SOE HOK-GIE

A BIOGRAPHY OF A YOUNG INDONESIAN INTELLECTUAL

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Political and Social Change
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
at The Australian National University, Canberra

JOHN R. MAXWELL

June 1997
In memory of George Pappas and Monty Brown, two outstanding teachers who introduced me to the world of books and ideas
This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other
degree or diploma in any university and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains
no material previously published by another person, except when due reference is made
in the text of the thesis.

signed:

John R. Maxwell
ABSTRACT

This thesis is a biographical study of a young Indonesian intellectual, Soe Hok-gie, set against the background of Indonesian politics during the 1960s.

The biography begins in Chapter 1 by sketching Soe's family background and considering those factors that moulded and conditioned his personality and his perceptions of the world around him: the immediate family circle, the particular Jakarta milieu in which he grew up, his early schooling and secondary education, and the impact of his own reading and the mass media. The aim is to detect the early glimmerings of the political activist of his mature years.

Chapter 2 offers a concise overview of Indonesian national politics during the 1950s and 1960s, that period when Soe's own understanding of politics was steadily developing. The emphasis is on the Guided Democracy years and the rising tensions within the political system, especially after 1963.

Chapter 3 considers Soe's gradual emergence as a political activist in the early 1960s after his enrolment as a student at the University of Indonesia. This part of the thesis describes his contribution to the assimilation movement within the Sino-Indonesian community, his initial contacts with student political activists, and his discovery of one small clandestine group of committed opponents of Sukarno and Guided Democracy. The chapter concludes by considering the escalating tension within student politics during the early 1960s and its impact on Soe's own campus.

Chapter 4 is a detailed account, largely from Soe Hok-gie's own perspective, of the student movement that emerged in response to the attempted coup of 1 October 1965. This chapter considers Soe's own participation and leadership role throughout the various phases of this movement, and describes the increasing chaos on the streets of Jakarta that culminated in Sukarno's granting of emergency powers to Soeharto on 11 March 1966.
Chapter 5 examines the protracted struggle throughout 1966 to force Sukarno from the presidency, and outlines Soe's own advocacy of a militant and uncompromising approach towards both Sukarno and the Old Order through his student radio broadcasts and his early journalism. His own aspirations for the post-Sukarno era are discussed, as are his initial anxieties about the course and direction national politics appeared to be taking.

Soe's own response to the emerging character of the New Order government is the central theme of Chapter 6. During the late 1960s, while rejecting the view that students had earned the right to play a permanent role in national politics, Soe emerged as a prominent public intellectual offering a critical independent commentary on some of the key moral, social and political issues of the day. Throughout this period his own life was marked by a growing sense of isolation from the world around him.

The epilogue considers the impact of Soe's life, both on those who knew him directly and on later generations of students and activists who learnt of him through his writings. The study concludes by reflecting briefly on certain characteristic features of Soe's approach to politics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note on Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: ORIGINS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A distinctive <em>peranakan</em> heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebon Jeruk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early school years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canisius College and beyond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political awakening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: CONTEXT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The collapse of parliamentary democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The push to Guided Democracy: 1957-1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Democracy becomes established: 1959-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Democracy moves towards crisis: 1963-1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: THE EARLY UNIVERSITY YEARS: A POLITICAL ACTIVIST EMERGES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawamangun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pessimism and a crisis of confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to Sukarno's ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The assimilationists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the Great Leader of the Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemsos and the urge for action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The radical left: an alternative path?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerakan Pembaharuan: conspiratorial politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus politics in the early 1960s: the GMNI offensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student politics at Rawamangun: preserving independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: INTO THE CAULDRON OF POLITICAL ACTIVISM: THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS OF 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The destruction of the PKI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student response: the birth of KAMI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Tritura campaign begins 137
Student demonstrations escalate 141
President Sukarno hits back 149
The president's supporters respond 152
Strategies and structures 160
The pressure to return to class 162
Demonstrations resume: the violent phase 171
Militant students take charge 176
The arrival of Bandung radicals 179
Further demonstrations: the role of KAPPI and a student militia 182
The militants' dilemma and escalating chaos 185
Soeharto finally moves 191

Chapter 5: CLEANING OUT THE OLD ORDER 193
Radio Ampera on the offensive 195
A defiant president 207
The end of Sukarno 214
The post-Sukarno era: aspirations and forebodings 223

Chapter 6: GRAPPLING WITH THE EMERGING NEW ORDER 238
Resuming the life of a student 238
Student politics: KAMI under the New Order 247
Student politics: 'intra-extra' conflict increases 253
National affairs: the rising tide of authoritarian politics 256
Considering the options 263
An overseas interlude 268
Returning to old problems 272
The private realm 276
Prostitutes or partners: the place of intellectuals in public life 279
A downward spiral 285
Conflict on the campus 293
Semeru 300

EPILOGUE: 302
Reactions, responses and the legacy 304
Final reflections 309

GLOSSARY 313

BIBLIOGRAPHY 322
Acknowledgements

A project that has taken as long as this one to bring to fruition inevitably racks up a large number of personal debts.

It was Herbert Feith who suggested Soe Hok-gie as a possible subject of research longer ago than he or I may care to remember. Herb was an inspiring teacher when I was an undergraduate at Monash University, and he has continued to offer his wisdom, judgement and insights throughout the course of this project. My understanding of Indonesia and my work on this biography has also been immeasurably enhanced by the contributions of Harold Crouch and Jamie Mackie. I thank all three for their encouragement, for their detailed and searching comments on my work, and especially for the example of their own scholarship on Indonesia. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have had these three people as my supervisors and to be able to count them among my personal friends.

Throughout the course of several visits to Indonesia I have received assistance from many quarters. Above all I would like to thank the immediate family of Soe Hok-gie: his mother Ibu Maria, his father the late Soe Lie Piet, Dien Pranata and Arief Budiman. Any qualms I had about invading their privacy were quickly dispelled by the openness and complete honesty with which they greeted my inquiries and the friendship which I received during my visits.

There have been a great number of others in Indonesia who have assisted me directly with my work. I think that it is some measure of Soe Hok-gie's own standing among those in his society who knew him personally that I found so many willing to share their impressions with me. Some of those mentioned below helped me in many small ways; others made major contributions to my knowledge of Soe's life and my understanding of Indonesia and its politics. In many places throughout the body of the thesis I have made reference to the assistance of specific individuals during formal

In addition to those listed above there are a small number of others to whom I have promised anonymity. Although I am not able to acknowledge their assistance in the way I would like, I am sure that if they read my work they will recognise their contribution.

During the course of my many visits to Indonesia I have received support and assistance from various people of a more general nature. Above all, I would like to single out my good friends in Bandung - the Hardjono family and the Lok family - for their friendship, their hospitality and their many kindnesses over the years. I also thank Lance Castles for providing me with a congenial place to stay during a visit to Jakarta in 1985.

Since I did not make my first visit to Indonesia until 1972 I never had the opportunity to meet Soe Hok-gie in person. But during the researching and writing of his biography I have had the good fortune to discuss his life and its meaning with a number of people in Australia who were former friends of Soe's in Jakarta, including Ganjar Ilyas and Tuti Mitchell, and also with several visiting scholars - Ben Anderson, Dan Lev and Mary Somers Heidhues - who had come to know him well during the course of their own work in Indonesia. I thank each of these people for sharing their
impressions with me. I also wish to thank Charles Coppel, Angus McIntyre, Ruth McVey and Claudine Salmon for their encouragement, information and suggestions, and Thee Kian Wie for his helpful comments on a draft of the early chapters.

In Canberra I would like to thank all my friends in the Department of Political and Social Change and those within the wider community of Indonesian studies at the Australian National University for their support and friendship over the years and for helping make Canberra a lively centre for the study of modern Indonesia.

Finally, I wish to mention my family. Robyn and I discovered Indonesia together and have shared innumerable rich experiences over the years in many parts of the archipelago. Her support has been critical, especially in recent months. I know I have tried her patience with this thesis but I hope she will think that it has been worthwhile. Simeran has been a healthy diversion and a constant source of encouragement. I look forward to her reading some of this to discover for herself what the fuss was all about.

In writing these acknowledgements I recall an occasion many years ago when I attended a wedding feast in Banda Aceh. The host made a long speech during which he apologised most abjectly to the assembled guests about the quality of the food in case not enough salt had been added during the preparation. I also feel the need to make an apology, especially to all those people who have been encouraging me for so long to complete this study. The food in Banda Aceh on that occasion was magnificent. Recent events in Indonesia suggest to me that, despite the long procrastinations, a biography of Soe Hok-gie still has a special relevance. I just hope there is sufficient salt.
Note On Spelling

Indonesian language words and expressions used in this thesis have been rendered in accordance with the spelling reforms introduced in 1972 which are now standard practice in Indonesia and Malaysia.

There are two important exceptions. The titles of all published works (books, periodicals and newspapers) that appeared before the introduction of the spelling reforms have been reproduced here in their original form: for example, *Harian Rakjat*, 'ichtisar sedjarah tjita\(^2\) assimilasi' etc.

Personal names present a different and perplexing problem. Some people changed the spelling of their names to conform to the new system (for example, Syarif Thayeb), while many others did not (for example, Sjahrir). Some have retained the old Dutch-derived *oe* (Soeharto), while others prefer to use the *u* form (Sumitro). Note that President Sukarno advocated that form as the correct spelling, even though he continued to sign himself *Soekarno*. Faced with such diversity, the only possible line of consistency is to render all personal names in accordance with each individual's preferred spelling, or at least as far as that has been possible to determine.
INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a biographical study of Soe Hok-gie, an unusual and most remarkable young Indonesian intellectual and political activist of the 1960s.

Within the broad sweep of Indonesia's post-independence history, this particular decade was of profound importance for it was marked by the transition from the nation's first presidency to its second, as Sukarno was forced to concede office to General Soeharto. It was a period that encompassed the implementation, elaboration and collapse of Guided Democracy, that fatally flawed authoritarian system of government that saw President Sukarno attempt to balance the opposing left and right forces with whom he shared power, and also the establishment years of the self-styled New Order when power and authority shifted into the hands of the armed forces under Soeharto's leadership.

