nevertheless, there is a

strong possibility that Sukarno could still have won through if he had announced his support for the September 30 Movement publicly and early, claiming it had forestalled an attempted coup against him by a "General's Council". Much of the Armed Forces would have rallied to the Great Leader of the Revolution, not so much because they really loved or respected him, but because it was ingrained habit and what everyone was used to saying. This would have risked civil war, of course, and would have required a toughness and decisiveness that Sukarno seemed to lack. He was a man of great determination and doggedness over the long term; he was even capable of courage in pursuing his convictions at great risk if the risk were not immediate. But Sukarno was so enraptured with verbal symbols and achievement of his goals through indirect and sly maneuvers that he seemed incapable of firm and decisive leadership in a crunch, particularly when that involved a physical threat to his person. He was devoted to the "revolution" and a revolution in the Marxist sense but his massive ego had brought him to identify the revolution with his own destiny. Ultimately, the revolution had to take second place when the chips were down, if only during the crucial moment that sometimes constitutes a major turning point in the history of nations.

## Footnotes - Chapter XIII

1. These events were fairly well established and are covered in considerable detail in Hughes, Notosusanto and Saleh, and The Coup That Backfired.
2. Mashuri's role as Suharto's first informant was well known in Jakarta soon after these events. According to Suharto's biographer, O.G. Roeder, a television technician on his way home from work had observed highly unusual activity at the homes of Nasution and Harjono. He informed an Army captain who called Mashuri, who then woke up Suharto. Cited by Brian May, The Indonesian Tragedy (London and Boston, Routledge and Kegan Paul) 1978, p.98.
3. Hughes, pp. 59-50 has a more sketchy but similar account.
4. Brackman, p.S3.
5. Tempo, October 6, 1984 (Dewi statement).
6. Ibid. (statement by Police Lt. Col. Mangil Martowidjojo).
7. This account is based on the Coup that Backfired and the Hughes book, supplemented by considerable detail in Mangil's 1984 statement in Tempo.
8. Bambang Widjanarko, pp 58-59. He says later (p.60) that Sukarno only learned the identity of the troops surrounding the Palace from Supardjo at Halim. This account coincides with the later announcement by the Tjakrabirawa leadership that it had taken Sukarno to Halim because of concern about the presence of unidentified troops around the Palace. See Hughes, p.55.

9. Tempo, October 6, 1984 (Mangil statement).
10. Curiously, General Pranoto was also absorbed with Javanese mysticism. The two generals were otherwise quite different in both personality and political loyalties.
11. Notosusanto and Saleh, p.32.
12. The Coup That Backfired, p.24.
13. Bambang Widjanarko, who arrived at Halim about 11:30, that is after the Sukarno - Supardjo meeting, was told by participants that Sukarno looked very pleased, treated Supardjo as the purge commander, and said, "you have done well, why did Nasution escape?" while patting Supardjo's back. Bambang says that the persons present at this meeting were Omar Dani, Sabur, Colonel Saelan, Mangil (head of the bodyguard), and Brigadier Generals Suparto and Sunarjo. This account parallels all the others and is not new except for providing an indication of who witnessed the scene. Bambang Widjanarko, p.61. Notosusanto and Saleh, p.41, say that Supardjo reported to the President who was "noncommittal" but also clearly did not condemn the events of the previous night.
14. Hughes, p.69.
15. American Embassy telegram 1770 of December 15, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
16. Our Embassy had such a report from an Army Colonel as early as December, 1965. See American Embassy telegram 1791 of December 17, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.

17. Brackman, The Communist Collapse in Indonesia, p.98. c
18. Bambang Widjanarko, p.129.
19. There were rumors for many months that Sjam, the head of the PKI Special Bureau whose existence was soon unearthed, was really Tjugito, an overt member of the PKI Central Committee who had long been Njono's deputy as head of the SOBSI labor union affiliate and who more recently had switched to the PKI Secretariat staff. This rumor was probably derived from speculation over Tjugito's appearance as the ranking PKI name on the Revolutionary Council list. This error is contained in Hughes book, p.71, for example. Tjugito escaped the early round-ups and was only apprehended some years later with the PKI remnants trying to conduct guerrilla warfare in East Java in 1968. This was long after Kamarusaman, the real "Sjam", had been apprehended.
20. The Coup That Backfired, pp 34-35.
21. The Coup That Backfired, p. 35. Another version has him saying that, if the movement were not stopped, he would be the butcher.
22. Bambang Widjanarko, p. 29 and p. 76.
23. This account of the actions around Merdeka Square is well established and appears in all the standard accounts. The Army Information Officer, Brigadier General Ibnu Subroto, issued a statement that appeared in Antara (Warta Berita) on October 23, 1965 that exonerated the personnel of the 454th and 530<sup>th</sup>

battalions below their commanders and reported the efforts of Generals Basuki Rachmat and Sabirin Mochtar.

24. Tempo, October 6, 1984, Dewi statement.
25. Ibid, Bambang Widjanarko statement.
26. The CIA study, The Coup That Backfired, says that messengers from Sukarno went into the city in the early afternoon and had no trouble in persuading Leimena (and others like Martadinata) to go to Halim but failed to get Pranoto and Umar to go because of referral to Suharto who refused. This account says Suharto then "decided to send one person - Deputy Prime Minister Leimena to Halim to negotiate with the President" and that Leimena gave an ultimatum for the President to leave Halim by 4:30 P.M. or that Suharto would attack. Suharto did not observe that deadline but Sukarno eventually decided to leave much later. This return of the initial couriers is said to have led Sukarno to instruct General Sabur to make his announcement. The account in Bambang Widjanarko's testimony is the most detailed regarding the chain of events at Halim insofar as he knew them from his own observation. However, his account may overstate his influence on Leimena and inflate his own importance. Nevertheless, as noted later, it does not seem likely that Leimena was "sent" by Suharto to Sukarno with an ultimatum to leave or that Leimena would have been very forceful with the President as early as depicted in the CIA account.

27. Bambang Widjanarko, pp 65-66, states that Martadinata urged Sukarno to get in touch with General Suharto but the President refused on the grounds that Kostrad was supporting the Council of Generals. It is clear that many of the cabinet ministers such as Leimena, Sutjipto and Martadinata were confused in varying degrees about what was happening and that their knowledge of Sukarno's intentions also varied greatly. Martadinata had not been involved in the pre-September 30 Palace plotting sessions and probably believed on his arrival at Halim that Suharto was putting down a coup against the government as a whole.
28. The Coup that Backfired sets the arrival of Sukarno's children at 4:00 P.M.; Mangil's detailed statement on movements in Tempo, October 6, 1984 puts the arrival at 5:00 P.M.



## XIV

### The Early Aftermath

The next few days appeared rather quiet on the surface as if both players and spectators had been exhausted by the momentous events of October 1. Many were indeed physically as well as mentally exhausted. There had been little sleep for the Untung/Supardjo task forces during the night of September 30-October 1 and even Sukarno had probably had only a few hours sleep that night. Some later observers found it odd that the President retired for a nap at one point on the morning of October 1 but that may have been either a necessity or one of the wiser decisions of the day. The battalions occupying Halim air base during the night of October 1-2 must also have been spent by morning and even the politicians were probably long awake pondering the meaning of it all for the nation and especially for themselves. Fearing the possibility of being cut off from communications, our embassy and undoubtedly others posted political officers in the embassy chancery around the clock with radios turned on for possible announcements. Our knowledge at this point was extremely fragmentary, being based primarily on monitoring of radio announcements and sight observations around the city, although our military attaches were beginning to make contacts on the afternoon of October 1 with knowledgeable Indonesian officers. The Indonesians were to keep

their distance for some time as were we, however, in order to avoid any excuse for Sukarno or communist charges of a US-supported Generals' Council. Leading Indonesian generals like Suharto and Nasution remained aloof for months although one of our political officers, Mary Vance Trent, was soon in contact with Nasution's wife whom she had known a long time.

The appearance of the October 1 issue of Harian Rakjat, the PKI daily newspaper, was not much different than any other day, the main story being Sukarno's speech of September 29 to the communist university student affiliate, the CGMI. The October 2 issue was to be a sensation, however, for it fully confirmed PKI support for the September 30 Movement. Harian Rakjat's banner headline said that "Lt. Col. Untung, Commander of the Tjakrabirawa Battalion, Saves the President and the Republic of Indonesia from a Coup of the Council of Generals". It proceeded to set forth the Revolutionary Council membership and other decrees and orders of the Council, the order of the day by General Omar Dani, the Sabur statement on Sukarno's safety and continued leadership of the Revolution, the appointment of General Pranoto Reksosamudro as caretaker commander of the Army, and a demand for the death of five named "capitalist bureaucrats" or "Kabirs" who appeared to be selected more for their anti-PKI activism than their wealth. The kidnappings and murders of the generals were not mentioned. An editorial and several cartoons strongly supported Untung and the September 30 Movement and condemned the alleged coup being planned by the Council of Generals for October 5.(1) PKI sympathy

was clear and irrefutable. What is more, no other significant Jakarta daily was so nakedly revealed as on the side of the September 30 Movement and the PKI thus appeared to stand alone with Untung. Actually, a few minor left-wing newspapers had also exposed themselves to some degree and were subsequently banned. The PNI Central Board headed by Surachman had also issued a statement in support of Untung that was to appear in the Party newspaper Suluh Indonesia but, despite some leakage of the original document, the PNI was able to alter the statement before final publication in a way that confused the issue of who it was supporting other than its usual total commitment to Sukarno. In a 1984 statement, Ruslan Abdulgani, a member of the PNI Central Board in 1965, said that Surachman appeared at Ruslan's house at 1:00 P.M. on October 2 and acknowledged that he had already announced PNI support for Untung's Revolutionary Council.(2) Suluh, Harian Rakjat, the Partindo organ, Bintang Timur, and the several minor pro-PKI papers were all subsequently banned.

The Harian Rakjat edition had obviously been prepared during the afternoon of October 1 and gone to press then or early in the evening. General Umar, as Jakarta military commander, had placed a temporary ban on all newspapers at 6:00 P.M. except for the two military dailies, Angkatan Bersendjata and Berita Yudah, although it may not have been implemented for a while due to all the confusion and strain on resources and communications. Many have tried to explain such a monumental blunder when the September 30 Movement was in the process of failure. Even if the paper had gone

to press during the late afternoon, the question has been asked as to why distribution was not halted once the tide had irrevocably turned. A major factor would seem to be the probable psychological distance between the newspaper and the small band of actors at Halim, a factor that was exacerbated by the absence of chief editor Njoto in North Sumatra and the low rank of the available editorial staff. It may well be that the communist editors in their downtown offices were still confident long after confidence had turned into despondency at Halim where no one happened to think about informing the newspaper given their total absorption with the unfolding catastrophe. The visible signs of the day's events were not very evident for most people and the paper was probably relying primarily on the radio broadcasts. These would indicate that all still seemed to be going according to plan at the time of the Omar Dani order-of-the-day announcement at 3:30 P.M. Word of the Pranoto appointment appears to have been the last item received by the newspaper as the October 2 edition carried a stop press designation, but this news had probably arrived by courier. There is every reason to believe that the paper was readied for the distribution system and the responsible staff was departing at a time when they felt confident but when the final collapse was actually underway. When and if they did receive news of catastrophe in the evening it may have been too late to stop the routine flow of distribution coupled with the fact that the news of defeat was sure to cause panic, particularly since PKI cadres in the capital had been briefed for several weeks on emergency plans to go underground. It is also possible, as some have

suggested, that the Army learned of the damaging nature of the edition and purposely facilitated distribution to impugn the PKI, but there was certainly no evidence to that effect at the time. Whatever happened to cause PKI failure to prevent this gross indiscretion, the effect was decisive in demonstrating PKI guilt.(3)

There was some other early evidence of PKI sympathy for the Untung coup such as a favorable Pemuda Rakjat demonstration in Yogyakarta, a pro-coup statement by the communist mayor of Solo (Surakarta), Utomo Ramelan, and a message from the pro-communist Governor of North Sumatra, General Ulung Sitepu, but communist complicity would have come out much more slowly if it were not for the Harian Rakjat blunder. This would have allowed Sukarno time to apply his normalization tactics of returning to the status quo ante much more effectively and would have made it more difficult for the anti-PKI forces to take swift action while they still had the momentum. Meanwhile, nothing was known definitely about the fate of General Yani and his colleagues although much could be surmised. The Bambang Widjanarko interrogation now produces an important sequence on October 2. The interrogators appear to have had information already from other witnesses that a radiogram from the Commander of Halim Air Base had been given to Omar Dani about evidence of corpses being found at Lubang Buaja. Under questioning, Bambang Widjanarko said he had been told the following day by another adjutant, Colonel Kardjono, and by General Sabur that such a report had been received and passed to the president, who then ordered Colonel Saelan of the Tjakrabirawa to

take a team to Halim to look for the bodies on the evening of October 3. The Saelan team went to the Air Base and commenced a search but were interrupted by the arrival of RPKAD troops, according to this account. The purpose of this search was said to have been the President's desire to remove the bodies and related evidence.<sup>(4)</sup> In any case, the remains were soon discovered and exhumed by the Army and readied for the highly publicized funeral on October 5. Sukarno did not attend the funeral but sent Subandrio instead. The President's callousness toward the fate of the generals was widely noted and hardened the new Army leaders toward preventing a return to the status quo ante. At this time it was not known that Sukarno had commented to Supardjo on the morning of October 1 that such things (as the death of the generals) happen in a revolution but both he and Subandrio were to make similar comments beginning at the cabinet meeting on October 6 where Sukarno treated the murders as a minor incident which should not disrupt the path of the revolution. Sukarno did, from time to time, make grudging statements subject to different interpretations that he did not approve of the Revolutionary Council and the September 30 movement. However, the main thrust of his posture from here on was to protect the PKI, to disparage the importance of what had occurred and even to imply that there had indeed been a plot by a "General's Council" that loyal followers had merely tried to thwart.

In the days that followed, various important participants in the events of October 1 came under Sukarno's protection in the Bogor Palace grounds. Omar Dani had given a briefing to Air Force officers

at Iswahjudi Air Force Base west of Madiun after his arrival there on the morning of October 2, a briefing that described Sukarno's presence at Halim and his congratulations to Supardjo. He then flew to Semplak Air Base near Bogor that afternoon and rejoined Sukarno. Dani no longer discussed Sukarno's role after his initial blunder of saying too much at Iswahjudi. Dani remained in the Bogor Palace with Sukarno and even stayed under its protection after Sukarno returned to Merdeka Palace on October 13. Dani and his family subsequently flew to temporary exile in Phnom Penh in Sukarno's personal plane on October 19. Sukarno had been forced by that time to replace Dani as head of the Air Force but did so "with honor", and subsequently made him Minister of Civil Aviation. Dani was persuaded to return in April, 1966 and was reported to have deeply implicated Sukarno in testimony that has never been released. Although Aidit remained in Central Java, he sent Lukman to attend the October 6 cabinet meeting in Bogor. Njoto also attended that meeting after his return from North Sumatra. After Lukman's departure, Aidit reportedly considered joining Sukarno as well but was unable to obtain a plane and was afraid to go by car. Both Njoto and Lukman remained under Sukarno's protection at Bogor for a time but eventually were forced by public pressure to leave. They were both killed. According to Bambang Widjanarko, General Supardjo also spent three days living in a small pavilion on the Bogor Palace grounds before moving on. When student and Army pressure later developed against such pro-communist ministers as Subandrio and Oei Tjoe Tat, Sukarno extended as much protection to

them as he could. In regard to Supardjo, Sukarno had initially ordered him to take charge of the battalions at Halim but Supardjo fled with Sjam.(5) Presumably his stay at Bogor followed his separation from his PKI contact. Supardjo was captured a year later after a massive search. When found, he had a letter of protection from the President.

Colonel Sarwo Edhie of the RPKAD called on Sukarno on the morning of October 2 and asked him the fate of the generals. He was told that this was a minor matter in a revolution. A more significant meeting occurred on the afternoon of October 2 when Suharto met with Sukarno at Bogor in the presence of Leimena, Dani, General Adjie, Pranoto, Sabur and various senior officers of all services. Early reports that have not been confirmed in the literature, say that Sukarno initially renewed his order for Pranoto to be Army commander and then fell back on Adjie as a compromise proposal but that Suharto rejected both. The CIA study does not mention this point but says that Sukarno called Suharto "too stubborn" when the Kostrad commander pressed for firm action on the missing generals. Sukarno reportedly then turned to Adjie and said he had not appointed Adjie to command the Army because Adjie was also "too stubborn and too much known as an anti-communist". Sukarno reportedly insisted at this meeting that the political settlement of the matter should be left to him.(6) Bambang Widjanarko said, incidentally, that Pranoto reported to Sukarno on October 3 after Pranoto had received orders from the Army to reject any



appointment by Sukarno but he then agreed with Sukarno to leave the question of his appointment to the President.