In between these two periods were the tumultuous and chaotic events of late 1965 and early 1966, sparked off by the violent and controversial episode of 1 October 1965, which has passed into received history in Indonesia as 'Gestapu-PKI', an attempted coup said to have been masterminded by the Indonesian Communist Party. Throughout those months, and until well into the following year, the words and deeds of young people were an important part of the political life of the nation to a degree that had not been evident since the revolution and has only rarely been the case since. Many of these young people, men and women of roughly Soe Hok-gie's age who collectively came to see themselves as the '66 generation (to distinguish themselves from the '45 generation of their parents who had had direct experience of the revolution and the struggle for independence), later believed that they had played a path-breaking role in the critical months between January and March of 1966.
The broad picture of this period of Indonesian politics has already been examined in considerable depth and detail in major works by a number of scholars. In addition, there is a rich vein of specialised monographs and shorter journal articles on selected issues and themes. As will be evident from the footnotes attached to the pages that follow, I have drawn extensively on the work of many of these authors and have acknowledged my debt accordingly.

In that particular respect this study does not break new ground. Yet biography - in this case political biography - does seek to achieve something distinctly different from other forms of social studies. By selecting out for closer scrutiny the lives of individual political actors, biographical studies seek to complement those more broadly-based forms of social-science analysis that are concerned with defining, probing and appraising the major social and cultural forces that have shaped and determined the course of history. Biography encourages us to factor into our analysis the relative weight to be accorded to specific individuals and the unique force personality plays in the collective human experience.

However, the study of modern Indonesia has not as yet been particularly well endowed with full length critical biographies of prominent figures. Among biographical studies so far are those of Sukarno by, respectively, Bernard Dahm (1969), J.D. Legge (1972), and C.L.M. Penders (1975), Penders and Sundhausen's biography of General Nasution (1985), Mavis Rose's study of Mohammad Hatta (1987), David Hill's doctoral thesis on the journalist and publisher Mochtar Lubis (1988), Rudolf Mrázek's biography of Sutan Sjahrir (1994) and Legge's group biography of the Sjahrir circle (1988). In addition, there are a small number of shorter biographical portraits, such as Mrázek on Tan Malaka (1972) and Angus McIntyre on Soeharto (1995), and the collections by Andaya, Coppel and Suzuki (1976) and McIntyre (1993). As far as Indonesian language

---

material is concerned, the publishing boom that has occurred in Indonesia over recent years has produced a flood of autobiographical and biographical literature, yet much of this material is either popular uncritical hagiography or reminiscences and reflections of a blatantly self-justifying nature of which President Soeharto's 1989 volume is undoubtedly the most prominent example.2

In several fundamental respects the present study of Soe Hok-gie provides a sharp contrast to all the major biographies referred to above. To begin with, the subject is a minor figure within the world of Indonesian politics. Although for a short period his journalism brought him a degree of prominence in certain quarters, especially among those Indonesians who were readers of the quality Jakarta press, Soe's was never a household name in Indonesia. Ethnically and culturally, as a Sino-Indonesian he began life as an outsider.3 Though by dint of energy, intelligence and force of personality he came into contact with many members of the political elite, he himself held no position in any political party or national body, except for his participation in the assimilation movement within the Sino-Indonesian community during the early 1960s, and his own place in national politics remained obscure. At certain points in his life he was actively engaged in politics, but unlike some other prominent members of his generation he never sought to make politics into a full-time vocation. Consequently, the most diligent reader will struggle to find his name even in the footnotes of the published literature on Indonesian politics during the 1960s. Moreover, Soe died prematurely, with an academic career scarcely begun and before he had achieved much either personally or politically in the course of his short life.

Nevertheless, Soe was a passionate and intense observer of his nation's affairs, even from his teenage years. And fortunately - almost uniquely - many of his innermost

---

2 See Soeharto 1989. Like other works of this genre Soeharto's personal reflections will undoubtedly be extremely useful as source material for future independent biographers to analyse.

3 Until the early 1960s the civic status of Indonesian residents of Chinese descent, even *peranakans* whose families had been there for several generations, was still under a cloud in strictly legal terms. On this issue see Somers 1965: 224-50; and Mackie 1976: 9-12.
thoughts and reflections about the world around him, as well as his forcefully argued commentaries on unfolding political and social problems, have survived in a substantial body of private and public writings. In this regard, the existence of Soe's private diary, an unusual and rare document in Indonesian literature, has been of special importance. In addition, Soe's network of family, friends and acquaintances have remained to provide their own insights and perspectives on the events of his life.

I have drawn extensively on both these sources in constructing the life history. It reveals one young man's emerging political consciousness as he attempts to respond to what is happening in the society around him and as he seeks to come to terms with the challenges of the nation's politics. In addition, Soe's personal experiences are also remarkably useful as a fresh perspective on a number of aspects of Indonesian politics during the 1960s, in particular the origins of organised student opposition to Sukarno's government, the role that students played in the transition to the New Order in 1966, and the debates within intellectual and activist circles about the direction of national politics throughout that entire decade. Since it is Soe Hok-gie's own understanding of politics that is at the centre of this work, and since it is rare in Indonesian studies to have access to such highly personal reflections, I have chosen to include a substantial number of my own translations of selected passages from Soe's own public and private writing.

To avoid misunderstanding about this life history I think that it is important at the outset to register what I see as several basic qualifications about the nature and scope of the present study. As far as the choice of subject is concerned, there may be some - especially in Indonesia - who will contend that this biography has resulted in a biased interpretation of certain aspects of politics, in particular in the account of the 1966 student movement. As one of my interviewees in Jakarta put it to me - he was no friend of Soe

---

4 The letters written by Sutan Sjahrir to his wife while in internment by the colonial authorities during the late 1930s are perhaps the finest example of material of this type. See Sjahrir 1949. The only comparable body of more recent published material of which I am aware are the edited diary essays of Ahmad Wahib, a young Muslim intellectual of almost the same age as Soe Hok-gie, who was tragically killed in a Jakarta road accident in 1973. See Wahib 1981.
and was keen to persuade me of the inappropriateness of my choice of biographical subject - 'the locomotive will not be strong enough to pull the train!' While I did not accept his point of view (after all, I was well aware that he had his own political axe to grind) I am conscious that there is an important issue here that needs to be addressed. It is a dilemma that faces any biographer, for, by isolating out from the mainstream the life of the individual subject for special scrutiny, there is a risk that other voices may not be sufficiently heard or the causal power of other societal forces not be adequately addressed. All I can say is that I have tried to take this problem into account. Although it is essentially Soe's biography that is on display, at various points throughout the study I have tried to set the life-history dimension against the broader political narrative to achieve a certain balance. In the long run, however, what is really required is a set of additional biographies of other political figures so that their distinctive contributions can also be analysed and assessed.

A second matter worth noting concerns the problem of geographic perspective, for there is an inherently Jakarta-centric bias running throughout this study. Although the political high jinks of the national capital by no means constitute the totality of Indonesian politics, a preoccupation with events in Jakarta in this case simply cannot be avoided. Soe Hok-gie was himself very much a child of that city, his life lived out almost entirely within its boundaries. There were occasional brief visits to other urban centres, one overseas venture towards the end of his life, and, of special importance, his numerous excursions to the mountain peaks of Java. However, Soe's judgements, instincts and impressions about the world of politics were fashioned out of his own experiences within the national capital. In addition, most of the key political events that form the background to the personal history took place within the parameters of national elite politics with Jakarta as their physical epicentre.

Finally, there is the difficult question of how much scope and attention should be given to what I shall call the private realm. It seems to me to be self-evident that if we are to strive towards an understanding of another human being, particularly a young man of
Soe's age, a biography must take into account questions of personality development, identity and the emotional life of the subject. Like many others who have turned to writing a life history I have been challenged by my reading of A.F. Davies' remarkable essay, 'The tasks of biography', which revives and expands upon the prescriptions for 'systematic biography' advanced by John Dollard in the 1930s. Consequently, where I have found that there are sufficient source materials available I have tried to take account of the inner life of my subject, especially when this appears to have had some significant impact upon his emerging or shifting political outlook. Although the results may be disappointing to anyone seeking a more overtly psychological reading, I hope that I may have uncovered material useful to others better able to follow such a path.

---

5 Davies 1972: 108-17; also Dollard 1935
Chapter 1

ORIGINS

On 10 December 1959, a Jakarta schoolboy from a Sino-Indonesian family of modest circumstances, turned to the first page in a new notebook of a diary in which he had occasionally jotted down a few random thoughts over the previous two and a half years. In the still immature handwriting of adolescence, he penned the following:

Earlier today when I was looking after my monkey, I met a man (not a beggar) in the middle of eating mango skins. It appears that he was starving. This is just one of the signs that are beginning to appear in the capital. I gave him 2.50 rupiah. It was all I had at the time. (15 rupiah in reserve.)

Yes, two kilometres away from this fellow eating peelings, 'His Excellency' is probably laughing again, feasting with his beautiful wives. And when I see incidents like this fellow eating peelings, I feel proud that our generation has been given the task of overcoming the older generation that has created such a mess. Our generation has to be the judge of the old corruptors - men like Iskak, Djodi, Dahjar and Ibnu Sutowo. We will become the generation that will make Indonesia prosper.

Those in power now grew up during the era of the former Netherlands Indies. They were the stubborn fighters for independence. Look at Sukarno, Hatta, Sjahir, Ali and the like. But now they have betrayed what they fought for. Sukarno has betrayed Independence. Yamin has falsified - or at least romanticised - Indonesian history. Hatta rarely dares to speak the truth. And as time passes our people are suffering more and more.

'I'm on your side, all you unfortunate ones.' Indonesia is sinking, sinking, and if the challenges of history remain unanswered, it will be destroyed. 'My unfortunate country.' The prices of goods are rising, everything is becoming increasingly difficult. Gangs terrorise. The army terrorises. Terror is everywhere.

Who are responsible for all this? They are, the older generation - Sukarno, Ali, Iskak, Lie Kiat Teng, Ong Eng Die - all of them leaders who should be shot at Lapangan Banteng.