Sukarno spoke on Radio Indonesia on October 2 (the first hard evidence to outside observers that he was alive). He called for calm, said the leadership of the Army was directly in his hands, that he had appointed Pranoto to carry out the daily tasks of the Army and had assigned Suharto to restore order. This required a great deal of gall considering all that had happened. This broadcast was monitored by Ambassador Green, Deputy Chief of Mission Galbraith (who replaced Green as Ambassador five years later) and by Political Counsellor - later Ambassador - Ed Masters and Political Officer Bob Rich, both of whom were sleeping in the Embassy as part of a round-the-clock vigil that Masters had instituted for the Political Section. All those who heard the broadcast commented on its brevity and the depressed, colorless tone of Sukarno's voice. Frank Galbraith, who had known Sukarno longest, observed that the voice, though definitely Sukarno's, was totally unlike him and showed either extreme fatigue, an awareness of failure, or both. Sukarno spoke again on October 3, this time in a tone of anger. He denied Suharto's accusations that the Air Force had been involved in the September 30 Movement and explained his presence at Halim Air Base as being at his own volition in order to be near a plane. Incredibly, he again made no comment regarding the attacks on the country's top military commanders. Sukarno's defense of the Air Force was particularly incredible given Dani's order of the day, the staging of the raids from Halim, and the retreat of the 454th Battalion

there. This was part of a transparently false effort to exonerate the PKI and the Air Force (as well as Sukarno) and claim that the whole affair was nothing more than an internal Army matter. This original cover story might have appeared plausible if the enterprise had been successful but everything had gone wrong and it was clear that both the emperor and his men were without clothes. Unfortunately, a number of distant foreign observers of Indonesia (those at Cornell and others) repeated this version and some have become entrenched in this position, whatever their reasons.

The cabinet meeting of October 6 was not attended by Nasution, who was preoccupied with his dying daughter, nor by Suharto who was not in the cabinet. Although the subject of the meeting was the September 30 Affair (soon to be called "Gestapu" from a clever acronym based on the Indonesian words Gerakan September Tiga Puluh - Movement of September 30), Sukarno's posture was one of restoring normalcy and ignoring or slighting what had happened. He did condemn the killings themselves (privately he defended them on at least one reported occasion) and held the dismissal of the cabinet by the Revolutionary Council to be illegal. (7) Sukarno also did not express appreciation to Kostrad, he did not condemn Untung, Supardjo and the others, and he did not express disbelief in the rationale for the Untung coup - that is the prevention of a coup by a General's Council. Indeed he implied the opposite and that posture of his was to be clear in all that followed. He called for a halt to all anti-communist agitation, defended Nasakom, defended the Chinese link and demanded restoration of calm, return to the status quo ante

and he promised a political solution by him and him alone somewhere down the road. He also met privately with Lukman and Njoto and reportedly received a written message from Aidit at this time as well as other messages later. According to the trial testimony, only one Aidit message was intercepted and that message proposed six points for Sukarno to follow, the main themes of which were to shift the re-establishment of security to the police, to condemn neither the Revolutionary Council nor the Generals' Council but to treat them equally, to instill calm and a return to normalcy and to promise a political solution later by the Great Leader himself. Actually Sukarno was already doing most of these things and his later statement of October 23 made all these points.

Although the September 30 Movement soon collapsed in Central Java, this region and others remained highly unstable.<sup>(8)</sup> The Diponegoro Division Commander, General Surjosumpeno, could not fully count on many of his units and he soon ordered the return of several battalions from duty in other islands. The situation was sufficiently chaotic that the RPKAD battalions under Sarwo Edhie, now promoted to Brigadier General, were sent to Central Java. They arrived on October 17. The PKI leaders, such as Aidit, had no great difficulty in moving around Central Java in this early period but there was initially no effort to organize a communist armed resistance. They were following the same old strategy of relying on Bung Karno to shield the Party and to contain the outburst of Army fury that had been loosed. It was a reasonable gamble since the alternative would have given the Army an even greater excuse for a

crack down which it had the ultimate capacity to effect. However, this policy failed and Aidit has been roundly condemned for his over-reliance on Sukarno by communist second-guessers ranging from PKI remnants to the Chinese to the Soviets. Their criticisms are based more on their own interests in self-justification and positioning themselves against rivals than on the Indonesian realities that confronted Aidit, however. As Aidit began to see in mid-October that Sukarno was being ignored and that Suharto was intent on turning the September 30 fiasco into an opportunity to crush the PKI, widespread but ultimately ineffectual communist attacks, intimidation and terror began to take place in Central Java after October 21 or 22, particularly in the area around the towns of Klaten and Bojolali that had been the scenes of violent rural clashes in mid-1964. Several police stations were overrun, communist road blocks were established, several hundred PKI opponents were reportedly killed and thousands were intimidated. This wave of violence was soon suppressed by the RPKAD, however, and the tables were turned. As the RPKAD now began a serious hunt for Aidit and other PKI leaders, aroused anti-communist civilians began to kill their communist neighbors. The fury of the great massacres had begun.

Much has already been written on the slaughter of communists and other civilians, many of whom were undoubtedly innocent victims of the hysteria or of a neighbor's long smoldering enmity. Along with other political officers of our embassy, I was among the first to report the wave of stories and rumors reaching Jakarta. This

was before the stories reached the American press and a host of journalists descended, often for a quick week or two of instant expertise. No one has the slightest idea of how many people were killed since the people doing the killing weren't talking in most cases while the stories were coming in second and third and ninetieth hand. In retrospect, I believe there was a tendency to overestimate the numbers at the time and I am indebted for these views to a colleague of those years, Dick Howland, who wrote a very thoughtful piece for internal US government consumption on this issue. The point is not to minimize the tragedy but to seek some kind of objectivity where reliable data cannot and will never be available. Several points should be kept in mind as arguments on the side of lowered estimates. First, there was a tremendous tendency toward gross exaggeration long before the tragedy. I remember a political rally in Medan where the distant central party organization of the PNI in Jakarta claimed a million people were in attendance. However, the local PNI paper had only claimed 100,000 and I was told later by Americans who observed the rally that the crowd could not have been more than 10,000. The level of exaggeration in that case, and in others, was not minimal; it was spectacular. We had initially forgotten about this disposition toward gross exaggeration, given the sensational quality of the news. Reports were coming in of 10,000, 20,000 or 50,000 people being killed in this town and that, often where the normal population was no greater than that. Rivers were supposedly being choked with bodies but when our Consul General in Surabaya, a fluent Indonesian speaker with ten consecutive years

of working on Indonesia in Washington and Jakarta, dashed off to the alleged sites, he found nothing. The British Consul General, whose house was located alongside the Brantas River, did see three bodies wash up on the river bank but that is a far cry from the exaggerated stories that reached the foreign press.

Another factor was that some local Army officers who had flirted with the PKI in its heyday were now anxious to demonstrate their anti communist credentials. Some encouraged killing but more of them talked an even more extravagant game. The single most extreme claim we heard came from such an Indonesian Army officer in a particular middle-sized Javanese town. Another factor was that many PKI members and sympathizers, fearing the terror that was all too evident, simply fled to other places or to relatives. It was often assumed that all the missing were dead. Finally, I regret to say that there was a certain competition among foreign newsmen to come up with a more sensational story than the next guy. Embassy officers talked to many of these visiting journalists and began telling them that an honest story would say that there was no way of setting a figure; even well positioned Indonesians were telling us the same. I recall the answers of some journalists that they had to come up with a figure that was higher than the last one reported or they would strike out with their papers. One of these fellows was the first to reach the million mark, if I remember correctly. He was in Indonesia for a whole week. In saying all this, I do not wish to disparage a lot of fine reporting and often thoughtful efforts to get at the truth to the degree possible by such journalists as John Hughes and Denis

Warner. Some of those who made the comments noted above were also basically good reporters but were under a great deal of pressure to compete. Although few were so honest as to acknowledge it, there was a considerable subconscious pressure on everyone to inflate the numbers and make a better story. This does not imply that numbers were manufactured from nothing; it simply means that the stories of 50,000 in town X, 100,000 in Y province, etc., could simply be added up indiscriminately to reach large numbers despite the possibilities of overlap, of no real sources for the fragmentary figures being added, and for the fact that much of the real killing was going on at night and at least in semi-secrecy. The plain fact was that the country was in a state of chaos and there was no coherent government structure or rule of law in the affected areas. I have no "wise" estimate and distrust all such supposedly balanced, educated guesses. The slaughter could range from the 87,000 once announced by Sukarno to the million figure some have mentioned. Indeed, it could even be less or more than that range. Whatever it was, it was an appalling event.

These killings tended to be concentrated in particular regions and to occur at different times. Central Java was first and reflected the rural tensions that had been rubbed raw by the Sukarno-supported PKI land reform drive of 1964. East Java was similar but the conflicts were further exacerbated by the abangan-santri class division and by the anti-communist militancy of the local NU party (in contrast to its Sukarnoist Jakarta-level leadership). Bali was affected by the creeping settlement of

land-hungry Javanese peasants into the Western portion of the island during the previous decade or so and by PNI resentment that its once dominant position had been eroded by a burgeoning local PKI that was supported by an unusual conglomeration of communist or pro-communist top island officials in the Governor's palace, the army and the police. North Sumatra, the fourth scene of concentrated violence, had been rent by conflicts between the Sumatrans and imported Javanese estate workers (i.e. - rubber plantations) as well as by rifts between rival Sumatran tribal groupings. Sukarno and the PKI were not responsible for the underlying social conflicts but they bore most of the responsibility for inflaming the issues in a revolutionary rather than a problem-solving direction. It is also clear to me that Sukarno's post-Gestapu behavior tended to incite the Army and anti-communist civilians to strike much harder than would otherwise have been the case because of their fear that this overpowering figure, who had made an imprint on Indonesian history like that of Napoleon on France, would somehow pull it all out.

If he were to do so, it would have to be without the support base of the PKI whose leadership and cadre structure continued to be hunted down and systematically destroyed. The deaths of Lukman and Njoto have been mentioned. Aidit himself was reportedly captured on November 22 by the RPKAD in Central Java after betrayal by an intelligence agent who had infiltrated the local Party organization. He was summarily executed and buried secretly. The capture and death of the PKI chairman is shrouded in mystery.



Various alleged interrogation reports appeared in Jakarta in the months that followed as well as an alleged confession in a Japanese newspaper but all of these documents appeared suspect.(9) The entire Politburo was eventually wiped out except for one member who was fortunate enough to have been in China and who remained there. Most of the Central Committee met similar fates. In spite of the round-up of the PKI, Sukarno continued to defend the Party as best he could and to proclaim his dissatisfaction with the flow of events. There are some indications that he even communicated secretly with Aidit before the latter's capture although that evidence is tenuous. He gave a speech to a group of university students in December that was not carried by any newspaper in which he dwelled on how much the PKI had contributed to the Revolution. "The PKI", he said, "has contributed more than any other party or group". He referred particularly to the thousands of PKI members who had been killed or arrested in the 1926 uprising, a repetition of his identification with the 1926 PKI rebellion that he had projected in his July and September speeches to the PNI and PSII.(10) Two weeks earlier, he had told the Air Force Command and staff school that the Indonesian revolution was leftist and that no one could change its leftist course, neither generals, nor political organizations nor foreign ambassadors.(11) In a speech in Bogor in mid-January on the day when violence was narrowly avoided between the anti-communist KAMI student organization and the Tjakrabirawa, Sukarno thundered that he could not change. Those who wanted to follow him should follow, those who liked him should defend him. He then

changed his voice into what sounded like an order for coming action, "form your ranks, do not act wildly, await my command".(12) The so-called Sukarno Front soon followed.

Indeed, Sukarno really did appear at times to have the potential to get it all back. From October 1 until Suharto's seizure of state power on March 11, the Great Leader was down but never out and there was a duality of power in the country that has few parallels in history - a brief period in the Russian revolution during the rise of the Soviets alongside the Kerensky Government being the only such event that comes to mind. Adam Malik, the central figure in the Sukarnoist movement of 1964,

a close collaborator of the Army at this time, and a future foreign minister and vice-president, told Ambassador Marshall Green in late January, 1966 that he was not optimistic and believed there was a 50-50 chance that Sukarno would get away with it after all and resume Indonesia's march toward communism.(13)

The above comments by Malik had followed a meeting between Sukarno and his top leaders and cronies plus the military service commanders in which the President had insisted on Nasakom and demanded that all his commands be executed. No one demurred. Nasution seemed grateful as early as October that he had succeeded at long last in establishing warm working relations with Sukarno and had exchanged several warm hand-delivered personal letters with the President. Hope springs eternal, apparently, as Nasution was said to feel that he was "making headway" with the President.(14) The early sense of surface calm after the September 30 affair persisted for

some days and is reflected in the somewhat curious nature of the Indonesian press and of the news agency, Antara, which went on in a kind of business as usual fashion, printing the same old anti-Nekolim slogans, talking about the New Emerging Forces and a big international anti-Western bases propaganda show on Bali called by its Indonesian acronym, KIAPMA. Not much was said in the Antara press coverage for a while about the September 30 affair which seemed to be treated as an acute embarrassment. Following the generals' funeral and Sukarno's defiance, the word was quietly passed to Moslem and other anti-communist youths to begin sacking PKI buildings, book stores etc., and this became a chief characteristic of Jakarta life in mid-October. I was among those who witnessed some of these scenes from a distance including the destruction of the three communist book stores in Jakarta that I had visited once a month or so for the previous two years or more. One was an annex to the main PKI headquarters which was being sacked. Formerly hostile crowds had now become friendly to Americans although there was yet no real contact. At first, there was a tendency to assume that the changes underway would lead no further than the ascendancy of a leftist (Ali) PNI syndrome rather than that of the PKI.

This was not to be, however, as the genie was thoroughly out of the bottle. In the weeks that followed, the new student movement began to be organized into KAMI (university students) followed a little later by KAPPI (secondary students). These movements were not entirely spontaneous and were fanned by the underground Masjumi, the PSI and sympathetic elements in the Army such as

Sarwo Edhie of the RPKAD and Kemal Idris, Suharto's successor as commander of KOSTRAD following Suharto's promotion and Kemal Idris' quick and successful suppression of the PKI and its sympathizers in North Sumatra. The students, sometimes reinforced by sympathetic Army men in civilian clothes, came close to an open battle with the Tjakrabirawa in Bogor as they demonstrated increasingly against the President as well as Subandrio and the PKI. The student movement was gaining strength and self-confidence and it was also gaining a will of its own under its own young leaders. Its courage and discipline were impressive. I remember one demonstration against Subandrio who, in his First Deputy Prime Minister capacity, had taken over former First Minister Djuanda's office next door to our Embassy after Djuanda's death. The students marched up the street by thousands in columns of platoons and were faced by troops who began firing volleys over their heads. As rifles came to shoulders, the students dropped prone on the street as if by pre-arranged signal, then promptly rose and resumed their progress between volleys. It is not clear whether Subandrio was there or not but the noisy demonstration was not halted although no effort was made by the students to penetrate the building on that occasion. The non-communists had learned well from the communist side how to orchestrate a demonstration involving cooperation between demonstrators and government forces according to a pre-arranged scenario. It was also in the tradition of the Indonesian wajang or shadow play, a tradition that tends to emphasize the posturing and disposition of forces rather than their actual use.

Although the masses were by now aroused in their millions against him, Sukarno had the determination to fight back. The man may have wavered on more than one occasion in the face of an immediate physical confrontation but he had the courage or the stubborn commitment to stick to his guns as long as the threat was less than immediate. An effort was made in January to organize a mass action counter-attack under the slogan of a "Sukarno Front" (Barisan Sukarno). This front was nominally headed by Chairul Saleh who was now back in Sukarno's favor, given the dwindling choices available, but Saleh turned over operational control to Lt. Col. Sjafie, a somewhat mysterious police officer with criminal connections who had become a minister attached to the Presidium with responsibility for security. Sjafie worked diligently to organize leftist students as a counter to KAMI. The Partindo Party, which the Army was reluctant to suppress because of the known personal closeness of its leaders to Sukarno, became a front for the infusion of thousands of PKI militants. Occasional clashes occurred while the leftist youth had the support of friendly military units such as the Tjakrabirawa, the Marines and some units of the police. Efforts were also made to mobilize support in East and Central Java where any kind of backing could be found, as among the Marines. Retired General Bambang Supeno (Nasution's old nemesis of ten years earlier and not, of course, identical with the younger officer of the same name who commanded the 530th battalion) was enlisted to recruit a basis of support in his old East Java Brawijaya Division. He later became the main figure in the Sukarno Front efforts of a later

period. All these efforts were to little avail, however. The Army countered the Sukarno Front gambit with a tactic reminiscent of the Sukarnoism movement of 1964. It proclaimed itself, and encouraged all its provincial supporters to declare themselves, members of the Sukarno Front. Everyone still claimed to support the mystical figure of "Bung Karno", however remote that image might be from the real Bung Karno whose political position was clear for all to see even if no one wanted to admit it publicly.