We can still only hope for truth. And the radio still screams out, spreading lies. Truth only exists in the heavens. The world is false, false.¹

¹ Soe Hok-gie's diary (hereafter SHG Diary), 10 December 1959. For additional information on this journal and an account of its use in this thesis, see the bibliographical appendix. 'His Excellency' refers, of course, to President Sukarno. Ali Sastroamidjojo of the PNI was prime minister twice during the 1950s (July 1953 to July 1955 and from March 1956 to March 1957). Iskaq Tjokroadisurjo, lawyer and PNI politician, was Minister for Economic Affairs in the first Ali Sastroamidjojo Cabinet. He was accused of corruption but avoided investigation until 1959 when he was finally tried and convicted. Djody Gondokusumo, PRN politician and also a lawyer, had been Minister for Justice in the same cabinet. He was arrested and convicted on corruption charges in 1955. (On both, see Feith 1962: 422-3.) Colonel Ibnu Sutowo, previously territorial commander of South Sumatra and from 1957 head of Permina, a state-owned oil company, had been dismissed from his post as the army's chief of operations after a smuggling racket had been exposed in late 1958 in the port of Tanjung Priok. 'Dahjar' is almost certainly Colonel Dachjar, the Jakarta military commander and one of the other senior
This extraordinary passage was written a week before the author's seventeenth birthday and only a few months into his second year of senior high school. It makes abundantly clear not only his antipathy toward some of the most prominent political figures in Indonesia in the late 1950s, but also displays an unusually sweeping confidence and moral certitude, claiming for his generation the responsibility to set matters right.

Who was this young student and what had made him so extraordinarily self-assured? What kind of social background had moulded and conditioned his perception of the world around him? In particular, what had produced this strong sense of moral purpose, and what lay behind his hostility towards the course and direction of Indonesia's politics by the late 1950s and the qualities of its leaders? This chapter will attempt to provide some answers to these questions but it should be readily apparent that Soe Hok-gie in no way conformed to any stereotypical views about the Chinese minority in Indonesia as a materialistic group consumed by economic self-interest. This highly idealistic young man was possessed of a remarkably powerful social conscience which, as we shall see, guided his thoughts, his words and his actions.

A few years after these words were written, their author became deeply involved in political activities aimed at undermining the Sukarno government. In early 1966 he was one of those who played a prominent part in the turmoil on the streets of Jakarta, which

army officers caught up in the same racket. (See Lev 1966: 195-6 and Crouch 1978:78. On Ibnu Sutowo's early career, see McDonald 1980: 143-6.) Mohammad Hatta was Indonesia's vice-president until he resigned in November 1956 and withdrew from public life. Sutan Sjahrir had held the prime ministership from November 1945 to June 1947 and was the leader of the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) in the parliament throughout the 1950s. Muhammad Yamin - lawyer, historian and nationalist ideologue - had twice been a cabinet minister during the 1950s and was widely believed to be close to the radical nationalist Murba party. Dr Lie Kiat Teng (Mohammad Ali) of the PSII was Minister for Health and Dr Ong Eng Die of the PNI was Minister for Finance in the first Ali Sastroamidjojo Cabinet.

This entry was written a few months after the government's 'monetary purge' of August 1959, which had catastrophic consequences for the domestic economy and caused considerable hardship for many Indonesians.

Lapangan Banteng is a large square in central Jakarta that served as a bus station. It has frequently been used for political rallies.
was a catalyst in the chain of events that saw President Sukarno slowly but surely forced from power and the establishment of a new government led by armed forces commander, Major General Soeharto.

A distinctive *peranakan* heritage

Only the bare outlines of the early history of the Soe family in Indonesia are known. Soe Hok-gie's paternal great-grandfather, Soe Hoen Tjiang, was a native of the island of Hainan in southern China. He arrived in Batavia as a poor immigrant, probably during the 1870s, a time when thousands of Chinese, almost all of them unattached young men from the southern provinces, were starting to migrate to Southeast Asia looking for work and new opportunities. In the Netherlands East Indies only a small percentage of these new arrivals managed to find marriage partners from within the established *peranakan* Chinese community of acculturated overseas Chinese. Soe Hoen Tjiang must either have possessed some outstanding personal qualities or else he was very fortunate since he was an exception to this general pattern. According to the family stories, although like almost all of the new arrivals from China he was destitute when he arrived in Batavia and brought nothing from his homeland but the clothes he was wearing, he had the good fortune to marry the daughter of a prominent *peranakan* family. His in-laws looked with favour on their son-in-law, giving him the start he needed in his

---

2 This account of the early history of the Soe family is based largely on interviews with Soe Lie Piet (29 January 1982), Nio Hoei An (31 January, 5 and 21 February 1985), Dien Pranata (20 February 1982) and Arief Budiman (15 April 1979, 8 and 9 March 1982).

3 There is an extensive literature on the Indonesian Chinese community. For a sound overview see Skinner 1963. For a more recent comprehensive bibliographical survey see Oetomo 1989. The term *peranakan* has been used for those Chinese born in Indonesia into families where there has been some intermarriage with indigenous people, a degree of accommodation with local culture, and who use Indonesian or some other vernacular language as their mother tongue. Some of the older generation of *peranakan* had received a good education and were able to speak Dutch. By contrast, the term *totok* has been applied to those Chinese now residing in Indonesia who were born in China and who speak a Chinese dialect as their first language. For a clear account of the categories of *totok* and *peranakan*, see Coppell 1973.

4 There were only small numbers of Hainanese in the Netherlands East Indies. They were especially poor and regarded as outsiders. According to Somers Heidhues (1974: 6), Hainanese women did not migrate to Southeast Asia until the 1920s.
adopted land where he soon established himself as a batik cloth trader. Soe Hoen Tjiang was apparently a shrewd and enterprising individual for within a short space of time he had amassed a considerable fortune. Yet his children and grandchildren failed to capitalise on these advantages, proving incapable of managing the wealth and property they subsequently inherited.

Soe Ho Soei, one of Soe Hoen Tjiang's seven children and born probably around 1880, operated a bakery in the Tanah Abang area that prospered for a time during the early part of this century. Like his father before him, Soe Ho Soei married well within the peranakan community: his wife, Oei Tjit Nio, was the daughter of the second wife (bini muda) of a prominent Batavia peranakan landlord who owned large tracts of land in the Pasar Senen area. Despite these connections, his Tanah Abang bakery business ultimately collapsed when debts piled up that could not be repaid. Soe Lie Piet (Salam Sutrawan), the eldest of the couple's four children and father of Soe Hok-gie, was born in Tanah Abang, Batavia, on 20 February 1904. As the first male grandchild he was the particular favourite of his grandfather, Soe Hoen Tjiang, who arranged for the boy to be raised in his own household. He was placed in the care of his maiden aunts who were responsible for his upbringing and for the apparent indulgence that he experienced during his childhood years. Consequently, Soe Lie Piet saw little of his own parents during his childhood and he grew up in relatively comfortable circumstances. Despite his totok grandfather, this was a peranakan environment so that Soe Lie Piet grew up speaking Malay, the characteristic Sino-Malay dialect of the Batavia peranakan Chinese community.

---

5 Interview with Soe Lie Piet, 29 January 1982. See also Latief 1980. For brief biographical sketches, see Salmon 1981: 303-5 and Suryadinata 1981: 124, although many of the details in the latter, including his date of birth, are inaccurate. Like many Sino-Indonesians, Soe Lie Piet adopted an Indonesian name during the late 1960s when the government encouraged name-changing as an assimilation measure. He died in Jakarta in August 1988.

6 For a detailed account of this Sino-Malay dialect, its origins and its relationship with both other Malay dialects and modern bahasa Indonesia, see Oetomo 1991, and also Salmon 1981: 115-22.
Soe Lie Piet received a rudimentary education at one of the elementary schools that had been established in Batavia early this century under the auspices of the Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan (the Chinese Association, THHK). Since the first four years of instruction were in Mandarin (*Kuo-yii*) the young *peranakan* learnt little of lasting value. However, during his final three years at school much of the instruction was in English, and Soe Lie Piet managed to absorb sufficient of this language to achieve an effective reading knowledge in his adult years.\(^7\)

After he left school, Soe Lie Piet worked for a while in his parents' bakery in Tanah Abang, and later, probably under the influence of his grandfather, he also tried his hand at the batik trade. However he did not last long at either pursuit. Brought up in the comparative affluence of his grandfather's house where he had been indulged by his maiden aunts, he was not attracted by the idea of long hours of drudgery in the family bakery and he appears to have lacked the temperament for commercial work. His apparent aimlessness and his enjoyment of time spent in the company of a group of indolent friends contributed to his reputation within the family as something of a 'black sheep'.

In fact, by his late teens Soe Lie Piet had decided that he really wanted to become a writer. As a child he had been attracted to the imaginative and creative world of books and ideas; then in his teenage years he began to write poems and short stories, some of which he managed to have published.\(^9\) In his youth, Soe was inspired by the example of older *peranakan* writers, journalists and publishers who were responsible for the impressive proliferation of newspapers, magazines and literary journals in the Sino-Malay language that sprang up throughout the Netherlands Indies during the first quarter

---

\(^7\) On the THHK schools and the problems of Chinese education in the Netherlands East Indies during this period, see Somers Heidhues 1965: 47-50; 1974: 39; Suryadinata 1972a: 49-54; and Nio 1940.

\(^8\) English, rather than Dutch, was the preferred choice as a foreign language at THHK schools. See Suryadinata 1972a: 53-4; also Suryadinata 1981: 60.

of the twentieth century. In particular, Soe was influenced by the legendary writer and journalist Tan Boen Kim whom he appears to have known and sought out for advice.

In the early 1920s, the young man left Batavia for what turned out to be an extended period of travel. By the mid 1920s he was in north Sumatra where he found employment for a time with a Medan newspaper, *Tjin Po*. Towards the end of 1926 he had moved to Palembang where he was appointed to the deputy editorship of a new bi-weekly *peranakan* newspaper, *Han Po*, that had been launched by a group of *peranakan* businessmen in that city. But in April 1927 he suddenly resigned and returned to Batavia. By the following year he had departed again, this time for Surabaya in East Java.