The real Bung Karno kept trying, however. He suddenly announced a new cabinet on February 21, 1966. The new cabinet was more left-leaning than its predecessors with the addition of a number of additional crypto communists. Open communists were all on the run or dead. The biggest surprise was not who was in the cabinet but rather who was dropped-- General Nasution as Minister of Defense. The General, in accordance with his inimitable vacillating style, accepted his expulsion meekly and in the process lost much of the respect of the Army, the student movement, and other anti-communist forces. The people now turned to Suharto as their principal hope for firmness against a Sukarno effort to reclaim his authority and return even more forcefully to a pro-communist path. They also turned to themselves. The now powerful student groups, KAMI and KAPPI, launched massive demonstrations that openly began attacking Sukarno himself for the first time. The Palace was surrounded and members of Sukarno's new cabinet were prevented from arriving by normal means. Confrontation between the Tjakrabirawa and the students ensued, shooting occurred, and a

student was killed. The crowd was boisterous but more festive than ugly. The dead student, Arif Rachman Hakim, became a martyr and the students were galvanized into increasing the pressure despite Sukarno's prompt banning of KAMI, a ban that was ignored. Although students were in the forefront, others were also active. One retired Army officer I knew supplemented his behind the scenes support of the student movement by "arresting" communist cabinet ministers and taking them to KOSTRAD, where they would soon be released. The Army was not prepared to move against the President directly as yet although it did not discourage this popular pressure either.

Tension was clearly mounting to a breaking point. The week of March 6-11 became crucial. A KAMI and KAPPI led mob attacked the Foreign Ministry in an anti-Subandrio gesture on March 8 and wreaked great destruction. Simultaneously a Sukarno Front mob was staged out of the Partindo headquarters down the street from the American Embassy and launched an attack on the Embassy that was not just one of the show demonstrations of the past but an attack with blood in the eye. Fortunately the once-open Embassy had been provided with heavy grillwork and other defensive measures that made penetration difficult without high explosives. The mob set fire to more than thirty automobiles and lobbed a few Molotov cocktails against the front of the building (one came through the window of Political Counsellor Ed Masters) but the mob itself did not get in. Its members finally retreated into Merdeka Square just as the KAMI/KAPPI mob was driven there from the Foreign Ministry.

Troops intervened and the two groups were dispersed amid a hail of gunfire, all in the air. Our embassy soon received intelligence reports that a more serious attack was being readied for March 12 with the intent of entering and killing the occupants of our embassy (or so it was said). A hectic burning of almost all our documents took place on March 10 and 11 and was stopped only in the early evening when an Indonesian with high Army connections telephoned to say that Suharto had sent three generals to Sukarno in Bogor with an ultimatum to surrender power and that Sukarno had done so. At long last it was all over, he said.

This is getting ahead of the story a bit, however, as Sukarno was making a serious bid that week to recoup his power. He scheduled a series of meetings with the country's elite at which he planned to face them down, beginning with the most easily pressured level and gathering momentum toward the final confrontation with the military leadership including regional commanders on Saturday, March 12. During the March 10 meeting with representatives of eight political parties (Murba was still banned and the PKI was obviously not represented), Sukarno demanded complete obedience and renewal of the struggle against "Nekolim". Threats were made and all the participants including General Sukendro of the pro-Army IP-KI Party succumbed to the pressure and signed a pledge of fidelity to the President and his policies. The next day a cabinet session was held in Merdeka Palace with the same end in mind. It was never completed, however, as word was brought to Sukarno that unknown troops (the RPKAD) were moving in, as indeed they were. Sukarno,



Subandrio and Saleh fled to a helicopter and were lifted to Bogor as the cabinet session broke into confusion. This became a famous scene with Subandrio forced to leave so rapidly that he left his shoes behind. This was also a period of Sukarno efforts to mobilize military forces on his behalf and it appears that he received a pledge from Marine General Hartono to use his forces to defend the President. With the military meeting still on and with leftist troops and mobs baring their teeth for a confrontation, no one could be absolutely sure that the Suharto-led Army would stand firm. Suharto again proved himself a man with a keen sense of how and when to apply decisive power in a forceful yet gentle way allowing his antagonist a line of retreat. Three senior generals, Basuki Rachmat, Andi Jusuf and Amir Machmud were sent to Bogor with a paper for Sukarno to sign that in effect turned over all significant power to Suharto while leaving Sukarno with his titles. Although apparently presented with outward politeness and signs of respect, the quality of ultimatum was made crystal clear. Following the already well-established pattern of his life, Sukarno gave in to the pressure of an open, immediate confrontation. The next day witnessed a joyous celebration by the students and most of the people of Jakarta, complete with a military parade.

If the late morning of October 1, 1965 marked the turning point for the collapse of the Sukarno-led communist effort to take total power in Indonesia, March 11, 1966 was the second turning point whereby a period of dual power and anarchy was ended and a "new order" for Indonesia firmly initiated. Sukarno would continue to

struggle like a helpless, doomed insect but there was never any doubt of the outcome. Subandrio, Dani and various other pro-communist ministers were soon arrested; a new cabinet was formed under Suharto with Adam Malik and the Sultan of Yogyakarta as parts of an initial triumvirate; the jails were emptied of anti-communist political prisoners and efforts were begun to shift Indonesia's internal and external orientation.

## Footnotes – Chapter XIV

1. An English translation of the editorial appears in Hughes, p. 78.
2. Tempo, October 6, 1984, Ruslan Abdulgani statement.
3. A detailed analysis of the Harian Rakjat and Suluh Indonesia editions of October 2 appears in Benjamin R. Anderson and Ruth T. McVey, A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press) 1971. This is the controversial "Cornell Paper" that was criticized by many for its view that the September 30 affair was primarily an internal army coup by disgruntled younger officers, mainly from the Central Java Diponegoro Division, who succeeded in drawing the PKI and Sukarno into the affair as "dupes". While it should be obvious that I disagree fundamentally with that thesis, the Cornell paper does contain useful information and insights at the level of micro-analysis. However, I know of no one in the US Government who was there, no other knowledgeable diplomat or journalist on the scene, and no Indonesian official of any political complexion (with the possible exception of the PKI) who agreed with the thesis of the Cornell paper. The authors were led astray in part, I believe, by distance from the scene and the obvious Army effort to slant the material to serve its political goal of destroying the PKI while covering up for Sukarno. The Army initially did not really understand Sukarno's role very well either and was wedded to the idea that he had been manipulated by the PKI and

that gray eminence, Subandrio. The real failure of perception at Cornell was similar to that of the Army, an inability to comprehend Sukarno's drive to "enter the socialist stage" in the immediate future in spite of everything that the President had been saying and doing. The authors' dissatisfaction with the inadequacies of the official explanation led them to an even more idiosyncratic explanation that stretched credulity - the postulation of a fiendishly clever group of young officers in place of the reality of a not very bright assortment of Sukarno loyalists whose concept of discipline led them to personal ruin for the sake of a leader whose commands were law.

4. Bambang Widjanarko, pp.25-27.
5. See Jones, p.389, Bambang Widjanarko, p.33.
6. The Coup that Backfired, p.88.
7. Several writers have reported the remarks of General Sutjipto that some two weeks after the murders Sukarno told him that the generals had been executed with dignity by a kind of People's Court and with apologies to the victims. His description made it all seem very nice. See The Coup that Backfired pp. 92-93. Also Hughes, pp 44-45. This Sutjipto was an Army Major General on the staff of KOTI, the Supreme Command, and was not identical with either of the two police generals of that name who have been mentioned in this work, although neither of the above sources provides a clear identification.

8. A description of the September 30 Movement in Central Java and Surjosumpeno's escape does not seem necessary to this work. Fairly detailed accounts are available in Notosusanto and Saleh, pp 52-59 and in Hughes, pp.143-146.
9. The classical account of Aidit's capture appears in The Coup That Backfired, pp. 77-84. Also see Hughes 162-172. I received an excited report of Aidit's alleged capture from a student activist who had reportedly heard it from the Army some weeks before the November 22 date. The news was later disavowed by the source. I have often wondered whether this first report may not have been true after all and that Aidit underwent more prolonged interrogation efforts than would have been possible in the official version where death soon followed capture.
10. American Embassy Jakarta telegram 1842 of December 22, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
11. American Embassy Jakarta telegram 1654 of December 4, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.
12. American Embassy Jakarta telegram 2077 of January 17, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library
13. American Embassy Jakarta telegram 2183 of January 28, 1966, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library
14. American Embassy Jakarta telegram 1181 of October 25, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.



## XV

# Nationalism and Communism in Indonesia and Elsewhere

Before proceeding with an examination of the direct and indirect effects of the unexpected collapse of Indonesian communism on other countries and on the balance of power in Asia, some further summary remarks on Sukarno and Indonesian communism seem necessary. These will be set forth in this chapter and the next.

In developing my views on the importance of Sukarno's ideological commitment toward a communist future for Indonesia as the key to the otherwise bizarre September 30 Movement's abortive coup, I have become aware of the great difficulty many people have in seeing Sukarno as a "communist". These discussions tended to founder on at least three obstacles that have both semantic and conceptual roots and cause people to talk past each other. One problem was the tendency in the West, and in the United States in particular, to view communism and nationalism as mutually exclusive absolutes. Of course, everyone also knows that Soviet communism and Russian nationalism co-existed and were interwoven and that the communist-led upheavals in places like Vietnam and Cuba had strong national roots. Yet there has been a tendency to argue that a movement or a particular figure was at bottom either a communist or a nationalist. These arguments still go

on in the somewhat fruitless debates over whether we "drove" Castro from a virgin-like pure nationalism toward communism or whether Ho Chi-Minh might not have been rescued for a kind of liberal democratic or at least "Titoist" Vietnamese nationalism if only we had sided with him against the French. There is far too much liberal romanticism and wishful thinking in these positions but one must also admit that something similar has occasionally appeared to happen as in the apparently genuine conversion of Aung San in Burma from his underground communist party membership before 1944 to a kind of democratic and national-centered socialism before his assassination in 1948. This can be explained, at least in part, by the policies of the British Labor Government under Prime Minister Attlee and the attitudes of Admiral Mountbatten but it was also a reflection of Aung San's capacity for intellectual growth. The need for Americans to categorize national Marxist leaders one way or the other was propelled to a great extent by the early post-war view that nationalism was "the great bulwark against communism", a view that rose from the heavy dependence of weak Marxist parties on Soviet support during the late 1940s and early 1950s and on the claims of communism itself to be a unified international movement. The test of true communism appeared to be, and to a great extent was, abject fidelity to an omniscient Moscow. Beneath the surface, this international orientation was always suspect; the break-up of Moscow's authority made it more so. Still, the subconscious after effects linger on in our thinking.



A second problem is the residue of McCarthyism on the liberal mind in the United States. The irresponsible demagoguery of McCarthy and other right wing extremists in the late 1940s and early 1950s led to an excessive reaction. It became not only unfashionable but a sign of implicit intellectual bankruptcy to regard a radical third world figure as "communist", however radical and Marxist the content of his rhetoric or his policies. Some writers on Indonesia have dismissed even the possibility of examining a communist basis to Sukarno's outlook with a flip assertion that the easy thing to do would be to label Sukarno a communist. The implication is that anyone who adopts such a hypothesis must be a political Neanderthal with a bent toward Fascism. This position might be sustained if the criticism were to be followed up with an imaginative and well-documented analysis of Sukarno's motivations that could really explain why he so thoroughly identified himself with the communist party internally and with the more extreme communist parties abroad. Instead he is portrayed as a political eunuch or as an opportunistic intellectual lightweight. While simplistic and emotional communist labels must be eschewed, I believe that the equally simplistic and emotional dismissal of such a possibility should also be avoided. The merits of the case should be argued, not dismissed without argument through the implicit intimidation that one is a Neanderthal for daring to believe that people may have been communists who acted and talked that way.

A third impediment to seeing the communist quality of Sukarno's political orientation is the subconscious picture that most

Americans had of communists as ascetic or at least very serious appearing men in proletarian suits of the Stalin or Mao variety who fit some kind of standardized personality mold or image. There has been such a syndrome in communist behavior in most places and most times but it is hardly an essential point and, in any case, there have been many exceptions. It is true that the young PKI leaders were conservatively dressed and of sober demeanor, although not nearly to the degree of their Chinese comrades, but Sukarno never felt a need to abide by such conventions for a variety of reasons including his need to play to broad national (and especially Javanese) expectations about the properties of a paramount leader, his need to be all things to all men for the sake of the early stages of the revolution and, far from least, his own ebullient personality and epicurean tastes. Although Marxism-Leninism claimed to be an internationalist doctrine, its primary inner appeal has been to paranoiac nationalism. Indeed, communism has only been successful in appealing to portions of national elites in those have-not or degraded countries like Russia, China, Indonesia, and much of the Middle East where there was a highly developed sense of national inferiority coupled with a considerable sense of potential (or lost) grandeur.(1) Marxism's implicit paranoiac appeal was to blame one's troubles on someone else (capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, etc) and to project visions of grandeur (building socialism and then communism, ending exploitation of man by man, having a total monopoly on revealed truth). At the individual level, a person who typically lapses into a paranoiac approach toward dealing with felt

inferiority is not so much the fellow with a 90 IQ but the confused and disoriented fellow with a 120 IQ who knows he has the basic mental equipment to succeed but is not doing so. He could (and may) take a problem-solving approach of lowering his expectations or improving his qualifications by hard work and study or by some combination of the two but it is much easier to blame it all on others. While nations cannot be regarded as organic personalities susceptible, en masse, to structural psychological afflictions like paranoia and catatonic schizophrenia (avoidance of an unpleasant reality by shutting out its very existence), politically conscious nationalists may and do identify with their nations in ways that closely resemble individual psychological behavior, in my observation. Marxism has intellectual features that may be examined on their objective merits but the appeal to nationalist elites has primarily been to these intrinsic paranoiac qualities in the core doctrinal tenets of Marxism. A corollary, incidentally, is that no individual chooses a paranoiac course of behavior for the sake of someone else's ego; he does so only for his own ego. Similarly, no nationalist leader chooses a paranoiac solution (communism is only one) to the problems of an "inferior" nation with "superior" aspirations for the sake of some external power (i.e. Moscow or Peking), he does it for the sake of his own nation. Paradoxically, the purportedly internationalist doctrine of Marxism was almost inevitably destined to attract rabidly nationalist adherents - to the degree, of course, that they achieved power on the basis of their own efforts.

This quasi-psychological digression seems useful in order to explain the nature of Sukarno and other Indonesian Marxist-nationalists, whether they were formally in the PKI or not. My view of the young Sukarno, and this is hardly controversial, is of an intelligent, sensitive, romantic, young man who became steeped at an early age in the glories of Javanese culture and then immersed himself in the heady atmosphere of radical nationalist politics. It is clear that he was highly resentful of Dutch supremacy and hyper-sensitive to racial slights. These feelings were not uncommon for most subjugated peoples but Sukarno felt them especially strongly. His story of his brief boyhood courting of a Dutch girl and the crude rejection by her family was revealing of this sensitivity as were some of his comments to Ambassador Howard Jones. On one occasion, he put his bare brown arm alongside the white arm of Jones and gave forth a bitter soliloquy on the slights he had suffered or thought he had suffered as a young man.(2) Sukarno was more of an intellectual and theoretician than most people have given him credit for but he was attracted to Marxism from deep emotional needs. His mental agility then gave him the capacity to adapt that Marxism to his individual needs and to construct an elaborate network of Marxist rationalizations to express his needs. One of Sukarno's deepest impressions appears to have been his secret but very minor role in the 1926 PKI uprising which he alluded to time and again in 1965.(3) The scene was always the same and had to do with a message being smuggled from an imprisoned PKI "leader" in the Ciamis jail to Sukarno to "carry on the struggle". Sukarno never

revealed who was the source of the message or precisely what his tie to the 1926 PKI had been. His role was probably minor and whatever germ of truth there was had probably become magnified in Sukarno's mind over the years. However imaginary and however inflated, this linkage seems to have been extremely important to Sukarno's romantic view of himself as a revolutionary of heroic quality. The fact that he had to keep this early PKI linkage secret or at least obscure over the decades to protect his credentials as the pre-eminent non-sectarian national leader appears to have increased its significance to Sukarno and to have romanticized it.

Sukarno's Marxism was in one sense subordinate to his nationalism in that he could never countenance subordination to a foreign political party or country. He also was clear-sighted in seeing independence as the major early goal to which all else, including social reform, should be subordinated. Achievement of communism without a Nasakom way-station was unthinkable to Sukarno since the first goal was to mobilize all the national forces against the colonial power. After independence had been achieved and become more or less old hat, the need for further revolutionary struggle became an increasing psychological need for a man like Sukarno who romanticized his self-appointed role as the leader of a continuing revolution. The dialectic of history then provided the intellectual justification to express the deep craving Sukarno felt for continuing revolutionary upheaval. The communist dialectic itself had justified the subordination of purely communist goals to national goals in the independence struggle. That same dialectic now

sanctioned, and even demanded, a shift to ultimate communist goals. A belief in a revolution of different stages was deeply ingrained in Sukarno's thought process. It may be noted, incidentally, that this is not merely the thought processes of 1965; it was always there in the past, even if muted. It is implicit in the Nasakom idea that goes back to 1927. The two stage revolution also appears in some of Sukarno's statements and writings of the early post war period, notably in "Sarinah", a publication of the year 1947. According to the Australian biographer, C.L.M. Penders, Sukarno, "unlike some of the socialists and communists ... who considered the revolution foremost as a movement for social and economic change, ... argued that the revolution was solely nationalistic and that a social-economic revolution should not be attempted until after complete national freedom and consolidation had been achieved". Penders went on to cite Sukarno's views from "Sarinah" as saying that Indonesia "had only reached the national revolutionary phase in the world-wide struggle against capitalism and imperialism, and all efforts therefore should be directed at establishing an Indonesian nationalist state, which was a pre-requisite for any true socio-economic development. National unity was of the utmost importance and a class struggle should be avoided".(4) This position explains Sukarno's posture of unity at all costs in the early post-war period but it also points to a commitment for the true revolutionary to move on to the social revolution in a later stage and that is exactly what Sukarno was saying in 1965 - that the time had at last come for the social revolution to become paramount. There is no contradiction between

these two postures of unity and independence first in 1947 and achievement of "socialism" as the top priority in 1965 along with its handmaiden of "progressive revolutionary unity" based on the PKI and those fellow travellers willing to go all the way with a now identical Sukarno/PKI prescription for the real Marxist revolution. The two stages concept is also enshrined in the Political Manifesto (Manipol) of August 17, 1959 and I would attribute its presence there to Sukarno himself even though Aidit may have had a hand, as claimed, in the drafting of that speech. Sukarno was far too much a master of language and far too knowledgeable about ideology and doctrine to accept material he opposed and that goes as well for the later speeches drafted in part by Njoto and Oei Tjoe Tat.

Sukarno's romantic view of the 1926 PKI revolt and his own identification with that "generation" were encouraged by Aidit, of course. At the Sixth PKI Party Congress in September, 1959, Sukarno praised the PKI saying, to quote Guy Pauker, that "from the time of his youth till the present he had always cherished feelings of close friendship with the PKI". Aidit then responded that, "We who are obliged by the Party to study the history of the Party and the struggle of the Indonesian people, know just how close are the spiritual ties between the PKI and Bung Karno. It was none other than Bung Karno, still then very young, who warmly welcomed the heroic 1926 rebellion".(5) The implication is that Sukarno was, at a minimum, a PKI sympathizer in 1926, if not a secret Party member. This subtle influence on Sukarno may have strengthened his sense of identification but it was hardly decisive. Sukarno had long been

inclined in this direction and remarks like those of Aidit were probably viewed by Sukarno primarily as evidence that Aidit, unlike Musso and Alimin, understood Sukarno's revolutionary commitment and had a similar view of what tactics and policies were required at different stages.

Quoting again from "Sarinah" in 1947, Sukarno said that "it is socialist theory which makes us understand that the present stage of our revolution can be nothing else than a national stage..... The Indonesian nationalist who thinks and acts in a social-nationalist way is a socialist in the true sense of the word, Conversely, an Indonesian 'socialist' who already wants to 'organize' a social revolution, is a 'socialist' who harms the revolution".(6) This view of Sukarno in 1947 was sharply at odds with the Musso approach of 1948 and helps to explain Sukarno's readiness to repudiate Musso during the Madiun affair (along with his personal interest in being number one). This 1947 Sukarno view, which remained consistent over the years, was identical with the PKI position in the late 1950s and early 1960s, however. Indeed, no one was more vociferous than Aidit in repudiating those (like the Murba Party) who claimed that the socialist stage had arrived or was arriving in 1964-65 and in Aidit's general position that the tasks of the national democratic stage must continue to be emphasized and socialist revolution postponed until the time was ripe to enter the socialist stage. As noted elsewhere, it was Sukarno, not the PKI, who finally decided that it was time to enter the socialist stage and to do so by acts of violence that would ensure its irreversibility, but both Sukarno and the PKI - despite the



latter's apparent initial doubts - agreed that certain objective events were necessary to make the transition. Although expressed in the jargon of crushing imperialism and feudalism, the real meaning of the requirement was the achievement of a monopoly of power by the communists through dominance of civil politics (essentially completed) and political control of the military (attempted on September 30/October 1).

What about Sukarno's occasional statements that he was not a communist as in the "autobiography" prepared by Cindy Adams, in similar comments from Sukarno's "Nationalism, Islam and Marxism" in 1927, and even one speech as late as 1965?(7) I regard these statements as tongue-in-cheek remarks aimed at lulling domestic anti-communist and Western audiences. The "lie" may not have been outright in that Sukarno would call himself a "socialist" in the same statement and otherwise take strong Marxist positions so that he could say to himself that he was using the term "communist" in the sense of a Soviet lackey or of a formal PKI card-carrying member or of a target of anti-communist hysteria with all that such an image would imply. The man was exceedingly capable of hair-splitting rationalization when convenient. He loved to project different images in different directions. After the burning of the British embassy in September, 1963, Sukarno came to the US ambassador's residence to put on a friendly show in order to placate Western opinion without retreating an inch on substance. I recall vividly his act of calling himself the Indonesian Clark Gable (an allusion that also appears in the Cindy Adams' book which was aimed at disarming or dividing

Western opinion). Delivered in English, this speech was totally different from his speeches in Indonesian to Indonesian audiences. By chance, I happened to live across a small canal from the Soviet residential compound where Sukarno appeared the next day. My Indonesian speaking colleague, Henry Heymann, and I walked over to the wall alongside the Soviet compound and listened to Sukarno's speech to the Soviet embassy in both Indonesian and the Russian translation (my Indonesian was still weak but my Russian was then still strong). Between us, Henry and I could report a speech 180 degrees different from the speech of the previous day which had indeed had its effect on some of the more gullible Americans. A difference of emphasis was to be expected, of course, but Sukarno was able to project a totally false posture when it was tactically useful.

Aside from such anecdotal examples (and there could be many), Sukarno's occasional statements of being a Marxist and a socialist but not a communist pale into insignificance when viewed against his statements of identification with the PKI, particularly in 1965, his record of consistently pushing the revolution toward a communist climax, and the clear course of conduct that he adopted in attempting the liquidation of the last obstacles to communist power. For those who prefer to regard Sukarno as a nationalist rather than a communist, it is suggested that the same criteria then be applied to D.N. Aidit, for their views were essentially the same. They both wanted a two-stage revolution in Indonesia in which the second would be "socialist" in the Leninist sense but only as altered to fit

Indonesian conditions. All communist revolutions that are organized by indigenous forces are also nationalist and tend to have deviations that are natural to the situation in the particular country. Asian communist revolutions also tend to emphasize the role of the peasantry and see Asia as more important than Europe. This is hardly surprising. Indonesia, of course, did not take the path of a peasant armed revolt but that was hardly desirable given the position of Sukarno and the left at the top of the formal government structure and the distribution of military power elsewhere although in a context where loyalties were blurred and lip service was paid to Sukarno's slogans and concepts.

## Footnotes – Chapter XV

1. Nineteenth and even Eighteenth Century Russian history is replete with evidence of this deep inferiority complex. In philosophy and literature, the "Westernizers" tended toward excessive mimicry of the West as a response to perceived Russian backwardness while the "Slavophiles" tended to withdraw unduly into a search for unsullied virtue in the Russian peasant and Russian village. These contrasting reactions to perceived inferiority were also manifest in a less intellectual way in the policies of various Tsars. Peter and Catherine II often carried Westernization to extremes (e.g. French rather than Russian to be spoken at the Court) while Nicholas I withdrew Russia behind a kind of iron curtain more than a century before Stalin, looking for virtue in Russian backwardness.
2. Told by Ambassador Jones to his staff in late 1963 or early 1964.
3. The story appears, for example, in "Sarinah", in Cindy Adams' Autobiography of Sukarno, in his speech of July 25, 1965 to the PNI and in his September - 1965 speech to the PSII.
4. Penders, pp. 109-110.
5. Pauker, "Communist Prospects in Indonesia" (Santa Monica, Calif., Rand Corporation) 1964. p. 43.
6. "Sarinah", p. 235, quoted by Penders, p.112.

7. Cindy Adams, Sukarno; an Autobiography (Indianapolis) 1965  
quoted by Penders, p. 32.



## XVI

# The Rise and Fall of Indonesian Communism – A Perspective

The story of Indonesian communism has been one of spectacular advances and sudden collapses over a period of half a century. Nowhere in the world outside the Soviet Union did communism gain such an early foothold at the end of World War I (the Bela Kun regime in Hungary was a transitory phenomenon and hardly related to the re-introduction of communism under the aegis of the Red Army in the late 1940s). The reasons for communism's early impact on Indonesia are complex but there are several key factors. There was the conscious effort of energetic and dedicated Dutch Marxists to propagate their ideology and their skillful appreciation of the need to build up a national leadership even if that were to mean significant nationalist distortion. Second, the country was in the early stages of a fervent nationalist revival that was intellectually susceptible to the appeal of the Leninist analysis on imperialism and colonialism. Third, the deep-seated internal societal conflicts between abangan and santri in Java and other cleavages provided a seedbed for consciously anti-clerical, secular, political movements. This latter factor also was a source of great weakness in another sense, however, since it ultimately divided the nationalist movement. Furthermore, the Indonesian nationalists, whether

communist or not, faced a well-organized and determined foe in the Dutch administration, unlike their counterparts in a chaotic, anarchic China that had never been ruled by outsiders whatever their indirect and tangential inroads on Chinese sovereignty. The genius of Sukarno was to recognize from the beginning (or from the lessons of the 1926 PKI failure) that a strictly nationalist revolution aimed at independence was essential as a "first stage" and that any ultimate "socialist" revolution would not only have to be deferred to a distant future but would have to be blurred for the sake of nationalist unity in the first stage. The corollary was the Nasakom idea which was inherent in Sukarno's approach from 1927 on - a tactical united front doctrine that avoided the internationalist crudities of Leninist jargon in order to weld together a genuine national front toward independence. The degree of accomplishment was all the more remarkable given the conflicts within Indonesian society and the additional geographic liabilities inherent in a far-flung archipelago. Sukarno's contribution also rested on his ability - although this is also a characteristic of Indonesia reflected throughout its history - at being able to assimilate foreign ideological imports in an eclectic manner that suited local circumstances. Marhaenism expressed that idea, the adapting of Marxism to Asian conditions, and this willingness to adapt was evident among such formal Indonesian communists as the early Semaun, Tan Malaka, and, above all, Aidit - as long as they lived and worked in Indonesia. It may even have been true of the early Musso and Alimin but they, and particularly the former, were contaminated by their long exile in Moscow. The final



great advance of Indonesian communism in the late 1950s and, especially, the early 1960s was due, above all, to the patronage and tactical brilliance of Sukarno although it received help from a flexible PKI leadership who were more than just opportunistic manipulators of the "nationalist" Sukarno. They were young men who essentially agreed with Sukarno's vision of the Indonesian Revolution and of his recipe for mixing Marxism and nationalism. They were the ultimate Sukarnoists - more so than the less ideological Sukarno sycophants and opportunists - because Sukarno ultimately proved that his ideological commitment to a communist Indonesia, toward "entering the socialist stage", was more powerful than anyone imagined. The Chairul Salehs, Ruslan Abdulganis, Johannes Leimenas and the others found that Sukarno was dead serious about his Marxist perspective for Indonesia and that this Marxism was not a watered-down compromise but a hard-line, Leninist version.

Why then did Sukarno and communism fail? Much of the answer is implicit in the story that has been told in these pages. The major underlying reason that governed everything else was overconfidence. The propaganda of Sukarnoism and communism had become so all-pervasive, and the fear of non-conformity was so great, that everyone sounded like communists and Sukarnoists whether they were or not. Both Sukarno and the PKI had also come to regard their enemies with contempt. Like Mao, they considered their non-communist enemies, both domestic and foreign, as paper tigers to be despised strategically even though one had to be careful

of their latent raw power tactically. Sukarno had been able to divide and conquer step by step and to set the tone of the dialogue to the extent that the non-communists even opposed his efforts through such a lame excuse for a policy as trying to redefine Sukarnoism. Furthermore, Sukarno really believed in the historical dialectic; he saw his entry into the socialist stage as the inevitable consummation of an historical process. A non-Marxist aspect of his thought, his belief that he was the chosen instrument of destiny, the Ratu Adil of ancient prophecy, made him less cautious than a Lenin with the latter's "one step forward, two steps backward" dictum that allowed for adversity.

Aside from this all-important climate of optimistic self assurance that caused Sukarno to go off half-cocked to his rendezvous with destiny, there were many practical failures as well as Sukarno's personal failing of an acute lack of personal courage in the face of a direct physical threat. The single most important practical cause for failure, however, was the overlooked presence of the two RPKAD battalions. But for that accident of fate, General Suharto would have been without the requisite forces to act and all the other mistakes could have been overcome. A corollary failure was the serious underestimation of General Suharto as noted later. Another major failing was the excessive compartmentalization and "need-to-know" inhibitions which caused too many players to work at cross purposes because the right hand did not know what the left was doing. The failure of Sukarno to go to Merdeka Palace on the morning of October 1 was just such a failure. The mishandling of

Harian Rakjat's publication was another. Even the failure to know about the RPKAD's delayed departure for Borneo was probably the result of this narrow, compartmentalized approach and lack of adequate planning and foresight. There seemed to be no allowance for mishaps. The plan was devised and each part was to be executed rigidly and efficiently - and this narrowly defined execution was rather efficient overall - but there was a lack of thoughtful overall direction that would have permitted more flexible responses.

Even so, a Sukarno who could show such willingness to take risks in launching a plan proved excessively cautious in its execution. Prompt Sukarno public reaction on the morning of October 1 that he had been shocked by the heinous imperialist plot against him and a cry to rally the country behind the Great Leader of the Revolution and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces would not only have rallied his civilian supporters but also much of the Armed Forces. Even a suspicious Suharto would have found it difficult to deal with such a position. Of course, the escape of Nasution did make this more difficult. Nasution's escape was probably more important in this sense of providing a channel for undermining or disputing the intended claims that a heinous plot had been discovered and squelched than in any Sukarno fears of Nasution as a military strongman. If Nasution had taken over the Army rather than Suharto, it is not unlikely that Sukarno would eventually have found a way to regain his authority.

Finally, of course, the quality of Suharto as a man of tremendous resolute strength and a natural bent toward inter-service

diplomacy and political maneuver must be accorded considerable significance. Suharto could not have pulled it off without the RPKAD but the instrument also required a resolute directing force and one that knew when to apply direct pressure and when to let up. It is not really possible to know, of course, the degree to which General Suharto's tactics of slow, but remorseless, pressure were calculated and the degree to which he was merely engaging in opportunistic adjustments to the situation as well as reacting to the gradual development of his own views. There is a rather good case for giving considerable weight to these latter factors since Suharto seemingly had to be pushed and cajoled by the student movement and his own more forceful subordinate commanders to move against Sukarno in the long interregnum between October 1, 1965 and the March 11 order. Still one must also be impressed by both his firm resolution and his tact on October 1 and by his ability to shift power away from Sukarno in a way that did not set off any violent inter-service clashes that were always a latent possibility.

## XVII

### The Impact of Failure

A major thesis of this book is that the failure of the September 30 - October 1 coup became a historical turning point not only for Indonesia but also for the entire East Asia region and to some extent beyond. Although Indonesia's size and strategic importance contributed to this result, they are secondary to the psychological impact on Asian communism resulting from the great, and probably excessive, expectations of the Asian communists that they were winning everywhere and that the non-communist forces, both indigenous and foreign, were in disarray and retreat. The shock of unexpected defeat in Indonesia, it will be argued, was especially great on Chinese ambitions and served to drive the nascent Cultural Revolution almost immediately into an orgasm of inner-directed fury while also leading to a major shift in the focus of the Sino-Soviet dispute. Before delving into those issues of positive cause and effect, it is also worth examining the probable effects of a successful outcome for the communists. While perforce speculative to a degree, it should not be overly difficult to postulate the broad outcome of a communist victory in Indonesia that was so widely expected by the communists themselves. A successful elimination of the non-communist leadership of the Army was to be followed by Army acceptance of a new leadership consisting of leftists or Sukarnophiles

such as Pranoto, Sjafiuddin, Adjie and Mursjid. Officers such as the latter two were not communists but are believed to be men that would have totally accepted Sukarno's guidance and would have gone along with the policies of real Nasakom advisory councils and a communist-dominated fifth armed force that would have made any future effective resistance to a communist Indonesia impossible. Highly regarded, but apolitical, professional soldiers like Suharto (and this is how Suharto was then perceived) might have been retained for a time but in safe positions that would not threaten Sukarnoist or communist control. Loyalty to both Sukarno and Marxism would have become ever-stronger requirements for advancement and the Pranoto/Sjafiuddin/Omar Dani coloration would become the norm at the higher command levels of the armed forces. While this process would have been continuous over several years, it is clear that Sukarno would not have waited for its completion to proclaim entry into the socialist stage and to install a Nasakom cabinet dominated by the PKI and the wide array of communist sympathizers and opportunists available in the other parties or outside them. Some of the other parties such as the PNI and Partindo would have been merged with the PKI in due course while others would have been allowed to exist in limbo for a while but the PKI would have quickly become the openly acknowledged "vanguard". The relationship of the Party to the State would have become Leninist with variations suited to Indonesian conditions.