During the late 1920s Surabaya and nearby Malang were important centres of the burgeoning *peranakan* publishing enterprises in the Indies. Soe Lie Piet managed to secure an editorial position with *Hoakiao*, a prominent bi-monthly magazine, popular within the *peranakan* community. At the same time he began to devote himself seriously to his own writing, managing to have several of his works published. In October 1928 he won first prize for an essay in a competition organised by the editors of *Liberty*, a monthly literary magazine.

---

10 On the development of *peranakan* Chinese publications during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Salmon 1981: 33-46, 100-6; and Adam 1995.
11 Interview with Nio Hoei An, 31 January 1985. Also born in Batavia, the self-educated Tan Boen Kim was a prolific and popular writer of novels and stories from about 1912 onwards, many of them based on infamous crimes and other sensational events. Among his best known novels was *Nona Fientje de Feniks* (1915) based on the life of a famous Eurasian prostitute who was murdered by her lover. See Salmon 1981: 310-13.
12 Interview with Soe Lie Piet, 29 January 1982; *Tjin Po* 1925-1926. According to Suryadinata (1981: 124), Soe Lie Piet was editor of *Tjin Po* from 1922-6, but the newspaper did not appear until 1925 and Soe Lie Piet's name never appeared on its editorial staff list. Since this appears to have been his first newspaper job, he was almost certainly employed there in a junior capacity.
13 See *Han Po*, 8 November 1926. This was the newspaper's first edition, and its chief editor was Tan Thwan King. Salmon (1981: 303), however, dates Soe Lie Piet's appointment to 1927 and describes him as editor-in-chief. Soe contributed articles on a range of subjects and began to write a story set in the Glodok and Mangga Besar areas of Batavia entitled 'Dasarnja baik' (Good foundations), which appeared in instalments in each edition.
14 *Han Po*, 14 April 1927
15 The essay, entitled 'Pertjidra'an roemah tangga' (Household disagreements), appeared in *Liberty*, October 1928. Several further essays and a poem were published in the following months in the same
The Hoakiao group was also the publisher of another literary monthly, Penghidoepan, that had been launched in 1925 in Surabaya. Soe Lie Piet was appointed editor in 1928 and 1929. The format of this publication was significantly different from most of the other peranakan literary magazines and periodicals, for each monthly edition of Penghidoepan actually consisted of a complete novel. The same formula was also adopted by a rival publication, Tjerita Roman, first established in Malang in December 1929. Although a number of other competitors appeared throughout the 1930s, none was as successful as these two literary monthlies, which together published many novels by most of the leading peranakan authors during that period.\(^\text{16}\)

Soe Lie Piet's own experiences in Surabaya and the contacts he made there drew him into this literary circle, and in 1929 his first full length novels, Takdir!? (Fate) and Oeler Jang Tjantik (The Beautiful Snake), were published by Penghidoepan.\(^\text{17}\) From this promising beginning Soe quickly established himself as a popular author within the peranakan community. During the 1930s he joined that select band of writers whose work was regularly published by the leading peranakan literary journals of the day.\(^\text{18}\) Most of his novels were sentimental love stories taking place in a familiar Indonesian setting and frequently ending in tragedy. Although the main protagonists were invariably peranakan Chinese, Soe's stories frequently turned upon magical and mystical elements drawn from indigenous society. Throughout this period he maintained a prolific literary journal. In July 1929 he repeated the effort of the previous year, again securing first prize for his essay 'Pergaoelan' (Social relationships).\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{16}\) On Penghidoepan and Tjerita Roman, see Salmon 1981: 429-33 and 447-51; also Nio Joe Lan 1962: 24-6.

\(^{17}\) Takdir!? appeared in Penghidoepan, March 1929; it is the sad story of a young woman forced into concubinage by a rich and unscrupulous merchant when the young man to whom she is betrothed is reported to have been killed while studying in Shanghai. Oeler jang tjantik, the story of a peranakan Chinese who abandons his wife for a Sundanese mistress, appeared in Penghidoepan, May and June 1929.

\(^{18}\) See the notice announcing the tenth anniversary of Tjerita Roman in its January 1939 edition. Soe Lie Piet is listed as one of the most prominent authors of the day, along with Njoo Cheong Seng ('Monsieur d'Amour'), Pouw Kioe An, Chen Wen Zwan, Ong Khing Han and Liem Khing Hoo ('Romano').
output. In addition to another fifteen published novels during the next ten years, there was a steady stream of short stories, essays, translations and travel writing.  

In 1930 Soe moved to Bandung and attempted to establish a publishing venture of his own in that city with the aid of friends. However, the venture failed through financial mismanagement and lack of capital. For a time he worked in the printing establishment of a friend, while continuing to write novels and collaborating with others in their attempts to launch literary journals in both Bandung and Batavia.

In early 1933, Soe Lie Piet was married in Bandung. This was not a love match, for the couple had never met before the betrothal that had been arranged principally by one of Soe's aunts who had Bandung connections. The bride, Nio Hoei An (Maria Sugiri), was born in Bandung in 1907, the third child of a family of ten. Her father, Nio Boen Kie, who had died when she was about eleven, had been born in the Hokkien-speaking region of Fujian in southern China. He had come to the Netherlands Indies alone as a young man, establishing himself as a cloth trader to the Sundanese villages in the Bandung hinterland. Around the turn of the century, he married into an old established Bandung peranakan family. Together with his wife, Tan Lin Nio, he built up a thriving business buying, selling and processing a wide range of rural produce from their shop-house in Jalan Kelenteng, near the Andir produce market in central Bandung.

---

19 Unfortunately, nothing is known about the size of the print run of these novels or the reception they received from their peranakan readers. Two of his novels are briefly described in Nio Joe Lan's pioneering study (1962: 79 and 124-5) and most of his literary output is listed in Salmon's invaluable annotated bibliography (1981: 303-5).

20 This was probably known as Library, which Salmon (1981: 303) describes as 'a monthly....with articles on a wide range of subjects'. Soe Lie Piet is described as its former chief editor in a note on the facing page of Tjerita Roman, April 1934. It is not known how many issues appeared but it was almost certainly shortlived. There are no copies of Library in any of the established collections of Sino-Malay publications.

21 These include the literary monthlies Goedang Tjerita and Tjerita Novel that both first appeared in Bandung in 1930, and Sunrise launched in Batavia in the following year. Soe Lie Piet appears to have been the editor of the latter, which was published by Kwee Khe Soei. Another six novels by Soe were published in these monthlies between 1930 and 1932, including one based on his Bandung experiences, Bandoeng di Waktoe Malem (Bandung by Night), which appeared in Goedang Tjerita, January 1931. For the other works see the attached bibliography.
Despite her father's *totok* origins, Nio Hoei An grew up in a thoroughly *peranakan* environment dominated by the traditions of her mother's family where Sundanese was the everyday language and Chinese was unknown. As a young child, she received several years basic education in the Malay language at a Dutch Protestant mission school, followed by a further four years at a THHK school. Until her marriage, she had led a fairly sheltered life helping in the family business.

In 1933 Soe Lie Piet again found himself unemployed and was forced to live with his in-laws. He returned briefly to Palembang that year hoping to find further employment with *Han Po* but its publishers had been declared bankrupt. However, in 1934 he secured some work as an editorial assistant with the Surabaya literary monthly *Tjerita Roman*.

In August of the same year, Soe set out for Bali, accompanied by his wife and their eight-month-old daughter, Soe Lian-hiang (Dien Pranata). He had arranged to act as a correspondent for several Java-based publications and intended to explore the possibilities of establishing a newspaper in Denpasar, where he and his family lived for nearly a year. Although his plans for a publishing venture never materialised, Soe used his time in Bali productively. He wrote several short stories and novels, including some that were inspired by his Balinese surroundings. He also spent a considerable amount of time visiting places of interest throughout the island, collecting material for travel.

---

22 Interview with Nio Hoi An, 31 January 1985. She recalls that her father had worn the queue and practised Buddhism. However, he also spoke Sundanese fluently and discouraged his children from attempting to learn Chinese. Among her mother's family there had been a high degree of intermarriage with *pribumi* Indonesians, and for several generations the family had acted as suppliers of goods and services to the local Sundanese aristocracy.

23 See the announcement on the facing page of *Tjerita Roman*, April 1934. Several more of Soe's novels appeared in 1934, including one that drew upon his experiences in Sumatra. See Bidadari dari Telaga Toba (The Beautiful Spirit from Lake Toba) in *Tjerita Roman*, May 1934.

24 The couple's first child was born on 27 December 1933.

25 See *Lejak* (The Evil Spirit) in *Tjerita Roman*, April 1935. This is a rather fanciful story of unrequited love involving a Balinese dancing girl and a Chinese man. It became one of his best known novels.
writing and guide books that subsequently appeared in several editions in the following years.26

Upon their return to Java at the end of June 1935, Soe and his wife settled in Batavia, at first renting a simple one-room house in a kampung area of central Jakarta, then known as Pondok Rotan. The following years were not especially easy for the family. Unlike the period in Bali where food and lodging had been cheap and they had been able to live comfortably on the little that Soe Lie Piet was able to earn from his writing, in Batavia this was now insufficient to meet the needs of his young family, especially since he was unable to find regular employment as a journalist.27 For a time, he obtained work writing advertisements for small Chinese firms producing commercial publications but this was not an activity he enjoyed. Despite these setbacks, he succeeded in having four more novels accepted by publishers in the late 1930s, although the amount of money he was able to earn from his literary work was small.28 Family life was further unsettled by the difficulties Soe and his wife experienced finding a suitable permanent home in Batavia, forcing the family to move from one unsatisfactory rented house to another on several occasions during the late 1930s.29

With war threatening to erupt in the Pacific, a third child and their first son, Soe Hok-djin (Arief Budiman), was born on 3 January 1941. After the surprise assault on Pearl Harbour by the Japanese on 7 December 1941, the landings in Malaya the following day and the fall of Singapore in February 1942, an invasion of the Netherlands Indies was clearly imminent. As a mood of great uncertainty and rumours of impending danger gripped the city, Nio Hoei An decided to retreat to her mother's home in Bandung

---

26 See Melantjong ke Bali [dari pengalaman sendiri 1 taon berdiam di Bali] (Sightseeing in Bali [based on a year's personal experience living in Bali]) in Penghidoepan, November 1935. In the same year the Paragon Press in Malang published his guide book, Penggoendoekan (sic) Poelo Bali atawa Gids Bali (Guide to the Island of Bali or the Bali Guidebook). These were probably the first travel guides on Bali to appear in Malay; one of them was reprinted in revised form in the 1950s.
27 A second daughter, Soe Lian-eng (Mona Sugiri), was born in 1936.
28 Interview with Nio Hoei An, 5 February 1985
29 One house in the Petojo area was situated close to the Batavia gas works in Jalan Ketapang and the family was unable to endure the smell; another kampung house was too hot and crowded, while a third had to be vacated when it was sold.
with her three young children, leaving her husband behind in Batavia to continue to search for a suitable place to live.