Meanwhile, the international posture of Indonesia was already well established as a close ally of China and as a presumptive leader

of the most radical tendencies in the Third World. A successful "coup" would have reinforced these existing tendencies and ensured their acceleration. Although an Afro-Asian Conference, previously postponed because of the Algerian coup, depended on others, prospects would have been better for its occurrence in late 1965 or early 1966 if Indonesia had not gone awry. More important, the great Sukarno dream of a Conference of New Emerging Forces (CONEFO) would have taken place in 1966 with strong Chinese backing. CONEFO was to have led to a radical permanent international organization in competition with the UN and a platform for rallying the Third World against the West. The degree of its future long-term success is highly questionable, of course, but it would certainly have been a source of trouble while it lasted.

More significant than the ephemeral world of radical international conferences and posturing would have been the effects of communist victory on East Asia. First of all, it is extremely difficult to believe that China, whatever internal convulsions might have occurred anyway, would have retreated into itself if the planned monumental communist victory in Indonesia had indeed come to pass. The prevailing current of anti-Western activism on a regional scale would have been strengthened, not weakened, and the only recently proclaimed Lin Piao line of the world countryside surrounding (and vanquishing) the world city (of North America, Europe and their adherents) would have been bolstered by a mighty practical deed. Weak Southeast Asian states like Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines would have been intimidated toward compro-

mise, neutralism and eventual accommodation - or so, at least, would the Asian communists have postulated. The pressures from the communists on these countries would certainly have mounted and not only at the level of psychological intimidation but in accelerated support for insurgencies. The costs to the United States, Britain and the Commonwealth countries would have increased with foreseeable effects on their domestic constituencies. My own view is that the effect of higher cost would have been compensated by a greater awareness of the threat and that the U.S., in particular, would have become more committed, rather than less. This is by no means certain, however. In any case, the overall problem of militant Asian communism would not have receded but would have grown and the history of all of East Asia in the rest of the 1960s and 1970s, and probably beyond, would have been vastly different and vastly more difficult.

Turning now from the nebulous but significant world of what might have been to what actually did occur, the concluding chapters will briefly examine the main outlines of change within Indonesia itself followed by a discussion of the impact of the Indonesian political cataclysm on the region and the world. Some of this effect was direct and can be analyzed in traditional terms but much of it was subtle and indirect and requires the reader to compare the psychological climate before October 1, 1965 with that which followed and to do so in regard to the various affected countries of which China and the United States are the most significant. The point in all that follows is not to blow up the country of Indonesia as



a determinant of the fate of larger and more powerful nations but to lay the changes that followed to major shifts in psychological perceptions and attitudes. Much of this attitudinal shift was of an "out of awareness" variety, yet the chain of events is very clear and the arguments for causality do not appear far-fetched if one re-examines these events with a dispassionate mind and a broad perspective.



# XVIII Indonesia's Post-

## Sukarno

### Development

The new leaders of Indonesia were men with strong records of nationalist and anti-colonial activity. They had been in the forefront of the struggle against the Dutch and they subscribed to policies of jealousy guarded independence and non-alignment. Many of the slogans of the earlier Sukarno era, particularly "Panca Sila", were to remain sacred symbols of Indonesian nationalism. Open alliance with the West was unthinkable, nor was it sought.

The United States was obviously gratified by the turn of events but it also moved cautiously. A cable from Ambassador Marshall Green on October 23, 1965 had advised the Department of State to take great care in offering US assistance so as not to evoke a negative reaction. It suggested some forms of "safe" assistance such as food under Public Law 480 to be handled through private voluntary agencies, extension of export credit insurance to facilitate normal exports, quiet resumption of both civilian and military training programs in the US if requested by the Indonesians and routine handling of inquiries for rice imports from the US. Assistance should be rendered without publicity and only if it would not weaken friendly elements politically.(1) A Title I PL-480 program was actually begun around August/September, 1966. Every

effort was made to keep a discreet but friendly distance and to prevent any heavy-handed attempt at overt alignment, a policy course that was generally accepted in Washington and carried out with wisdom. Ambassador Green was also a strong proponent of keeping a low profile in Jakarta and, above all, of restraining the inevitable tendency of program agencies like AID and USIA to build up their staffs to the highly visible presence of earlier years. This effort was perhaps less successful but it did serve to balance off the political advantages of a low profile against the obvious needs of program agencies such as AID to have sufficient staff to manage needed programs when they became necessary (particularly in light of Congressionally - mandated paperwork requirements).

After the "March 11 Order", which effectively shifted power from Sukarno to Suharto, a major international effort was required to salvage the Indonesian economy from its virtual collapse during the late Guided Democracy era. One of the first steps was to re-schedule the Indonesian debt in the summer of 1966. The international effort was eventually managed through an international consortium of donor nations from Western Europe, North America and the Pacific Basin.(2) The consortium served the economic and managerial function of reducing duplication of effort and ensuring a rational application of resources to real needs. It also served the political function of minimizing visibility and projecting a professional and technical quality to the effort. The new Indonesian government contributed greatly to its own economic rehabilitation and to its capacity to apply external assistance fruitfully by its appointment of

an all-star cast of highly-trained professional Indonesian economists led by Professor Widjojo Nitisastro to key ministerial positions that would manage the economy. This sensible professionalism was continued on the whole in the three decades that followed in spite of continued Army dominance in other fields, endemic corruption in the execution of contracts and business deals, and other blemishes. Despite chronic problems of overpopulation, underdevelopment, and disregard by some officials for broader national interests in specific cases, there is no question that the years since 1966 saw first, a remarkable recovery from economic disaster and later, a consistent if uneven pattern of economic growth and modernization, at least until the stumble of the late nineties.

While relations with the West gradually improved, relations with China and other Asian communist countries rapidly deteriorated. The Chinese embassy and other Chinese facilities had been sacked shortly after the attack on the US Embassy mentioned earlier and Sino-Indonesian relations proceeded to a point of ultimate collapse. Foreign Minister Malik and his close advisors in the Foreign Ministry sensibly sought to maintain diplomatic relations with Peking in order to preserve a genuine non-aligned posture but were overruled by a strong wave of anti-Chinese sentiment in the Army. Strangely, relations with North Korea were somehow preserved to a degree. Relations with the USSR and the European communist countries remained very much what they had been - correct, formal and very distant. The real shift in Indonesian

diplomacy was a strong effort toward association with its erstwhile local enemies. Confrontation with

Malaysia was quickly ended on August 11, 1966 after visits by Suharto's trouble shooter, Ali Murtopo, an intelligence general. Indonesia also re-entered the UN in September, 1966. It was unthinkable that Indonesia would join the Western alliance system of SEATO, however, and this alliance system had, in any case, lost most of the minimal luster it had achieved. A new vehicle was needed and it was forged entirely by the non-communist nations of Southeast Asia without the participation or advice of outside countries. The new grouping, established at Bangkok on August 8, 1967, was called the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN. Not only Indonesia but most of the once weak and uncertain countries of the region were coming of age. ASEAN was strongly non-aligned in spite of the continuing connections of the four members other than Indonesia with either the US (the Philippines and Thailand) or the UK (Malaysia and Singapore). ASEAN purported to be primarily an economic and social grouping rather than one with a political orientation and it eschewed military cooperation. In actual fact, ASEAN was a political grouping from the beginning - a useful device for developing cooperation between non-aligned Indonesia and four Western-oriented neighbors in a non-communist but non-aligned framework. The US leaned over backwards to respect this indigenous orientation in the years that followed, particularly until the trauma of Vietnam receded into history after the end of the Ford Administration. More recently, ASEAN cooperation on

regional political and security issues such as Kampuchea (Cambodia) became more overt although this was generally done through consultation of the five countries (six with the later addition of Brunei and then, seven with Burma) outside the formal ASEAN mechanism.

The internal development of Indonesia since 1966 has been characterized by a continuation and even a strengthening of army domination of government. President Suharto was clearly the dominant figure from the beginning but political direction was initially shared in a triumvirate that included Adam Malik and the Sultan of Yogyakarta and which was backed by a wide assortment of Western-oriented civilian intellectuals. The Sultan never played much of a role. Malik did continue to play a significant role as Foreign Minister and was the key figure in regaining respectability for Indonesia on the world stage. His power to influence general policy, never very strong, gradually declined, however, and he was eventually moved to the prestigious but powerless position of Vice President in 1978. From there he was moved to the still prestigious but lower position of Chairman of the MPRS where he replaced another declining figure, General Nasution. Malik died in 1984 and was treated with honors. The changes were not simply a matter of changing a few personalities at the top (although some significant high level personality conflicts accelerated the trend). More profoundly, many of the bright secondary level civilian advisors were shunted out of key positions and eventually out of government entirely. This turnover, which affected such PSI-oriented intellectuals

as Sudjatmoko, also applied to political parties. It should be noted that this shift concerns the political sector, not the economic, where Western-educated civilian economists continued to reign. The old Masjumi leaders such as Natsir and Mohammed Rum were released from prison after the fall of Sukarno but were not allowed to play a significant role in the new Islamic party that was to combine the NU and the old Masjumi. The principal possible political threat to government supremacy was seen, in fact, as a possible resurgent political Islam.

The early thrust of political reorganization, which had a touch of Sukarno's philosophy, was to organize party politics into three groupings - a "functional group" or "Karya" syndrome that would constitute the Suharto and Army vehicle (with hangers-on from the civilian components of the government), a nationalist component that would cater to the old PNI and associated secular constituencies and, finally, the new Islamic vehicle. The Suharto-led "Karya" grouping was overwhelmingly endorsed in the parliamentary elections that followed in 1971. The MPRS elected Suharto as President and Adam Malik as Vice President in 1973. Elections have followed regularly every five years. The system of government has been conducted on a constitutional basis and, from a democratic perspective, was at least an improvement on the institutions of Guided Democracy and, for that matter, on what might have occurred under a more heavy-handed military leadership. There is no question, however, that, despite the subtlety and aura of constitutionalism, the army, and



Suharto personally, was fully in control until 1998 when the Suharto system collapsed.

The chief characteristic of the Suharto regime had been, in fact, to recoil from the flamboyance and excessive politicization of the Sukarno era by de-emphasizing politics to the degree possible. The theme instead was to build internal stability and the economic and technical basis for a modern state through a concentrated economic development program. Indonesian nationalism, including the on-going effort to integrate the diverse archipelago into a viable unitary state, remained strong but its face changed to one of plodding persistence from one of frenetic emotionalism. The Suharto regime has been criticized on several counts: its suppression of the communists including prolonged incarceration of thousands without trial, an aura of widespread corruption, and its monopoly of power. There is considerable justification for all these criticisms although not as much as the picture its enemies have tried to portray in their fury over the defeat of communism in the world's fifth most populous country and sixth in area. A discussion of these charges follows. The initial wave of killing has been discussed in a previous chapter. This tragedy, which was inspired by the terror that had gripped Indonesia both before and after October 1, 1965, had largely run its course during the anarchic conditions of late 1965. Mass arrests of PKI cadres followed and some 30,000 prisoners were still held as of the mid-1970s. Most of these prisoners were subsequently released or brought to trial and convicted. A one-sided propaganda barrage, based almost entirely on communist-supplied information,

was leveled at Indonesia for several years. This propaganda barrage often inflated the number of prisoners held and tried to discredit the Suharto regime by claiming widespread resort to torture, mistreatment, etc. On the other side of the coin, the new Government was influenced by the previous record of PKI resort to violence and by the undoubted fact that the Communist Party, along with Sukarno, had made no bones about its intention to crush its enemies and had taken the initial violent steps to implement that intention. The Army and most Indonesians felt no compunction, under these circumstances, in moving decisively to remove this recurring threat from Indonesian life. There were undoubtedly miscarriages of justice in individual cases and probably individual atrocities by particular people or units as there always are in major upheavals. I do not believe (nor did the US government believe) that this was the policy of the Indonesian Government, however. Furthermore, Indonesia lacked the procedures and legal machinery to try large numbers of communist cadres in a normal manner since the real case against them was their official positions within the structure of a tightly disciplined organization based on democratic centralism that had participated in an illegal conspiracy to employ violence against senior officials of the state and to change the institutions of that state by illegal means. There is little question that disciplined Party members would have executed instructions for the follow-through measures if the operations had been more successful. Their responsiveness to Party leadership authority is at the very heart of what it means to be a communist. To argue an absence of guilt is to

argue that involvement in a failed conspiracy cannot be punished while involvement in a successful conspiracy would also not be punished since the victors in a successful revolution would cast aside all aspects of previous legality and instead would be meting out punishment according to "revolutionary" law. Such a self-serving concept of justice is fine for the communists since it boils down to the proposition that anything done by them is justified by the revolution and that the opponents of communism are guilty by definition whether they win or lose. Not surprisingly, such a "heads I win, tails you lose" proposition was not acceptable to the Indonesian Army or to non-communist Indonesians generally.

The charge of widespread corruption in high places as well as low had much greater validity. There was also much less excuse for this continuing corruption than for detention of communist cadres under extra-legal procedures. It may be argued that the institutionalization of corruption was already well advanced in the Sukarno era and that the new order had merely operated according to existing standards. This excuse might have had some merit for the first few years of the new order but it lacked substance over the long haul. The fact that corrupt financial practices on a massive scale reached to the very top constituted a particular stigma. The charge of monopolization of power or excessive authoritarianism was also generally valid although there are again some mitigating considerations. Army power was needed at the beginning to restore security and to overcome the sharp polarization of Indonesian society that was the legacy of the Sukarno era. A strong hand was also

needed to restore and energize an economy that had reached a point of collapse. The Suharto regime did not significantly loosen its control or expand its base in subsequent years, however. On the contrary, it shunted aside a wide spectrum of able, democratically-oriented forces that had been at the forefront of the effort to stop the PKI and Sukarno. Masjumi and PSI intellectuals were gradually replaced by Army officers or toadies in all too many cases while even the Army was altered to reflect Suharto's factional wishes at the expense of potential rivals. Even such stalwart figures of 1965-1966 as Sarwo Edhie and Kemal Idris were sent abroad to minor diplomatic posts and then retired. Although it is unfortunate that the system did not become more open and democratic than it did, it must also be said that the Suharto regime was neither totalitarian nor severely repressive. Indonesia became a freer society than it was under Sukarno's late guided democracy and much, much freer than the communist order that Sukarno wanted to install if the September 30 Movement had been successful and Indonesia had thereby "advanced" into the socialist stage.

In sum, Indonesia, though less than perfect, was far better off economically and even democratically than it had been in 1965. Its rejection of the communist camp and its basic realignment with the moderate side of the non-aligned movement have also been of inestimable value to the cause of stability in East Asia and to a secure future for the non-communist, Western-oriented nations of the region. That new-found regional stability and sense of security in turn provided the basis for the establishment of an economically

dynamic Pacific rim that has become a major success story of the past 30 plus years.

While the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s affected all the countries of the region, Indonesia's problems were greater given the political stagnation of Suharto's long tenure and the corruption that had contaminated his regime. Since this book is limited in scope to the events of 1965 and their highly favorable results in terms of US foreign policy and overall Asian stability and progress, no attempt will be made to speculate on Indonesia's future development here. The problems are great but so is the opportunity to move toward a more democratic and just society that will, however, be uniquely Indonesian.

## Footnotes – Chapter XVIII

1. American Embassy Jakarta Telegram 1164 of October 23, 1965, Indonesia Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library. EXIM credit insurance was specifically added in a follow-on message (Embassy telegram 1165). Also see Indonesia, Crisis and Transformation 1965-1968, Marshall Green (Washington, D.C., The Compass Press) 1990, pp. 113-119.
2. The international consortium group, or IGGI, consisted of Indonesia, Australia, Belgium, France, the FRG, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the USA, the IMF and the IBRD. Observers represented Canada, New Zealand, Switzerland, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the OECD and the UNDP. The first IGGI meeting was held in Amsterdam February 23-24, 1967. See Department of State Report on the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson. Volume I, Administrative History, LBJ Library.