The arrival of the Japanese Imperial Forces in Java in March 1942 was the beginning of a difficult period for the Chinese section of the local population and many suffered at the hands of the Japanese during the years of the occupation. Chinese intellectuals, writers and journalists fell under immediate suspicion, many were arrested and most of the existing peranakan newspapers and publishing houses were closed down. By a stroke of good fortune, however, Soe Lie Piet and his family were not adversely affected by these events. Some time before the Japanese occupation, Soe had managed to secure a job with a recently established Batavia daily, Hong Po. Its publisher and chief editor was Oey Tiang Tjoei, who was not only an outspoken critic of Dutch colonialism but also an ardent supporter of the Japanese. In 1941 Oey was arrested by the colonial authorities for his pro-Japanese activities, but the newspaper continued to appear under its deputy-editor, Suma Tjoe Sing. After the arrival of the Japanese Oey was quickly released. While other established peranakan newspapers such as Sin Po and Keng Po were forced to close, Hong Po was one of the few permitted to continue, becoming a vehicle for pro-Japanese news and articles exhorting the Chinese community to support the war effort.

Soe Lie Piet was employed on the Hong Po editorial staff for about two years. Protected by his employer's strong support for the Japanese, he and his family did not experience any special difficulties throughout the war-time occupation. For a brief period later in the occupation, he joined his younger brother Soe Lie Foo, who had established a successful business as a supplier to the Japanese armed forces at Tanjung Priok, the port area of Jakarta, as the colonial city was now called. When the British arrived in Jakarta

---

32 In September 1942, Hong Po was merged with the Japanese-controlled Chinese-language daily, Kung Yung Pao, as its Malay-language edition. See Gani 1978: 95 and 106-7; and Latief 1980: 28-9, 121 and 129.
in September 1945, Soe Lie Piet continued to work for some time at Tanjung Priok doing routine clerical and administrative work.

**Kebon Jeruk**

In the middle of 1942 and several months after the Japanese occupation had begun, when Soe had finally located a suitable house for his family in an area of Jakarta known as Kebon Jeruk, Nio Hoei An returned from Bandung with the three children. She was already pregnant with her fourth child and on 16 December that year another boy, Soe Hok-gie, was born in the newly established family home. This area of Jakarta, its narrow and crowded streets filled with becak drivers and street hawkers, was a critical part of the children's experience during their formative years. This is especially important in the case of Soe Hok-gie, for unlike each of his siblings, he never really left this neighbourhood. He was to remain living in his parent's home throughout his short life and was buried from there twenty-seven years later.

The Kebon Jeruk area of modern day Jakarta had its origins back in the mid-eighteenth century as the colonial city of Batavia gradually expanded southwards from its earliest beginnings in and around the port settlement at Sunda Kelapa. It is located about half-way along and on the eastern side of Jalan Hayam Wuruk, a major thoroughfare running alongside the long canal (formerly known as the Molenvliet) that connects the old commercial and administrative area of Kota (formerly Benedenstad) and Sunda Kelapa (also known as Pasar Ikan) with the complex of government and administrative buildings surrounding the Medan Merdeka square and its towering national monument.33 The block of narrow criss-crossing streets that comprises the greater Kebon Jeruk area - roughly a square kilometre - has clearly defined boundaries on every side. To its west is the busy Jalan Hayam Wuruk lined with shops, offices and commercial buildings; to the north is Jalan Mangga Besar Raya (formerly Prinsenlaan), another busy commercial street; to the east is Jalan Taman Sari Raya flanked by the main railway line running up to

---

33 On the history of Jakarta's growth, see Abeyasekere 1989: 3-130.
the Kota central station; and to the south is Jalan Sukarjo Wiryopranoto, known originally as Jalan Sawah Besar and with a bustling market place of that name.

Although from the early nineteenth century this has been an ethnically mixed area, Kebon Jeruk has always had a significant Chinese community, and a large and famous mosque stands here that was built in 1786 by peranakan Chinese Moslems. In the early 1940s, there were no longer any signs of the citrus groves that had given the area its name, but although Jakarta was rapidly expanding, there were still some open spaces to the east not far from the Soe family home, the remaining evidence of the semi-rural kampung origins of this particular region.

Soe Lie Piet had located a suitable house for his family in Jalan Kebon Jeruk IX, a narrow street running parallel with Jalan Hayam Wuruk but set back about three hundred metres from that main thoroughfare. The house, rented from a certain Tuan Abdullah Bey, a prominent peranakan Arab landowner in the area, was a modest, mostly timber dwelling, probably built in the early years of the century. According to the recollections of the Soe family, in the early 1940s it was one of the more substantial houses in the immediate neighbourhood, although it was certainly not large and was nothing more than adequate to meet the family's needs. A low iron fence presented a token barrier from the street, and the house itself - set back only a few metres - was approached by a low flight of steps. The whole structure was built up more than a metre to provide some protection against the ever present possibility of flooding. During the wet season, the street's drains and the nearby canals - frequently choked with refuse - were unable to cope with sudden monsoonal downpours and often broke their banks causing swirling murky floodwaters to invade many of the houses in this low-lying region of the city.

34 See Castles 1967: 162.  
36 The monthly rent was originally Rp 12. Eventually the rent was pegged by the government at Rp 1000 and could not be increased. Interview with Soe Lie Piet, 29 January 1982
A narrow, bare-swept yard ran down most of one side of the free-standing house with several large foliage trees providing some relief from the scorching tropical sun. At the top of the steps was a broad open verandah, its floor, like that of the rest of the house, covered with the ubiquitous polished ceramic tiles. The verandah served as the place to receive visitors and provided a suitable vantage point to observe the parade of street vendors and itinerant hawkers who passed the front door from early in the morning until late at night.\(^{37}\)

This was not a house or a neighbourhood in which it was possible for young children to grow up cocooned from the harsher realities of the world around them. Throughout the 1940s and the early 1950s, a series of crudely-constructed bamboo shacks lined the street immediately opposite the Soe's Kebon Jeruk house and these served as the semi-permanent homes for a number of struggling families. Some of these people were petty traders from distant villages who brought goods to sell at the nearby Kaligot market in Sawah Besar just a few minutes walk away through the side streets, and who found it more convenient to overnight nearby until their transactions were completed. In addition to produce vendors, there were also handicraft producers and peddlers (tukang bakul) who traded in basketry and simple kitchen utensils made from bamboo, products for which the Kebon Jeruk area and its markets were well known. There were also other more or less permanent occupants of these rough dwellings, some of them poor Betawi people,\(^{38}\) who eked out a precarious existence doing casual menial work in the neighbourhood as domestic servants, gatekeepers, nightwatchmen and odd-job men.

Despite their mother's occasional expressions of half-hearted disapproval about playing with the kampung children, her two small boys, Hok-djin and Hok-gie, found

---

\(^{37}\) When visited in January 1982, the house retained an old-world, slightly dilapidated charm that was in sharp contrast to the signs of modern urban ugliness fast closing in on all sides. By early 1985 the Soe family had moved from the neighbourhood, the old house had been completely demolished and a concrete multi-storied structure with a fortress-like facade occupied the site.

\(^{38}\) The Betawi were the original ethnic inhabitants of the Jakarta area. Abeyasekere (1989: 65-7 and 191-2) notes their decline in the face of the city's growth.
their earliest playmates on the streets outside their front gate among the children of their poor neighbours.\footnote{SHG Diary, 3 September 1960. More than a decade later, Soe Hok-gie was still able to recall the names of these children and the memories of these early childhood experiences remained vivid. One neighbour, Pak Hassan, the father of one of their special friends, Mamat, had been swept up in the \textit{romusha} slave labour program during the Japanese occupation; he worked as a nightwatchman, and also cut grass and cleared garbage, including that of the Soe household. Interviews with Arief Budiman, 5 March 1982 and Nio Hoei An, 21 February 1985} The Soe family itself was certainly not well-off: the children grew up in an environment where there were few material possessions, and where their mother performed most of the daily household chores with minimal assistance from servants. Yet there was a solid roof over their heads, and the children were always adequately though simply clothed and fed. Consequently, throughout their childhood years, the two brothers steadily came to appreciate the contrast between their own apparent good fortune and the constant struggle faced by their poorer neighbours. Their growing awareness of the harsh realities of the world around them was one of their most important childhood experiences.

**Early school years**

I have been unable to establish precisely when Soe Hok-gie and his brother and sisters began to attend school but it was probably no earlier than late 1947, and in Hok-gie’s case, perhaps not until at 1948. After the arrival of the Allied Forces in late 1945 and the gradual return of the Dutch, the city of Jakarta became contested territory. The Republican-appointed Mayor, Suwiryo, who was tolerated until the First Dutch Police Action of July 1947, established Republican schools in the parts of the city under his control, but none were available in the Soe’s neighbourhood.\footnote{See Abeyasekere 1989: 156-7.} Before the war, the eldest child in the family, Lian-hiang, had attended a Dutch-medium government school for girls (HCS) and Nio Hoei An was keen to have all her children attend school as soon as possible. By late 1947 the only school available was a ‘Hsin Hwa’ school in the Kota area operated by the Chinese community. Much of the tuition was conducted in English, there was some Indonesian, and Chinese was also taught. Several of the Soe children
attended but gained little from the experience.\textsuperscript{41} When the Dutch finally conceded the inevitability of independence in November 1949, the new government was in a position to organise a system of national education and government schools quickly opened all over Jakarta.

As far as the Soe family was concerned, there was no cultural imperative or commitment encouraging the pursuit of a Chinese-language education. Nio Hoei An, despite her own limited education, immediately sensed the importance of enrolling in a government school where instruction would be in the new national language, ‘bahasa Indonesia’. When the possibility of attending one of the recently opened government elementary schools (sekolah dasar negeri) presented itself, Soe Hok-gie, his brother Hok-djin and their two older sisters were quickly transferred there, probably early in 1950. The school they attended operated in an old Chinese-medium school building in Gang Komandan, a narrow lane on the far side of Jalan Mangga Besar Raya, a short distance to the north.\textsuperscript{42} Reflecting the area from which the children were drawn, most of the students and almost all of the teachers were from Sino-Indonesian backgrounds. Hok-djin, almost two years older, had been one class ahead at the ‘Hsin Hwa’ school but now both brothers were enrolled together in the first grade. Both were bright students, and they performed well enough at elementary school to show their future potential.

Of particular importance, both boys learnt to read early and quickly became eager to search out books from wherever they could find them.\textsuperscript{43} They became regular visitors to public libraries and patrons of the small lending libraries (taman bacaan) that sprang up in shops and on street corners in Jakarta and where, for a small sum, books could be

\textsuperscript{41} SHG Diary, 3 September 1960. Soe Hok-gie could recall little about it beyond the names of a few of his teachers.
\textsuperscript{42} This lane was later widened and is now known as Jalan Mangga Besar I.
\textsuperscript{43} Interview with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979. On the subject of books and reading Arief recalls his mother reading to them from Chinese comic books bought or rented from the Sawah Besar market, with stories about classical heroes and the struggle between the forces of good and evil. He also recalls two particular lending libraries, one operated by an elderly Chinese lady in the Taman Sari area and another in Jalan Hayam Wuruk where they found translations of popular English language works such as *The Last of the Mohicans* and the stories of Karl May, a German writer of Western adventure stories. Many of these were translations printed by the local publishing house, *Jembatan*.
borrowed for a fixed period. The boys organised a group of their friends to pool their meagre resources for this purpose. Both boys began with adventure stories, especially the martial arts stories known as *cerita silat* and the work of popular Western writers translated into Indonesian-language editions. However, before long - and certainly while he was still at elementary school - Soe Hok-gie had started to read some of the serious works of Indonesian literature that were then appearing in cheap editions, including the writers of the 1945 generation such as Pramoedya Ananta Toer.

At the Gang Komandan school there were many friends, but the two brothers formed a close companionship with one particular classmate that was especially important. Their friend, Tjioe Tjin-hok, came from a very poor family in Karawang and lived with an aunt who ran a small business somewhere in their neighbourhood. The Soe brothers were shocked to discover that their friend was being harshly treated. Each day, under threat of punishment by his aunt, Tjin-hok was forced to work for long hours to the point of exhaustion. Hok-gie, in particular, incensed by such blatant exploitation, was determined to do what he could to help his friend. At first he persuaded his older sister, Lian-hiang, to remonstrate with the boy's aunt. When, predictably, this had no effect, he convinced his mother to allow Tjin-hok to stay with them at Kebon Jeruk. A few weeks later, when the boy's aunt discovered his whereabouts, the police were sent to bring him back. Angry confrontations followed and the local *lurah*, the senior district official, was called in to settle the matter. Ultimately, since he was still a minor, the boy had to be returned to his aunt's house. The unpleasant affair was a salutary learning experience for the young Hok-gie for it impressed upon him the harsh reality of poverty and injustice that was evident in the world around them. It was also an early sign that he was prepared to confront such difficult issues.

---

44 The incident was recalled vividly by several family members, and although noone can remember exactly when it took place, it was almost certainly while Hok-gie and his brother were still at the Gang Komandan school.
During the early years of the 1950s while the two boys were still at elementary school, the family circumstances were made considerably more difficult by Soe Lie Piet's inability to secure regular employment. Around 1950 he found a position on the editorial staff of a new Jakarta publication, *Sedar*, under the chief editorship of Thio In Lok. But six months later, after a dispute erupted between staff and management, Soe Lie Piet's employment was terminated. He subsequently obtained work as a clerical assistant and typist with the Jakarta branch of the Chartered Bank but this lasted only briefly. From this point, though only in his late forties, Soe drifted into permanent retirement.

Consequently, the family's eldest daughter, Lian-hiang, a talented and studious girl, was forced to abandon her much interrupted schooling to look for work to support the family. Lian-hiang, then seventeen, soon found secretarial work with a Chinese firm. Shortly afterwards, her younger sister Lian-eng, who was not especially enthusiastic about school work, took a course as a seamstress and also began to supplement the family income.

Soe Lie Piet had never succeeded in establishing himself in a career either in journalism or in publishing. Although in the late 1940s he had written two further novels and several short stories, now his literary career also rapidly came to an end. Like many other *peranakan* writers of his generation who wrote in the Sino-Malay dialect, he found it impossible to adjust to the post-independence era and the challenge presented by the new national language, *bahasa Indonesia*.

---

45 This publication only survived for about a year, though there is some confusion about when it first appeared and whether it was a daily or a weekly: according to Salmon (1981: 303) it was 1951, while Suryadinata (1981: 124 and 145) suggests 1949 or 1950. It seems to have been the successor to a weekly magazine, *Sunday Courier*. It was printed and published by PT Rakjat, a company directed by Siauw Giok Tjhan, which also printed the PKI's daily newspaper *Harian Rakjat*. See *Bara Eka*, No 8-9-10, Oct-Nov-Dec. 1965, p.5.

46 The Soe's fifth child and their third daughter, Soe Lian-sian (Jeanne), was born in 1945.

47 In 1948 Soe submitted four short stories to a short-lived literary magazine, *Tjantik*. A novella, *Ichlas Berkorban* (Sincere Sacrifice), also appeared that year in the September edition of *Goedang Tjerita*. Several years later, in 1954, two books drawing on his Balinese experiences were published: one was a revision of his tourist guidebook, the other his final novel, *Dewi Kintamani* (The Goddess of Kintamani), a story drawing on the 1926 eruption of Mount Batur for its setting.

48 For a thorough and incisive analysis of the way Sino-Malay literature was eventually marginalised, see Maier 1991; also Salmon 1981: 79-91 and Kwee 1977: 221-3.
Instead, from the early 1950s Soe Lie Piet became absorbed by religion and introspection, occupying his time by investigating a variety of religions, including Christianity in both its Protestant and Catholic forms, mysticism, and the theosophy of Annie Besant and Krishnamurti. Soe never became deeply involved with any organised religion and ultimately he seemed most comfortable with the philosophical flexibility of theosophy where Eastern and Western beliefs found common ground. For a time in the early 1950s when he attended a Protestant church in Mangga Besar, the children followed along, going to Sunday School there. Later they joined the children of a neighbour at another Protestant church in Gang Ketapang, but neither of these brief encounters generated any commitment to Protestant Christianity.

The children grew up knowing that their father had been a writer and had worked as a journalist, a fact that undoubtedly helped to legitimise these occupations as acceptable careers even though it does not appear that the children ever read much of their father’s literary work. In any case, by the time his two sons were moving through their early years at school, their father had all but abandoned these pursuits and had, in effect, retreated into a private world. By middle age Soe Lie Piet appeared to his children as a reserved, gentle man absorbed in his own thoughts. As a father he was certainly never a dominant figure in their lives, and he rarely if ever attempted to enforce his will upon them or offer advice or opinions about the direction they might take in life. When it came to practical matters affecting the family and the children’s welfare it was always their mother who assumed the active role. Nio Hoei An, a warm and caring parent, was the figure who loomed largest on the children’s horizons, for it was usually she who was

---

49 Interviews with Dien Pranata, 20 February 1982, and Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979 and 9 March 1982. Arief Budiman also recalls his father's interest in a Javanese mystic, Kyai Agung Suria Mataram. Some of the booklets he wrote in response to these interests are listed in Salmon 1981: 305.
50 Interview with Arief Budiman, 9 March 1982
51 The children’s education was in modern bahasa Indonesia while their father’s novels were written in the Sino-Malay dialect of his generation. Arief Budiman remembers, however, as a young boy watching his father at work at the typewriter and reading some of his stories as the pages were completed. Interview, 15 April 1979
responsible for organising their schooling, attending to their problems and administering
punishment on the rare occasions this was required.\textsuperscript{52}

One slightly unusual aspect of family life as far as the children were concerned was
the almost complete absence of extended family ties. By the 1950s Soe Lie Piet's
grandfather and both his parents were long dead and he was not on close terms with the
other members of his family in Jakarta, including his younger brother Lie Foo, who had
become a successful businessman. The children always enjoyed visiting their mother's
relatives in Bandung but this was a rare occurrence. Consequently, there was almost no
close contact with grandparents, uncles or aunts; for better or for worse, the children
grew up without other voices of family authority to encourage, advise or otherwise
influence them.\textsuperscript{53}

Secondary school begins

Towards the end of 1955 both Hok-gie and Hok-djin completed elementary school
with such high grades that they were able to apply for admission to the best secondary
schools in Jakarta.\textsuperscript{54} The elder brother, Hok-djin, immediately enrolled at Canisius
College\textsuperscript{55}, a Catholic secondary school for boys operated by the Jesuit order and widely
regarded as the best school in Jakarta. However, his younger brother, Hok-gie, opted to
enrol at a different junior secondary school (SMP), situated opposite the Gambir railway
station on the edge of the elite suburb of Menteng. This SMP was part of the Strada

---
\textsuperscript{52} Arief Budiman remembers an incident from his childhood when his mother tied him up and
administered a thrashing after he had been caught stealing. Interview, 15 April 1979

\textsuperscript{53} As a young boy growing up, the only older generation figure of significance in Soe Hok-gie's life
was an elderly and impoverished friend of his father who was known to the family as Empek Khe Hin.
He had been one of Soe Lie Piet's companions in their younger days and was reputed to have led a wild
life in his youth. In the 1950s he was a frequent visitor to Kebon Jeruk and enjoyed reminiscing about
the past. Hok-gie became a favourite with the old man, listening to his stories and talking to him about
the books they had both read. Interviews with Arief Budiman, 8 March 1982; and Dien Pranata, 20
February 1982. Also SHG Diary, 27 August 1960 where he recalls their friendship on the occasion of
his death.