## XIX

### The Effect on China

I believe that the Communist failure in Indonesia had a much more profound effect on China than has generally been recognized by Western observers including most of the Western specialists on China. In essence, it will be argued that this debacle shattered China's optimistic expectations concerning a revolutionary tide that was about to engulf Southeast Asia and drive the West generally and the United States in particular out of the region. The imminent victory of Communism in Indonesia was taken for granted by the Asian Communists and was viewed as a mighty coming blow against a West that found Sukarno distasteful but did not really understand that Indonesia was to become more than a nuisance; it was to become a full-fledged Communist state closely allied with Peking, Hanoi, and Pyongyang. The very excessiveness of Chinese and Asian Communist optimism, an optimism reflected in Lin Piao's famous ideological tome of September 3, 1965, for example, exacerbated the subsequent sense of failure and the need for re-evaluation of foreign policy that came in its wake.(1) This is not to say that a new, more sober, foreign policy was the immediate result. Indeed, the initial reaction was to repeat the old slogans but to shift the attention of the governing elite from foreign affairs to an internal orgasm of self-destruction called the Great Proletarian Cultural

Revolution. The Cultural Revolution has been evaluated largely in terms of its internal dynamics and its origins in the factional struggles that had become all too apparent since the late 1950s. My purpose is not to dispute the importance of these internal factors in setting off the Cultural Revolution, but to suggest that there is a significant relationship between the fact that they came to a head immediately after the Indonesian disaster and the course and texture of Chinese politics over the next few years. If one grants that the specific, more narrowly factional motivations for the Cultural Revolution were already in place, it is by no means so clear that it had to unfold in such an all-absorbing frenzy or that China's previous optimistic and aggressive foreign policy would disintegrate into sterile rhetoric and a shift of foreign policy focus to narrow border issues with the Soviet Union that could lead to no positive results. It was almost as if China had flung itself into a temper tantrum from which it would eventually emerge as a status quo power that had made its peace with the region it previously had hoped to lead into a bright revolutionary future. Instead, China was to become a central factor in a whole new constellation of international relationships. The nature of the Sino-Soviet rivalry changed radically during this period and the effect of that rivalry shifted from being a destabilizing factor to one of reinforcing the equilibrium of forces in East Asia. East Asia, and particularly Southeast Asia, now changed from one of the more unstable and explosive areas on earth before 1965-1966 to becoming one of the more stable regions in the world. These new



conditions also made it possible for the region to undergo a vast economic expansion and a rapid pace of modernization.

Before examining the changes in Sino-Soviet relations, Chinese regional foreign policy, and relations with the United States, and to speculate further on the effects of the Indonesian collapse on China, it may be useful to look briefly at the internal angle. The Chinese revolution had been fraught from the beginning with a confusion of aims and the methods to achieve those aims. Although Mao was a communist, he came to his communism through an agrarian-based nationalism and populism. While theoretically perceiving that the socialist stage of the revolution would have to be marked by industrialization and modernization (becoming more European-like), Mao tended to romanticize the virtues of China's backwardness. He identified with the rural peasant qualities of the Chinese revolution and appeared to resent many of the practical results of urbanization and bureaucratization. Like the Soviets, he longed for a "new socialist man" to be created by successful revolution, but his image of that new socialist man was vastly different from the Soviet view for Mao felt uncomfortable with the dominance of technology that was at the forefront of the Soviet ideal. Mao also romanticized the ideal of continuing revolution for its own sake and, in this latter sense, he was much like Sukarno.

Although the roots undoubtedly lay still deeper in the past, the internal strife, for our own limited purpose, may be traced back to 1958-1959 when Mao's Great Leap Forward policies of rural communes and back-yard blast furnaces came under criticism and

had to be displaced by a more realistic course.(2) Liu Shao-chi emerged as President of the Republic and effective head of the operating government system while Mao continued as Party Chairman with continuing prestige but much reduced real authority. On the other hand, the more radical Maoist side of the political equation had also been reinforced in some respects by the compromises of the period, notably in the rise of Chen Po-ta as a Party ideologue and especially by the replacement in 1959 of Peng Te-huai as defense minister by Lin Piao. Peng Te-huai apparently became vulnerable because of overly direct criticism of Mao's Great Leap policies but he was also attacked by Lin Piao for alleged revisionist policies in the armed forces that amounted in essence to excessive stress on technology and military professionalism at the expense of the Maoist values of revolutionary spirit and the primacy of man over machine. Although Mao could not be attacked so directly, Peng Te-huai's criticisms were seen as valid by many and this support was evident in an allegorical literary work by a noted writer, Wu Han, who described the sixteenth century struggle of a noble Mandarin who had stood up against a despotic emperor. This work was heavily criticized by the radical Chiang Ching group whose efforts to publish a critique were foiled in late 1965, however, by Wu Han's protector, the powerful Peking party chief, Peng Chen, who also headed the five-man committee that had oversight responsibilities on cultural questions. The Chiang Ching group finally succeeded in publishing the original critique of Wu Han by Yao Wen-yuan, a Chiang Ching supporter who became Minister of

Culture and achieved later notoriety as one of the "Gang of Four", through Chen Po-ta's influence on the People's Daily and through the backing of Lin Piao. This was in November 1965. Despite a series of delaying actions such as Wu Han's self-criticism in December, 1965, which was limited to technical rather than political factors, Peng Chen was soon forced from his positions and an attack followed shortly thereafter on Liu Shao-chi. The Cultural Revolution was much more than a series of purges at the top, of course; it erupted into a massive frenzied upheaval that affected virtually all the institutions of Chinese society. The phenomenon of the Red Guards soon appeared, leftist-organized student mobs that harassed and harried all who could be portrayed as bureaucrats, conservatives and "revisionists".

There is no way of knowing with certainty exactly what arguments were being leveled behind the scenes in the Chinese leadership in this period or, even more difficult, what weights were being attached to internal and external factors by various Chinese political figures. Indeed, the Western scholarly literature on this subject reflects a variety of viewpoints although those who place considerable weight on external factors tend to highlight developments in the Sino-Soviet dispute and the US threat as most significant.(3) Certainly more was being said publicly about the internal debate on cultural issues, broadly defined, and on Sino-Soviet and US issues but that does not mean that the Indonesian debacle was not praying on the minds of the Chinese leadership -- particularly since it seemed part of a chain of Third World reversals

including the overthrow of Nkrumah in Ghana, Indian military success against Pakistan and collapse of the Second Afro-Asian Conference as a result of the overthrow of Ben Bella in Algeria. One might argue, in fact, that the Indonesian setback was so monumental and shocking to Chinese revolutionary expectations that it could not be fully and openly faced publicly. It would be inconceivable, however, for the sudden and unexpected defeat of its principal allies on both a state-to-state basis and a Communist Party basis -- that is Sukarno and the PKI -- not to stun the Chinese leadership. The effects on the latter would be particularly great if some aspects of the Indonesian relationship had been controversial, as they probably were, and if the defeat could be attributed to allegedly mistaken policies by Liu Shao-chi and others.

It must be emphasized here that the Sino-Indonesian relationship had become remarkably close in 1964-1965. The Chinese were fully aware of Sukarno's intention to "enter the socialist stage" in the immediate future and to have understood that as a commitment to Indonesian communism. They had been repeatedly briefed by Aidit on the PKI's commitment to communist victory through and with, rather than against, Sukarno and had come to accept that strategy despite some ideological misgivings. High-level visits back and forth between the two countries were almost continuous and the Chinese leaders most visibly linked with this interchange were Liu Shao-chi, Peng Chen and Chou En-lai. China was working closely with Sukarno to organize a spectacular Conference of New Emerging Forces in Jakarta in 1966 and was

supplying much of the material assistance needed to construct a conference site. China had also promised Sukarno and the PKI arms for the Fifth Armed Force and had worked closely with both in promoting the whole concept of such a force as well as the effort to introduce a political commissar system in Indonesia. Indonesia's helpful role in fronting for China as a leader of the radical forces in Afro-Asian forums has been noted elsewhere. To use an apt analogy, Indonesia was playing a role in the new "axis" much like that played by Mussolini in relation to Hitler. It was the major junior partner of China.

Based on frequent Indonesian public statements in late 1964 about an impending nuclear weapons capability, it would even appear that the Chinese may have been induced to agree to some form of nuclear cooperation between the two countries. Some writers, notably Dake, have speculated that China might even have agreed to help Indonesia explode a nuclear bomb. It seems unlikely, however, that the Chinese would have gone that far. A more plausible explanation for all the Indonesian publicity on an impending nuclear capability is that the Indonesians were using such publicity to press the Chinese for all they could get on the one hand and, on the other, that Sukarno was using the prospect of Chinese nuclear assistance to sway the Indonesian military toward indulging his plans for both internal radicalization and a close partnership with Peking as the core of his foreign policy.

The existence of some reservations has been noted. Both the Chinese and the Soviets -- and this is a fundamental question for

communist ideology -- have always been faced by the question of how narrowly should a communist movement be based on a hard core cadre party and, conversely, how much should it open up to a wider range of viewpoints to achieve success. Both communist parties and individual communists have wavered back and forth on this issue but the ideological "charge" has been sufficiently great that the accepted position at any given time has been regarded as the gospel while opposing views have been anathema. Lenin answered this question narrowly at the second Russian Social Democratic Party Congress in 1903 and during the years of exile thereafter, although he relented to some degree after Bolshevik victory in 1917. A subdued Soviet internal debate on this issue was apparent in the 1960's over the question of how far one should go in supporting "national democratic" leaders believed to be sufficiently committed to an ultimate goal of scientific socialism (Sukarno, Castro, Nkrumah, Ben Bella, Ne Win, Sekou Toure, etc.) rather than traditional communist parties. The Chinese apparently thought the Soviets were too inclined to stretch the definition of what constituted an acceptable Marxist in the early 1960's and attacked the Soviet notions about "national democracy" of that period. This debate was obscure and complex, however. The Chinese initially welcomed the Castroite success in Cuba, for example, although they naturally opposed Castro when he soon began to show pro-Soviet colors. Mao probably thought better of such revolutionaries as Che Guevara and even Castro than of the old-line bureaucratic Cuban party. The Chinese also courted the Ben Bellas, Boumediennes, Nkrumahs and

Sekou Toures and they were all happy with Indonesian Communist advances under Sukarno. Nevertheless, the Chinese found it convenient, in their debates with the Soviets, to criticize the latter for advocating the possibility of a "parliamentary road", for excessive collaboration with "bourgeois nationalists", and for peaceful co-existence not only with the despicable West but with non-communist forces generally. The Chinese mocked Khrushchev's position at the Twenty-Second CPSU Congress in 1961 that the Soviet Union had surmounted class differences and was now a "state of the whole people". They called this "Goulash Communism".

I believe there was periodic Chinese criticism of the PKI before late 1964 for too much PKI collaboration with Sukarno and too much reliance on the peaceful PKI road to power through revolution from above. The evidence is understandably thin but there were occasional veiled PKI comments after the PKI's apparent total identification with the Chinese against the Soviets on the public stage to the effect that the PKI was beholden to no foreign party in choosing its strategy and tactics. It was always adamant in identifying itself with Sukarno, not for tactical reasons that contemplated ultimate betrayal of Sukarno, but because PKI views of the Indonesian revolution were similar to those of Sukarno. The Chinese leadership (or at least the leadership of Liu Shao-chi) went along with this and may have argued its appropriateness to those internal Chinese party elements who would have been more focused on ideological purity and conflict with the Soviet Union than with the geo-political opportunities opened by Indonesia's drive toward its own form of

goulash Communism. (One might call it "nasi goreng" communism after the national dish that mixes rice with bits of meat and vegetables). It seems most likely that Mao went along with this opportunistic but sensible strategy too (he met high-level Indonesian visitors, after all) but he was also not very closely identified with what was largely a state-to-state operation. Mao could have positioned himself to be associated with the expected success but he was also in a position, along with the ideologues, to criticize the whole official approach to Indonesia after it had failed.

This scenario certainly fits both the post-debacle line toward Indonesia and much of the subsequent criticism of Liu Shao-chi. The PKI, after its fall, was consistently and openly criticized for its peaceful strategy, for its collaboration with "national bourgeois" elements that by implication and innuendo now conveniently included the discredited Sukarno, and for its failure to conduct a revolution of armed struggle from below. Never mind that Sukarno had been more militant in advocating a violent entry into the socialist stage than the PKI itself; communists are adept, after all, at re-writing history to suit opportunistic convenience. As for Liu Shao-chi, he was pointedly called the "Chinese Khrushchev", which hardly related to any supposed identification with Khrushchev's cultural policies. This term of opprobrium was clearly directed to the core issues of the Sino-Soviet debate which had been concerned with the degree of collaboration with "bourgeois" governments and the extent to which peaceful tactics could be tolerated. It related, in other words, to the extent to which China was over-confident in expecting



a spectacular communist victory in Indonesia (and throughout Southeast Asia as a follow-up) through revolution by manipulation from the top. It is a myth, of course, to think that any other route was open to the communists (the PKI and Sukarno) in Indonesia. Indeed the route that was followed had to be perceived as having excellent prospects for it really should have been successful with any luck at all. The point of the later criticism was not to reflect the truth, however, but to cut a convenient myth to the cloth of factional convenience and the need for scapegoats. Liu was not only specifically criticized for his advocacy of the possibility for communist success through a "parliamentary road" and "peaceful coexistence" but both he and his wife were criticized for ostentatious bourgeois conduct in their dealings with Sukarno.(4)

Liu was also specifically accused of favoring the "united front from above" to the neglect of "the united front from below".(5) This accusation was not only pegged specifically to Indonesia but also to Burma where Liu was said to have advocated during a 1962 tour of Burma that the Burmese (White Flag) Communist Party make up with General Ne Win and cooperate with him in the building of socialism. The ideological question for Burma was somewhat similar to Indonesia, incidentally, although Ne Win's focus was almost totally internal and his style was the opposite of Sukarno's. Ne Win had once been a secret member of the Burmese Communist Party but formally left it in 1944 in accordance with the policy of the dominant "Thakin" leadership at the time. Ne Win's "Burmese road to socialism", although highly nationalist and even xenophobic, was

also rooted in a Leninist type system including a "vanguard" party organized on the principles of democratic centralism and a state system remarkably similar to those in formal communist states.(6) The charge against Liu Shao-chi, in other words, was not a wild charge applicable to just any Third World state but only to those few where there was a genuine intra-communist debate over how to treat eclectic mixtures of nationalism and "communism" (or totalitarian Marxism) of which Sukarno and Ne Win were both examples.

The initial Chinese reaction to the news of the September 30 Movement's apparent success on the morning of October 1 was one of undisguised pleasure. The Chinese hosts informed the visiting high-level Indonesian delegations that were there to honor the Chinese national day quite early of the formation of a Revolutionary Council and the death of the Indonesian generals. General Sukendro, a member of the Indonesian MPRS delegation headed by Chairul Saleh, has reported that the Chinese hosts even had a complete list of the assassinated generals by 11:00 A.M. on October 1, which was five hours before this information was announced by Jakarta. The list included the name of General Nasution which confirms that the Chinese had an advance copy of the target list but did not know of Nasution's escape, a point that the Supardjo/Untung tactical leadership was just learning from Sukarno.(7)

The subsequent Chinese reaction to the Indonesian defeat was one of stunned silence, followed by vituperation over the destruction of the PKI. The Chinese official establishment in Indonesia took an emotional die-hard position rather than trying to make the best of a

defeat. It breathed an all-encompassing defiance that played into the hands of its enemies. China's whole attitude was one of retreat into a defensive shell in which it refused to acknowledge publicly the extent of the disaster but focused instead on other issues, as if to avoid the pain of dashed hopes. Peng Chen and Liu Shao-chi, the two senior officials most connected with the Peking-Jakarta axis, soon came under severe attack and fell from power. Peng Chen, the defender of Wu Han, had also been closely associated with the Indonesian alliance, notably in his celebrated trip to Indonesia in May, 1965, and was an early purge victim. Even Chou En-lai, who was also prominent in the Indonesian relationship with Sukarno and Aidit, was on the defensive and was only able to survive because of his adroitness, his power base, and his relative lack of vulnerability on the domestic issues that were purportedly the driving forces of the Cultural Revolution. Chou's position was strengthened by his early support of Chen Po-ta's attack on Peng Chen in December but he was more vulnerable as a patron of Chen Yi and as a personal symbol of bureaucracy, modernization, nationalism and an urbane, cosmopolitan style, all these qualities being anathema to the ideals that characterized the Cultural Revolution.

While the Indonesia issue lay largely below the surface like a giant iceberg, the tip occasionally showed as well. The Chinese charge d'affaires in Jakarta, Yao Teng-shan, became a public hero after his expulsion by the new Indonesian political constellation in April, 1966. Although welcomed by Chou En-lai and Chen Yi as well as being received by Mao and Lin Biao, Yao and another

expelled official launched a fierce attack on Foreign Minister Chen Yi for his alleged failure to support the Indonesian communists and the Chinese minority in Indonesia. Yao soon became the leader of the radical clique in the Foreign Ministry and was reportedly egged on by the Chen Po-ta group to seize control of the ministry which he briefly succeeded in doing. Yao and Wang Li, a senior figure among the radicals around Chen Po-ta, eventually over-extended themselves in carrying the radical offensive too far and Wang was arrested on the orders of Chou En-lai with Mao's apparent acquiescence, after their instigation of an attack on the British Embassy in Peking. There are other connections if one looks closely. Lin Piao's most important statement after his pre-September 30 Affair pronouncement about the world countryside surrounding the world city was a speech on May 18, 1966. Lin spoke at length on this occasion about the possibility of a coup d'etat. While the theme was geared to the tense internal situation in China, it seems clear that Lin Piao had the Indonesian disaster in mind as well. He spoke, in fact, about the rising number of coups d'etat in the world at large and listed Indonesia, Ghana, and Syria as the most recent examples of what had "today become a fad". One might argue that the military miscalculations of the apparently dominant leftist political forces in Indonesia stimulated the Chinese Communist leaders to give additional weight to internal military considerations and to draw other appropriate lessons from the Indonesian experience. Strong efforts were made by Lin Piao in this period to strengthen central control over the military structure of the country and to place greater

emphasis on political indoctrination. The PLA chief of staff, Lo Jui ching, was purged in December, 1965 and replaced by a Lin Piao loyalist. Although the rise of the Red Guards was a result of internal political dynamics, leadership interest in ensuring a revolutionary cast to organized Chinese youth was probably also reinforced by the spectacle of Indonesian youth - once regarded as the glorified cutting edge of the Revolution - becoming the most visible instrument of the anti-communist reaction to the PKI and later Sukarno himself.