\textsuperscript{54} Interview with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979. In December 1954, after a problem had arisen over a
corrupt teacher the brothers had moved from the Gang Komandan school and completed the important
final year of elementary level at a school in Jalan Pembangunan.

\textsuperscript{55} It is now known as SMP/SMA 'Kanisius'.
network of diocesan schools also administered by the Jesuits. It did not have the prestige reputation of Canisius but was a school where boys could also expect to receive a sound education.\footnote{Interview with Father J. Drost S.J., 14 February 1985}

The question immediately arises as to why the two brothers did not attend the same school. Competition for scholarships to enter Canisius on a reduced fees basis was extremely tight and it is possible that Soe Hok-gie's marks were not high enough, although his elementary school results also appear to have been excellent. It seems more likely that this was a deliberate decision on his part to seek out a different school to his elder brother, for around the time when the two boys were beginning their secondary school years, the petty disputes and seemingly trivial squabbles that are a common feature of many children's lives had hardened into something more serious.\footnote{These paragraphs are based on interviews with various members of the Soe family.} Tension between the two brothers arose and bitter quarrels occurred with increasing regularity. Ultimately, relations between the two boys deteriorated to the point where, after one especially angry explosion during their early teens, the brothers virtually stopped speaking to one another.\footnote{Interviews with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979; and Dien Pranata, 20 February 1982} This state of affairs was to continue for ten years.

It is difficult to understand completely the complex personal and emotional chemistry that was at work here. Both boys were obviously highly intelligent, sensitive individuals and yet at the same time intensely determined and competitive. By their early teens both were already displaying the characteristic differences of personality that were noted and remarked upon by their friends during their adult years. Hok-djin was the quieter and less communicative individual, appearing a reserved and somewhat aloof figure to his family. By contrast, his younger brother, Hok-gie, was more outgoing and exuberant and touched with a streak of impulsiveness. Both boys were strong-willed and stubborn, especially when it came to dealings with each other.
It seems probable that the two brothers were competing for their parents' attention, and that a smouldering sibling rivalry prevailed between them throughout their teenage years. In a family not characterised by outward signs of emotion or spontaneous gestures of affection and where their father seemed a somewhat distant figure, a special bond steadily developed between Nio Hoei An and her youngest son, who talked openly and freely with her about his friends, his school experiences, and the problems of everyday life. While continuing to live under the same roof, the two brothers simply avoided further unpleasant confrontations by going their separate ways and ignoring the other's presence whenever their paths crossed. The underlying emotional tension, however, continued unresolved.

Soe Hok-gie entered the Strada SMP at Gambir in the latter part of 1955. Attendance at this school brought him into contact with boys from a wider range of backgrounds both socially and ethnically than at the schools he had attended in the vicinity of Kebon Jeruk. Despite his previous good school record and his obvious abilities, it was not long before he began to experience serious difficulties. The reasons for this are not entirely clear but a brief entry - the very first - angrily recorded in his diary early in his second year at the school gives some inkling of his problems:

Today's the day when resentment begins to harden. 8 for my geography exam but reduced by 3 leaving me with 5. I'm not pleased about this. I'm annoyed because I was third in the class in that exam and I believe I'm about the cleverest at geography in the whole class. Resentment wells up, then sinks to the heart and hardens like stone. I tossed my paper away. Let them punish me, I've never yet failed any exam.°

° Interview with Nio Hoei An, 31 January, and 21 February 1985. She recalls that as a small boy Hok-gie was remarkably generous. Yet he also had the capacity to be immensely stubborn; when angered he would lapse into silence for lengthy periods.

° SHG Diary, 4 March 1957. There are a mere thirty-four diary entries - many of them brief - written throughout the four and a half year period from March 1957 until Soe Hok-gie finished school in September 1961. Many of these entries are concerned with mundane and seemingly trivial day-to-day matters, and there is insufficient material here to reconstruct the events of these teenage years or to give a coherent understanding of his thought world during adolescence. Here and there, however, in a number of isolated snapshots the teenage schoolboy expresses himself with remarkable force and candour. These passages provide some insight into his inner thoughts, developing personality, and in particular, his emerging moral outlook. In addition, there are important implications here for his views about the wider political world and the political activism of his adult years.
At the Strada school Soe Hok-gie formed a close friendship with one particular classmate, Effendi, a Javanese boy with special talent at music and with whom he also shared a keen interest in literature and films. Both boys became regular visitors to the library attached to the Central Museum on Jalan Merdeka Barat and Hok-gie continued to read widely in Indonesian literature and began to take a serious interest in history. A few authors' names appear here and there in his early diary entries but the exact details of the books he read during this period are unrecorded. However, some years later he was to recall at least one book that had made a profound impression. During his second year at SMP, Soe obtained a copy of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's collection of short stories, *Cerita dari Blora* (Stories from Blora), and he was deeply stirred by three stories in particular, 'Dia yang menyerah' (The vanquished), 'Inem' and 'Pelarian yang tak dicari' (The fugitive no-one bothered about), in which Pramoedya writes movingly about the lives of ordinary Indonesians swept up by the force of events and circumstances outside their control. It was this kind of Indonesian literature that appeared to inspire a deeper interest in contemporary Indonesian history, especially the circumstances surrounding the 1945 revolution.61

His friend Effendi's own family life had been marked by tragedy and he appears to have been a somewhat rebellious boy.62 Whether it was the influence of his friend or his refusal to accept without question the strict discipline imposed by the Catholic *broeders* who taught at the Strada school, Hok-gie began to do badly: by the end of his second year his grades were so poor in several subjects that the school insisted that he repeat the year. His mother tried to persuade him to accept the decision but Hok-gie was furious, claiming that he had been treated unfairly and that several teachers had been vindictive.

---

61 See his article 'Tjita2 Kartini dlm pengalaman seorang mahasiswa Indonesia' (Kartini's ideals in the experience of an Indonesian university student), *Kompas*, 20 April 1968.
62 SHG Diary, 14 February 1958. According to Soe Hok-gie's mother, Effendi's parents had both been killed during the 1948 Madiun rebellion, and he grew up as an orphan living in Jakarta with an uncle who had quarters in one of the Catholic institutions. He was a frequent visitor at Kebon Jeruk during these years. Interview with Nio Hoei An, 21 February 1985. Is it possible that Hok-gie recalled his friend's circumstances when he turned to the study of the Madiun affair during his university years?
towards him. Rather than repeat the year at Strada, he found a Christian Protestant school in Jalan Pembangunan III that would allow him to enrol in the third year of SMP.

It is apparent from several of his diary entries written during the following year that Soe Hok-gie had already entered that troubling period of adolescence when an awareness of sexuality was a central factor in his life. Since the school he attended during that year was co-educational, the issue was brought into sharper focus. Beyond a certain natural curiosity and the crude adolescent schoolyard banter in which he shared, his diary entries record a glimpse of the struggle to come to terms with those strange and powerful new emotions that had suddenly clouded his mind with doubts and confusion. In particular, he was drawn to reflect on the problems posed by the nature of human love: did such a thing really exist, and how was it to be distinguished from those seemingly baser human instincts for sexual gratification that now stirred within him? At first he was inclined to deny emphatically the possibility of any fine or noble sentiments in human relationships:

I said there is no such thing as love (my firm belief). Marriage is morally nothing more than prostitution by contract every night. Love is nothing more than sexual desire made to appear as something beautiful.... Pure love might as well be put in the rubbish basket. It doesn't exist. It's just something that is imagined.

Two years later, by the time he was seventeen, he retained a cynical attitude towards marriage, but had clearly changed his understanding of love:

Marriage for me is identical with sexual relations, so it's also identical with lust. Human beings are conscious of this, but they are embarrassed and are reluctant to admit this phenomenon. They are embarrassed about being compared with their 'nephews and nieces'. So for me, marriage has no purpose for what is called love with its ridiculous variations. Marriage is driven by biological instincts.... For me love is not marriage. About a year or two ago I was sure that love = lust. However, I doubt the truth of that now. I think that there is something called pure love. But this is defiled by marriage. I have already experienced falling in love with certain individuals, and I'm sure this wasn't lust.

It would be foolhardy and unnecessary to take this matter too far. These are, after all, nothing more than two isolated entries in a teenager's diary, and there is no

---

63 Interview Nio Hoei An, 5 February 1985. In a diary entry written several months later he described the majority of teachers at Catholic schools as 'dictators'. SHG Diary, 14 February 1958
64 SHG Diary, 9 March 1958
65 SHG Diary, 27 May 1960. This diary entry was prompted by a debate with a staunchly Catholic school friend about the purpose of marriage.
substantive evidence to explain how or why he arrived at such views about love and marriage. However, the intensely felt emotions revealed in these diary entries are the earliest evidence of his attempts to grapple with some of the most fundamental problems of human relationships. Furthermore, these issues were to remain an important leitmotiv in both the private and public realm throughout his life. In particular, Soe's judgement about prominent figures in Indonesian public life was profoundly influenced by his perceptions of both their personality and their moral probity.

For a time he found it difficult to overcome the negative attitude towards school that the Strada experience had engendered. Returning to school seemed like 'returning to prison' and he found many of the lessons dull and boring. His new school did not have such a good reputation as the Catholic school and there was a rougher element among the students who attended. For several months Hok-gie continued to complain about petty injustices and incompetent and overbearing teachers. He found it difficult to curb his natural impulsiveness and it was not in his nature to accept without challenge teachers' opinions when he believed them to be wrong. This often led to trouble. The details of one angry confrontation with a teacher in an Indonesian literature class are recorded in his diary, concluding as follows:

Now I'm going to decide whether to be active or passive. If my grades are withheld (typical of the sort of teacher who can't accept criticism) I'll prepare a complete critique and I'll point out his slightest mistake. In fact this isn't my intention and it depends entirely on him. I don't wish to apologise. Certainly this is the case when he is not a clever teacher. But he has forgotten even about essay-writing and I believe on literature I'm more knowledgeable than he is. This sort of teacher who can't bear criticism might as well be tossed on the scrap heap. Teachers are not gods who are always right. And pupils are not fools.