The principal argument for arguing a significant impact of the Indonesian communist collapse on Chinese policy is not to cite a study of the tea leaves, however, but to stand back and look at the larger picture to recall the pervasive revolutionary optimism of September, 1965, the significance accorded to the Pyongyang, Peking, Hanoi, Phnom Penh, Jakarta axis, to the hopes for a Second Afro-Asian Conference and a Conference of New Emerging Forces, to the encirclement of the world city (the old Established Forces) by the world countryside (the New Emerging Forces) and to see what followed. China almost immediately retreated into itself in an orgy of internally directed radicalism that reminds one of the McCarthy era in the United States which was, in many ways, a last gasp of American isolationism to avoid external commitments by attacking artificial enemies at home. The years immediately after the Indonesian debacle were also a period in which the focus of the Sino-Soviet quarrel shifted from rivalry over who was the stronger proponent of national liberation struggles in the Third World generally and in Southeast Asia in particular to Chinese irredentist

claims and border clashes. While it is true that Chinese charges against Russian imperialist acquisitions were made before October, 1965, they were not a central theme as they were now to become. The great build-up of Soviet forces in Outer Mongolia and along the border only began in earnest around this time (1967-1968) and reflected the significant changes in the texture and locus of Sino-Soviet tensions. These border-centered tensions grew in intensity the following year with a series of military clashes commencing at the Ussuri River island of Damansky or Chenpao in March, 1969. A few months later, the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, launched a proposal for an Asian security arrangement. Though general, and probably not expected to be taken seriously because of the easily calculable reactions of the non-Communist states of the region to whom it was directed, the Soviet proposal was clearly designed as an anti-Chinese measure. Both sides were by now clearly subordinating ideological consistency to the primacy of direct bilateral confrontation and courting potential tactical allies against each other from among non-Communist as well as Communist countries.

Chinese fear of the Soviet Union was undoubtedly contributing to the intensity of internally directed Chinese radicalism and the Soviet threat was also a central issue among Chinese leadership factions. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the initiative for shifting the Sino-Soviet debate from leadership and strategy preferences in the Third World did not come from the Soviet Union but from the Chinese. It was the new Chinese emphasis on historical

Russian encroachment in Siberia with its implicit claim that vast Soviet territories should rightfully be Chinese coupled with increased Chinese aggressiveness concerning the more openly disputed border areas such as Damansky island that led to the Soviet military build-up, not the reverse. Although bellicose, the Soviet response was essentially defensive. It is sometimes difficult to know which came first, the chicken or the egg, in such mutually reinforcing animosities, but I would submit that this is one case where the initiative for change in a relationship is clear. It is the Chinese who in 1966-67 raised the ante of the existing dispute (even though the Soviets may be accorded the bulk of responsibility for the original split) and this, I believe, can be ascribed to their loss of faith in the positive unfolding of their optimistic hopes for a communist East Asia.

Meanwhile, the new Administration in the United States had begun a cautious minuet of gestures toward the Chinese following the Ussuri clashes and the Chinese were responding, as Henry Kissinger's memoir makes clear.<sup>(9)</sup> China was still immersed in the Cultural Revolution internally at this time but on a declining level of intensity. Pragmatism was gaining strength, particularly in foreign policy, and the desirability of some accommodation with the U.S. was becoming more evident, particularly since the posture of the new Nixon Administration was not so rigid as might have been expected. Beginning in early 1969, the United States began a series of steps designed to signal a shift in China policy including a relaxation of trade controls and removal of travel restrictions. The enunciation of

the Nixon Doctrine in mid-1969 also showed that the United States was de-emphasizing direct military involvement in favor of greater demands on its allies and friends in East Asia and elsewhere to pull their own weight. And behind the scenes, assurances of a US desire for some kind of relationship were being conveyed to China through Pakistan and Romania. That China understood these signals and was now favorable itself toward a foreign policy shift became apparent in 1970 with the surprise Chinese invitation to a U.S. table tennis team in Tokyo to come to China. The 1971 Kissinger visit to China that startled the world, and the 1972 Nixon trip and Shanghai communique that followed, were the results of this changed Chinese policy.

The new Chinese policy could only be based on a radically different Chinese assessment: the United States was no longer the great impediment to Chinese revolutionary expectations in Asia for the simple reason that the Chinese no longer entertained such expectations as a practical matter. There were other factors contributing to the change in Chinese perceptions, of course. These included Chinese awareness of a more immediate and more directly military Soviet threat than had been the case in the past. Other factors were the implications in the Nixon Doctrine that the US as a matter of policy would be less directly involved in the region coupled with the increasingly obvious erosion of American domestic support for the war in Indo-China. All of these factors were also shaped to some degree by the Indonesian upheaval directly or by the indirect results including the shift in Chinese policy after Indonesia



toward provocation of the Soviets and toward a loss of real interest in revolution in Southeast Asia. This is not to say that these factors did not have a life of their own, of course, for it is not my intention to allege a single causative factor. Nevertheless, the Indonesian upheaval was a much more significant factor in inducing these changes than has been generally realized and this applies particularly toward China.

## Footnotes – Chapter XIX

1. The key passage from Lin Piao's September, 1965 statement reads as follows: "Taking the entire globe, if North America and Western Europe can be called 'the cities of the world', then Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute the rural areas of the world. Since World War II, the proletarian revolutionary movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America has been growing vigorously. In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also presents a picture of the encirclement of cities by rural areas. In the final analysis, the whole cause of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples who make up the overwhelming majority of the world's population. The socialist countries should regard it as their internationalist duty to support the peoples' revolutionary struggles in Asia, Africa and Latin America". Lin Pao added that "The Chinese Revolution has successfully solved the problem of how to link up the national-democratic with the socialist revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries". K.H. Fan, editor, The Chinese Cultural Revolution: Selected Documents (New York, Monthly Review Press) 1968, p. 96. The Lin Piao thesis was already evident in Peng Chen's speech at the PKI anniversary celebration in Jakarta in May 1965 and was attributed by Peng Chen to PKI Chairman Aidit. Aidit's position was actually a reflection of Sukarno's thesis on the New Emerging Forces overcoming the Old Established Forces. See

INR (State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research)  
Research Memorandum RFE-39 of September 24, 1965, China  
Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library.

2. For the events between the Eighth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in May, 1958 and the factional struggles of the Cultural Revolution period, I have drawn particularly on Jaap Van Ginneken, The Rise and Fall of Lin Piao (London, Penguin Books and Amsterdam, Uitgeverij En Boekhandel) 1974 and Lowell Dittmer, Liu Shao-chi and the Chinese Cultural Revolution (Berkeley, California, University of California Press) 1974.
3. A useful summary of the contrasting analyses among a multitude of Western writers on the causes of the Cultural Revolution is contained in James C. F. Wang, The Cultural Revolution in China: An Annotated Bibliography (New York and London, Garland Publishing, Inc.) 1976. None of Wang's annotations mentions Indonesia as a factor. Most of the authors cited by Wang highlighted the power struggle, many dwelled on the dichotomy between modernizers and traditionalists or "revisionists" and conservatives, and a few focussed on the Sino-Soviet dispute. A CIA Special Report of August 5, 1966 entitled "China's Growing Isolation in the Communist Movement" noted that China launched a vigorous effort only two years earlier to build a bloc of supporters but that this effort had met failure. This failure was attributed largely to China's "rigid dogmatism" and to more flexible Soviet tactics after the

fall of Khrushchev although the report did note that, "Of all China's recent reversals abroad, the one in Indonesia has been the most serious". See China Country File, National Security File, LBJ Library. Another CIA Intelligence Report of April 1, 1966, "Peking's Setback in Indonesia", called the September 30 Affair "a major diplomatic debacle" for China and pointed out that China as well as Sukarno had set great stock in the forthcoming CONEFO and that China had relied on Indonesia for playing a central role in various front and Afro-Asian organizations hostile to the Soviets, a device now lost. Available in the Indonesian Country File, LBJ Library.

4. Liu was attacked specifically on the peaceful co-existence issue in September, 1968 at a time when the US and the PRC were discussing a re-opening of their bilateral ambassadorial talks, a course that the radicals obviously did not favor.
5. See Dittmer, p. 225.
6. Dittmer, p.225, refers to these charges. After the 1962 Ne Win coup, Burma became one of several third world states regarded by the Soviets as embarked on a "non-capitalist path" or, to use other Soviet terminology, to have become a "national-democratic state". I ran across an official unclassified Burmese Government document in 1970 which stated in a quite straightforward manner that Ne Win had been a secret member of the Burmese Communist Party and had left it in 1944 as a result of Aung San's decision to act similarly (Aung San was the Burmese independence leader assassinated in 1947 and, I

believe, had made a genuine conversion). While in Burma, I became a rather good friend of a co-founder of the Burmese Communist Party, a man who left the Party but remained a committed Marxist and a close adviser to Ne Win. This man believed strongly that Ne Win's Marxism was not only genuine but more rigid than his own. My own studies of the Burma Socialist Program Party structure and programs led to similar conclusions.

7. Arthur J. Dommen, "The Attempted Coup in Indonesia", China Quarterly, January-March, 1966, as quoted by Brackman, The Communist Collapse in Indonesia, p. 149.
8. Van Ginneken, pp. 113-114.
9. Quoted by Van Ginneken, pp. 56-57.
10. Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston, Little, Brown and Co.) 1979 pp. 167-194.



## XX

# The Effect on Vietnam and the United States

The US effort in Vietnam and in Indo-China as a whole has been greatly criticized in many quarters. It is probably still an issue so beset with emotion that any effort to analyze the effect of the Indonesian turnaround on attitudes toward the Vietnam War will have to contend with deeply-held convictions that were spawned by the domestic controversy over US involvement and its heavy costs in what many have seen as a dubious cause.

There were many aspects to the controversy and some are not relevant to the points to be made in the discussion that follows. The way in which US involvement proceeded, the size of the build-up, the extreme Americanization of the effort until the later stages, the debates over head-counts, the atrocities, the debate over confining the ground action to South Vietnam, the bombing, and a host of other issues can be debated on their respective merits but they are not really relevant to the basic issue for this study of whether there was more than a local threat to South Vietnam which lay behind the US decision to intervene. Reducing the question to a well-known but simplistic slogan was the domino theory really valid and, if so, was it more valid in one period than in another? A second point, and the main purpose of this section, is to examine the degree to which the

Indonesian upheaval changed the strategic picture and brought about largely sub-conscious or poorly articulated changes in the American public perception of US involvement. In this connection, there was some considerable attention paid in 1966-67 to the question of whether US intervention in Vietnam encouraged the Indonesian non-communists to react forcefully to the "communist coup" in Indonesia. A better question would be what effect the collapse of Indonesian communism had on the Vietnam War and particularly on the attitudes of the non-regional participants and interested observers.

First, the domino theory. I believe strongly that the domino theory had a great deal of validity before 1965-66 but that it rapidly lost its validity thereafter. Most of the critics of the domino concept became vocal after the strategic changes had taken place, had little understanding of the degree of communist revolutionary optimism before the Indonesian catastrophe, and only saw - in a vague- "gut feeling" sort of way - that the regional threat was overstated at the time their criticisms were being voiced. What they failed to see, or preferred to ignore, was that the domino theory had a great deal of validity up to October, 1965, if much less thereafter. Indeed, the domino theory really was an American shorthand summation of the openly expressed position of Asian communism at the time, a position that quickly receded after the 1965 defeat in Indonesia.

Meanwhile, the defenders of US involvement in Vietnam also failed to perceive the strategic change since the importance of Indonesia was never fully understood; it was regarded as a side show



(or at best a minor second front) to Vietnam for the quite understandable reasons that Vietnam was where the US was heavily engaged with its own forces and Vietnam was where the real fighting and dying were taking place.<sup>(1)</sup> The change in Indonesia was welcomed greatly by the Johnson Administration, of course, but it had little effect on perceptions of the strategic threat. The point in all this is to conclude that both sides in the bitter Vietnam debate were talking at cross purposes about the validity of the domino theory and the rationale for US involvement and both were at least half wrong on this aspect of the debate.

While it may sound as if I am trying to paper over the issues of that debate, I should make it clear that I personally remained convinced that US involvement in the Vietnam war was not only correct in 1964-65 when the strategic threat was real but in 1968 or even in 1973-74 when the strategic threat had receded. The issue in the later period is more narrow, however, and has to do with the US obligation to an ally and to the people of a small country that deserved a better fate, irrespective of the reduced effect of hostile conquest on US strategic interests. While US troop withdrawal and Vietnamization were warranted and should have been pursued earlier and at a more serious pace, US congressional refusal to authorize war material, particularly ammunition, to the beleaguered South Vietnamese forces was one of the more shameful acts in American history, in my judgement. But whether one agrees with this latter view or not, that is a moral issue that is largely irrelevant to the thesis of this chapter.

To return to the domino theory, the central core of that idea was that a Chinese-led communist threat to all of Southeast Asia was very real in 1964-65 and that an uncontested communist take-over of South Vietnam would lead to the progressive fall of the other non-communist states of the region. Some simplified the underlying proposition to an overly military scenario of Chinese hordes (or Vietnamese hordes) physically invading the rest of the region. That kind of simple-minded thinking existed but was essentially wrong. Vietnamese forces had and would continue to intervene in Laos and Cambodia where Hanoi had always seen itself as pre-eminent, but the threat elsewhere was much more indirect. China, and other communist states, would have continued to provide training, equipment, advisors and the like to guerrilla movements and this support would probably have increased, but direct intervention was not the real threat. As noted elsewhere in this book, all the East Asian communist countries and parties - and this extended to the dominant Sukarnoist element in the government as well as to the PKI in Indonesia - believed that they were riding a revolutionary wave that was about to engulf the region. This was manifest in everything that was being said by all of them at the time. The US was regarded, in Mao's immortal words, as a paper tiger strategically even though it was to be feared and countered on a tactical level. Communist victory in Vietnam might take time but was ultimately seen as inevitable (they weren't far wrong but largely because of their victory in the American media as well as their strength on the ground). More important, the imminent shock of giant Indonesia becoming an

openly communist state through a series of actions in late 1965 was expected, and correctly so, to send shock waves through the smaller, weak non-communist states of the region. As Ambassador Marshall Green was fond of saying after he became Assistant Secretary for East Asia Affairs in 1969, states like Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore would have seen themselves as caught between a gigantic pincers with a massive aggressively revolutionary China to the North and a large (if not exactly massive in the sense of China) aggressively revolutionary Indonesia to the South. Only the US commitment in Vietnam and British, Australian and New Zealand commitments in Malaysia appeared to stand in the way of their coming together. Again the threat was not so much physical as one of overwhelming intimidation to small, weak countries, each with problems of insurgency, internal subversion and social, economic and ethnic viability. This was the real domino theory and, in this psychological sense, it was clearly warranted in 1964-65.

The communist failure in Indonesia obviously removed the threat from the south but the effect was greater than that. It removed the psychological intimidation of encirclement - a threat from only one direction, no matter how powerful, somehow fails to project the terror and uncertainty that derives from encirclement. Still more significant was the withdrawal of China into itself as discussed in the previous chapter. Revolutionary rhetoric remained but the air had gone out of the balloon of Asian communist revolutionary optimism. China had begun to undergo the great sea change that would make it a status quo power for the next decade or more. The intensity of

communist efforts in Vietnam would persist but that continued communist hyper-nationalism would now be confined to the Vietnamese and contained within an Indo-China framework. Communist insurgencies in Thailand, Burma and elsewhere were gradually to lose steam despite continued, but increasingly perfunctory, Chinese support while China was eventually not only to reassure the non-communist states of the region of its benign intentions but even to encourage their resistance to a communist Vietnam that was depicted by the early 1970s, however simplistically, as a tool of Soviet encirclement efforts. The decline of the threat was not perceived clearly or immediately (particularly given the difficulty of understanding what was happening in China) and so the transition in people's awareness of the changed strategic threat was gradual and not linked to any specific act. By 1968, I believe, an increasingly strong but inchoate sense had grown among many Americans, led of course by the original critics, that the threat was not all it was cracked up to be and that the rationale for the US agony in Vietnam could not be sustained. The domino theory was seen as invalid but no one bothered to see that it had been valid earlier, whatever its validity in 1968. Indeed, the old time critics preferred to fuzz that issue if it ever came into their heads at all; it was far more pleasant to their egos to say that they had always been right - that there had never been a threat sufficient to merit a US commitment.

Some important figures in the Johnson Administration had understandably tried to attribute the successful comeback of the

Indonesian non-communists to resolute US action in Vietnam. Given the degree of polarization in US political opinion by 1966-67 and especially by 1968, it is not surprising that the stronger and more rigid opponents of the Vietnam War were quick to deny any such causal relationship. This debate, like most that are so heavily emotional and polarized, was not very illuminating. It should be clear from all that has been said earlier that the September 30 affair failed because of overconfidence, excessive compartmentalization, poor planning, plain bad luck, and Sukarno's loss of nerve. Suharto responded to what he saw as a deadly, immediate threat to a non-communist Army and he would have responded in sheer self-defense irrespective of whether Indo-China had gone communist or not. It is less clear, however, whether Yani and others would have stood as firm earlier on the issues of a fifth armed force and a political commissar system had the US failed to defend South Vietnam when the North Vietnamese regulars were introduced, or if Britain and the Commonwealth had weakened in their assistance to Malaysia which was the likely corollary of a US failure to act. Certainly the Army's show of resistance to the march of communism under Sukarno's benevolent protection was never frontal and never very strong, even as it was. If the revolutionary tide had seemed even more of a juggernaut than it was, the Army leaders may well have acceded to these measures so that a "peaceful" entry into the socialist stage would have been possible and the September 30 affair either unnecessary or structured quite differently. Similar psychological connections can be adduced for later developments such as the rise

of the anti-communist student movement and the long-delayed but eventually firm Suharto decision in March, 1966 to stop Sukarno's efforts to effect a creeping return to full power in a pro-communist context. There is no way that one can be sure of what the perception of a victorious North Vietnam and a cowed US would have done to destroy hope and the will to resist but there must have been some significant effect.

Leaving the vagaries of the above "what if" questions of policy, it is more fruitful, I believe, to look at the effect of Indonesia on the US. This effect is already implicit in the previous discussion but now it can be made more explicit. The growing awareness of the declining validity of the domino concept, the perception that China was not going to roll down through Southeast Asia since it was consumed with its internal agonies, and the sense that the rest of Southeast Asia was becoming more viable raised the question in the popular mind (and this was fed especially by the more superficial, slick and pontificating school of journalism) of why are we there? The issue was obfuscated further by all those side issues previously mentioned such as South Vietnamese corruption, excessive American visibility, atrocities, etc., so that all issues related to Vietnam became merged together in one great whine of condemnation. Boiled down to its essence, however, the core phenomenon was the traditional problem of democracies and especially of the United States with its residue of isolationism - an inability to sustain a high cost operation for complex ends, however justifiable, when the perceived threat was not massive, clear and

truly vital to the United States. There are many other factors that can explain the US disenchantment with Vietnam than the indirect results of the Indonesian reversal but this overlooked chain of events was of great significance. Democracies cannot follow through on strategic victories and the Indonesian upheaval was a strategic victory that changed the face of the Asian balance of power or, better, the political equilibrium of the entire region as well as the sense of where the momentum lay. Because of this major shift in political momentum, the outcome in Vietnam had become largely irrelevant - or relatively more irrelevant - to the future of the region. This became ever more clear in the decades that followed as Indo-China remained mired in backwardness, incompetence and vestiges of Marxist rigidity, while large numbers of its population fled abroad as "boat people" or otherwise. The rest of the region (except Burma) in the meantime experienced spectacular economic growth and the even more important development of greatly enhanced self-confidence and social and psychological stability. Problems remained considerable and some will take generations to overcome but anyone who has seen the region change over the last few decades cannot but be impressed that these countries are vastly stronger today than they were in the early 1960s.

## Footnotes - Chapter XX

1. This was especially true in the upper reaches of government and, quite naturally, in the US military establishment which was perforce fixed on the place where it was so deeply involved. However, it was also even true among the professional ranks of the East Asia Bureau at State - or at least that was the impression gained from visits to Indonesia by many officials of the Bureau. The State Department and other civilian agencies like CIA and AID were heavily engaged in civil operations programs in Vietnam and it was natural for policy attention to focus on the area where one's own resources were so heavily committed.



## XXI

# The Soviet Role in Asia - Before and After

The effect of the communist debacle in Indonesia on the Soviet Union is more difficult to evaluate than its impact on China, largely because the Soviet Union had lost out to China in their struggle for the affections of both Sukarno and the PKI. In one immediate sense, the failure of Sukarno's coup was helpful to the Soviet Union; it allowed Moscow to adopt a holier-than-thou, I-told-you-so attitude toward its ungrateful Indonesian erstwhile allies and toward all those Third World radicals who had courted or were in danger of courting China in preference to the Soviet Union. At the Party level, China's loss of its most important ally in the Sino-Soviet conflict effectively broke the back of the Chinese Communist Party threat to become a viable alternative leader of the world communist movement and Soviet ability to disparage Chinese prescriptions for revolution was enhanced.

There were also some subtle but quite real negative consequences. The Sino-Soviet and Indonesian-Soviet conflicts were, after all, still within the communist family. From this time on, communism all but ceased as a believable alternative for those portions of East Asia that had not become communist in the immediate aftermath of World War II or that were already in the

process of being overcome by powerful indigenous communist movements. This last category was limited exclusively to Indo-China. As earlier chapters have noted, the shattering of communist hopes for Indonesia was a defeat for communism in general. Furthermore, Soviet investments in Sukarno's Indonesia had been massive and relatively recent and it could always have been hoped before the debacle that Sukarno would ultimately see the error of his more recent ways and reject Chinese for Soviet support. This dream was now gone. Even at the ideological level, there was a setback of major proportions as Indonesia, along with Castro's Cuba, was one of the two leading examples of the Soviet view of a "non-capitalist path" for the Third World, that is the concept of "national democracy." This blow was aggravated by the fact that the third country to be declared a national democracy, Ghana, also fell from this state of incipient grace with the overthrow of Nkrumah at the same time as the change in Indonesia. The theory continued but in much weakened form and against a tide of growing doubts as to its efficacy even among Soviet ideologues. Although there were some new recruits to the "national democratic" category in the years ahead such as Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique, many of the early examples had to be removed from that category in subsequent years such as Egypt and Guinea. Furthermore, there was no escaping the fact that greater skepticism was required regarding the longer term stability of leftist third world regimes as well as their long term commitment to Leninist principles. The early failures of "the non-capitalist path" in Indonesia and Ghana set the tone for a growing

perception that communism was not to be the wave of the future—a trend that ended in the collapse of communist optimism in its original heartland.

In the years that have followed, the Soviet Union was reduced to a virtual zero as a potential model for Southeast Asia. Its influence became limited to a Vietnam that wanted the Soviet Union as a powerful but distant ally against a very proximate China whose interests no longer coincided with those of the Vietnamese after China lost interest in the cause of an expanding revolutionary Asian communism while Hanoi was more committed than ever to conquest of South Vietnam and effective suzerainty over the rest of Indo-China as it saw American will deteriorate. This is not to say that Soviet military power was not recognized by the nations of Southeast Asia. Indeed, a Soviet threat in such terms was much discussed, especially by Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew, but this perception of an outside military threat was much different than the earlier threat of powerful internal communist movements aided and abetted by a Soviet Union regarded as the fountainhead of a hostile world-wide movement. This shift in the perception of the Soviet Union from an immediate subversive danger to a distant, if powerful, Great Power that lacks resonance in the region paradoxically increased regional willingness to allow the Soviet Union a limited entree for such purposes as trade, cultural relations and diplomatic acceptability. A certain suspicion remained, and justifiably so, but the ASEAN countries, in particular, now regarded themselves as big

boys able to deal with whatever subversive emanations might protrude from the Soviet official presence.

Meanwhile, the real shift in the focus of Sino-Soviet rivalry from leadership of national liberation movements to direct state-to-state confrontation led to Soviet pre-occupation with the containment and encirclement of China. The Soviet leadership at the highest levels, including Brezhnev himself, began to advocate the need for an Asian security conference and a new security structure that was never spelled out. Despite the vagueness of this scheme, Soviet diplomacy and Soviet propaganda put forth considerable effort in trying to induce the non-communist countries of East Asia, and Southeast Asia in particular, to agree to the necessity for such a formal arrangement. The Soviet concept was vigorously denounced by the United States but it lacked any resonance in the region in any case and even the Soviets did not appear to regard it as a viable proposal. Its purpose was rather to foster the appearance of a broad coalition against a China with which the Soviets were increasingly locked in an acerbic direct confrontation. The bitterness of that confrontation had subsided by the 1980s but Soviet efforts to foster an encirclement of China with allies or at least rivals of China such as India continued. The Soviet military build-up also continued with the existing land force structure supplemented by greater Soviet naval activity in the Western Pacific and the acquisition of a base at Cam Ranh Bay in South Vietnam.

The shift of communist Vietnam from the Chinese to the Soviet orbit in the 1970s and early 1980s deserves further comment. The

first step in this process was Hanoi's perception that China was becoming increasingly disinterested in the cause of Southeast Asian revolution after the Indonesian debacle - irrespective of whether Hanoi connected this withdrawal to Indonesia or merely to the Cultural Revolution as an internal Chinese phenomenon. This was followed by very practical reasons for Vietnamese dissatisfaction with China; the latter began to interrupt the flow of Soviet assistance across the Chinese rail system - a feature of their trilateral relations that had become both common and quite clear to external observers by 1967-68. These Chinese actions were not simply the disruptions of the Red Guards and contending Chinese factions; they were conscious Chinese policy. This policy was not directed so much at Vietnam as at the Soviet Union which was becoming much more of a direct target of Chinese venom by this time as noted in another chapter. Nevertheless, it was Hanoi that was harmed and precisely at a time when its prospects for conquest of the south seemed to be taking on a new dimension as the result of the growing shift in US public opinion. The basis was accordingly being laid for a Vietnamese shift of primary reliance from Peking to Moscow, that is a shift from an alliance of common ideology and common regional strategy that had characterized the Sino-Vietnamese relationship before September 30, 1965 to an alliance of convenience based on more narrow and parochial interests of the Soviet-Vietnamese partners. The Soviet interest was the search for some kind of a toe hold in the region from which it was otherwise poorly positioned (with the future base at Cam Ranh Bay a later bonus) and the

extension of its effort to encircle China. The Vietnamese interest was to garner Soviet material support for its pan-Indo-China designs and, later, to offset a China that wanted to confine Vietnam to Vietnam proper as its policies in Laos and Cambodia were to show.

In sum then, the Soviet Union was largely frozen out of East Asia politically after the Indonesian upheaval and had to resort to a somewhat increased military presence and a courtship of its Vietnamese ally in order to harass China and to maintain some minimal participation in the affairs of the region in the hope that there would be a better outlook for its interests sometime in the remote future. The impact of the communist collapse in Indonesia on all this is related more to what transpired in the Chinese change of posture than to any direct relationship although the general decline of communism's appeal in Southeast Asia after 1965 also limited Soviet capabilities. And with the rise of Gorbachev and his last ditch efforts to salvage the Soviet Union through contained liberalization, all these calculations about communist advance toward its supposed inevitable world triumph became irrelevant.

## XXII

### The Broad International Effects

A stone dropped in a pond will send out ripples that reach far from the point of original impact although with diminishing effect. The Indonesian upheaval had such far reaching effects. One reason for this was the intrinsic importance of Indonesia because of its size and strategic location. A second was the indirect impact of the communist failure in redirecting China's militant external stance into a focus on internal policy and accommodation abroad. There was still a third factor that merged with the Indonesian upheaval and the resultant China effect to extend these influences yet further. This latter factor was not knowingly related to the Indonesian upheaval but the coincidence was nevertheless real. I am referring here to the conscious innovative foreign policy pursued by Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger on a global scale. As articulated in particular by Kissinger, there was a deliberate effort to shift the structure of international relations from the bi-polar system that grew out of World War II into a multi-polar structure based on five large agglomerations of power: the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Japan and Western Europe. To some extent this theme may have reflected Kissinger's personal interest in the Metternichean analogy of the stable Congress of Vienna settlement that followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars. In a deeper sense, it was also a natural

evolution in thinking that reflected evolving realities. The world was, in fact, decreasingly bi-polar in several ways. Soviet hegemony over international communism was fading. This was not only evident in the increasing bitterness of the Sino-Soviet split but also in the greater variety that was slowly developing in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. Both Western Europe and Japan had recovered from their wartime prostration and were becoming more assertive. The practical inability of the US and the Soviet Union to translate their awesome military power into commensurate political influence and the rise of limited but nevertheless important constraints of ethics and precedence served to provide smaller powers with more leeway to assert themselves without bringing down upon their heads the wrath of one or more of the great powers. Partly, of course, this was simply a matter of the smaller players learning how far they could go as the new post-war balance became more settled and predictable and partly it reflected both internal and external restraints on great power freedom of action. The Kissinger model was overly simplistic in my view as it did not take sufficient account of countries or "power centers" other than the arbitrarily selected "big five" and tended to downgrade the significance of medium and small nations as important actors, not just as pawns being acted upon. Nevertheless, the Nixon/Kissinger scheme had merit and, in any case, it had its effect upon US policy.

As Kissinger makes clear in his book on his official stewardship, neither he nor the President looked upon the opening to China as simply a crass playing of the "China card" against the



Soviet Union but rather saw the opening to China as part of a multi-polar balance or "concert of the world" that would involve all the powers including the Soviet Union in a stable system of checks and balances which in turn would sustain the general peace. This is also clear from what actually transpired. Nixon and Kissinger wasted no time after the Shanghai communique in following up their successful visit to Peking with a visit to Moscow. This was no ordinary visit, moreover, it was to be the launching of a US-Soviet detente and a general East-West detente that went far beyond the limited previous moves such as Brandt's Ostpolitik. A whole array of agreements were signed including a structure of significant foreign trade commitments (and Most Favored Nation treatment for the USSR) and a bevy of new exchange arrangements. The first SALT agreement, which had been bogged down in technicalities, was rushed to a conclusion and the United States reversed its long standing veto of a European Security Conference, albeit with insistence on getting some quid for the quo in the form of a "basket three" on human rights. This grand scheme was only partially realized, of course, in large part falling far short of expectations because of the virtual collapse of Presidential authority as a result of Watergate. Nevertheless, SALT one and CSCE - the European Security and Cooperation structure - remained as seemingly permanent institutional products of the Nixon/Kissinger policies.

How can these essentially European-centered structures be tied to the Indonesian upheaval? Although there are also purely European and US-Soviet bilateral factors that contributed to the march of

policy in this direction, it is difficult to see how all this would have come about without the prior China opening. And, as I have said, the China opening became possible only because of the powerful effect of the Indonesian reversal on Chinese policy. From the US standpoint, the Nixon visit to Moscow would hardly have occurred without the prior accommodation with China which allowed the American leadership to conclude that a stable multi-power balance or "council of the world" was a viable new course. The Soviet Union too, although it wanted a CSCE, expanded trade with the US, and a strategic arms agreement favorable to its perception of its interests, would probably not have been willing to deal with the Nixon administration on so grand a scale, or would have demanded unacceptable terms, without the specter of a US-China de-facto-alliance against it in view. Furthermore, if the Sino-Soviet conflict were still being conducted on the premises of 1965 - that is an all-consuming struggle over leadership of national-liberation movements and an effort to prove who had the most revolutionary, anti-imperialist spirit - it is doubtful that Moscow could have gone so far in the appearance of US-Soviet accommodation. There will undoubtedly be many objections to carrying this argument on the effects of the Indonesian turnaround so far afield. There is no way, really, of measuring the effects of major historical watersheds on distant developments when causal factors are also appearing from a variety of other sources. The changes in policy are also not clear cut from a time standpoint as the reaction of men to events is seldom precipitous but rather is conducted gradually and by stages to make

the change palatable to one's conscience and the strong human need to demonstrate consistency. The Sino-Soviet debate, for example, continued to speak in terms of national liberation movements after 1965-66 and it is only a matter of judgment based on long-term perspective to hold, as I do, that the "oomph" went out of this issue and shifted to direct border questions after 1966. Vietnam attitudes were, of course, affected by a variety of other factors including mistakes in execution, internal dissent and even long-standing emotional antipathies of a personal nature toward certain US leaders. Each reader can judge for himself the extent to which the arguments set forth in these pages can be carried. Nevertheless, I would submit that the long-range effects of the Indonesian upheaval should be seriously considered, most clearly, of course, in the more immediate vicinity of the new-found East Asian stability, in the attitudes of China toward its neighbors, and in the collapse of the domino theory in the United States with all that meant in terms of a sustained direct American role in Vietnam. The effects of the Indonesian reversal, if I am right, were generally favorable to US policy but not entirely so. Asian security was enhanced but US policy in Vietnam was negatively affected. But then all major historical upheavals produce complex effects on the external environment, the negative and the positive (from whatever viewpoint) interlacing in unforeseen ways that also cannot be detached from their interplay with other complex causes. That is one of the frustrations of the social sciences but also one of its fascinations. Indonesia is not only typical in this respect, it affords an unusually rich field for study and conjecture.