---

66 Were these thoughts merely a response to recent conversations with his peers? Or were they also a reflection of his judgements about his own parents' relationship? Although his mother's opinions are quoted (and dismissed contemptuously) on the first of these occasions, the diary evidence is inconclusive.  
67 SHG Diary, 24 and 28 October 1957
68 There were frequent disruptions to classes, especially from a delinquent (crossboy) element, and fighting in the playground between rival gangs. SHG Diary, 12 November, 12 December 1957; 16 and 17 January, 9 March 1958
69 SHG Diary, 12 December 1957; 26 January, 4 February 1958
70 SHG Diary, 8 February 1958
Yet his pride had been stung by the events of the previous year. Concern over his results at examinations is a consistent theme in many of his diary entries during these months for he was too intelligent not to realise the importance of success at school.\footnote{SHG Diary, 12 November 1957; 4 February and 9 March 1958} Despite the distractions posed by many of his classmates, around the middle of the year he arrived at a conscious decision to work as hard as possible.\footnote{SHG Diary, 24 March 1958} Consequently, by the end of the academic year he passed all his examinations easily, including those subjects that had troubled him in the previous year.\footnote{SHG Diary, 16 July 1958} In fact, his results at the State Examinations were so outstanding in several subjects that he had no difficulty being accepted for admission as a student in the senior secondary school (SMA) at Canisius College.\footnote{Interviews with Arief Budiman, 5 April 1979; and Nio Hoei An, 5 February 1985}

\textbf{Canisius College and beyond}

The school that Soe Hok-gie entered in the latter half of 1958, several months before his sixteenth birthday, was an old established educational institution with a proud record. Founded during the late 1920s, Canisius originally functioned as a Hogereburgerschool (HBS), providing a secondary education for the children of the colonial elite.\footnote{Interview with Father J. Drost S.J., SMA Director, Canisius College, 14 February 1985} After independence the Jesuit order had continued to operate the school as a private institution within the Indonesian state education system, and it had acquired a sound reputation for strict discipline and high academic standards. The school campus was located on Jalan Menteng Raya, south-east of the Medan Merdeka square. Behind the rather sombre facade presented by the oldest part of the school to the main road, the remainder of the classrooms, offices and other school buildings were unremarkable and utilitarian. These were arranged in one and two stories around each side of two quadrangles, one of them large enough to contain a football pitch. By Jakarta standards, the school was well-equipped, possessed good facilities and, above all, retained the services of competent, well-qualified teaching staff. In the late 1950s its director was a
Dutch Jesuit, but very few of the staff were either Dutch or in religious orders. Of the predominantly Indonesian lay teaching staff perhaps about ten per cent were Sino-Indonesians.

The student body was already quite large, probably not far short of a thousand boys enrolled at SMP and SMA level, some of them out-of-town students accommodated in student dormitories within the school grounds. Over a third of them were Sino-Indonesians but there were also significant numbers of Javanese, Bataks and other Outer Islanders. Only about half the boys who attended Canisius were practising Catholics. Catechism classes were available but these were voluntary. The school attracted many non-Catholic children, including some from Islamic backgrounds. Indeed, the school's superior academic reputation made it a desirable place for the sons of many well-to-do families in Jakarta, including political leaders, senior bureaucrats, doctors, lawyers and other professionals. Although school fees were high for such students, a certain number of places were also made available for children from poorer backgrounds - especially those who were academically gifted - under a sliding scale of charges. It was through such an arrangement that the Soe brothers were able to gain admission.

Soe Hok-gie was accepted as an SMA student in the humanities stream. His older brother, Hok-djin, who had successfully completed his SMP years at the school, had chosen the science stream, so there was little contact between the two boys even though they were in the same year. By the time Hok-gie began at Canisius he had already read many of the best known works of modern Indonesian literature, while his interest in history, especially the modern history of his own country, was well advanced. During his SMA years he was fortunate to find at least one teacher - a certain Pak Atja - who

---

76 There are no reliable school records covering the years when Soe Hok-gie attended the school. Many of these details are based on an interview with Father J. Drost S.J., 14 February 1985.
77 During the period that Soe Hok-gie and his brother were students at Canisius, the son of the Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, was also a student there. Interview with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979
78 Interview with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979. He recalled that they paid the minimum fee, Rp 9 per month.
commanded his respect and nurtured his interest in this particular subject. Throughout his three years at Canisius, Soe Hok-gie distinguished himself as a serious and thoughtful student. Increasingly confident in his own academic abilities, he worked hard and graduated from the school in August 1961 with superior results in all subjects and as the outstanding student in his year.

Despite their considerable success at the school, the experiences of three years at a Jesuit college did not make either brother any more responsive to the claims of religion. Although both boys attended a few religious classes out of courtesy, they firmly remained non-believers. Hok-gie, probably still smarting from his treatment at the Strada school, was especially scornful of the Catholic priests he observed at Canisius:

> In the past I thought that priests belonged to the people, that they were one with the people. But after I entered Canisius my impression changed. Priests are a new class. The class in authority in religion. They are the ones who monopolise the truth. Just look at the way they live: in luxury and as flatterers to those in power. To enter SMA one condition is absolutely essential, a father in a powerful position. So my initial good impressions have evaporated.

Hok-gie's awareness of the social and economic disparities within his society was undoubtedly sharpened by his experience at Canisius. Many of the boys who attended the school came from comparatively rich and privileged backgrounds, some of them living in the imposing houses of the well-to-do suburb of Menteng. Hok-gie saw them as part of what he disparagingly termed 'bourgeois society' (masyarakat borjuis). While at Canisius, he wrote the following impassioned poem in his diary which he dedicated to one of his school friends who came from just such a background:

**Bourgeois Society**

For L.B.S.

There is something worthy of tears
I think you also know

---

79 Interview with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979. By his SMA years Hok-gie appeared to have acquired a little more control over his natural predeliction for argument. Privately, however, he remained highly critical of many teachers, especially those he found wanting as regards critical thinking and wide reading. SHG Diary, 13 August 1960.

80 Their parents had become Catholics after the boys had been accepted at Canisius, and Nio Hoei An did for a time make an effort to practise that religion.

81 SHG Diary, 18 June 1960. Anger over the failure of several friends from poor backgrounds to gain entrance to Canisius led to this outburst.
Your society, bourgeois society
There is no truth there
And you always evade it

I always cry out (in my heart)
'Hey, proletarians of the world'
Pray for bourgeois society.

There's a class that has abandoned truth
That stands on false values
I think there is no happiness there
For there is no love, truth and beauty in falseness
I will always pray for it
(I personally don't believe in prayer, sorry)

I don't believe you know about love
(Lust certainly)
What is precious about money
And to you, friend
Everything is money, balance sheets

There is no beauty in falseness
(Are you really certain?)
Here amorality covers amorality
Here, the visible screens

Often I'm cycling in the afternoon
And I meet your girl (also bourgeois)
I feel so sad and full of pity
Yes, God (I don't believe in God) give them the truth
I know
A pretty girl in a car, wearing a grey gown

But for me it's nothing.\(^{82}\)

The label \textit{borjuis} had a sharp ring of disapproval about it that contained a personal edge. By the late 1950s, Hok-gie's uncle Soe Lie Foo - the brother of his father - had established himself as a successful businessman in the import-export trade and lived in a large and comfortable house in the Menteng area. The two families had never been close, although during the late 1950s his uncle began to make occasional visits to Kebon Jeruk. Hok-gie appears to have disliked him intensely, avoiding him whenever he arrived.\(^{83}\)

Despite his years at an elite school and his new found friends there, Hok-gie continued to identify with his Kebon Jeruk surroundings, remaining in touch with many

\(^{82}\) He also jotted down the title of a companion piece, 'Masyarakat proletariat' (Proletarian society) but never completed it. SHG Diary, 12 June 1960
\(^{83}\) SHG Diary, 30 March 1958; also 24 July 1960:
'My uncle is gossipping loudly at the front. He also belongs to that clique of extortionists and big shot bourgeoisie.'
of his friends in the neighbourhood, in particular his old friend Tjioe Tjin-hok whom he had tried to protect from his cruel aunt during their elementary school days. Tjin-hok had left school early and found a job. While Hok-gie was a student at Canisius, he was again called to come to his friend's aid when Tjin-hok found himself in serious trouble with the police. According to him, his employer, in an act of revenge arising from a personal conflict between them, had accused him of a theft he had not committed. Hok-gie believed his friend to be innocent. Despite his age and youthful appearance he argued the case for the defence when the matter was heard by a local magistrate. 84

**Political awakening**

It was during his SMA years that Soe Hok-gie's consciousness of the world around him began to find political expression. The dramatic denunciation of President Sukarno and other political figures that appears in his diary entry of 10 December 1959 is the first explicit statement in his journal of his understanding of the world of politics. 85 And it is significant that it was the sight of a starving man searching for food scraps among the rubbish near his house in Kebon Jeruk that prompted this tirade.

To what extent were his views about politics shaped and influenced by those prevailing within the family? Although it is difficult to provide a completely satisfactory answer to this question it appears most unlikely that he was influenced directly by his parents, neither of whom were actively involved in political life and who do not seem to have been especially interested in political issues. Certainly, politics was not a prominent topic of discussion within the Soe household during Hok-gie's childhood years. 86 Soe Lie Piet does not appear to have been interested in political questions during either the colonial era or the immediate post-independence period. In any case, by the mid 1950s when Hok-gie's perceptions of politics began to sharpen, his father had become

---

84 Interview with Dien Pranata, 20 February 1982; and Nio Hoei An, 5 February 1985
85 See page 7.
86 Interviews with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979; and Dien Pranata, 20 February 1982
thoroughly absorbed by mysticism, numerology and various other strands of metaphysical philosophy. If the parents had any impact at all upon their children's perceptions of the external world of politics it was probably a more indirect and diffuse influence, resulting from their own moral code of behaviour that by teaching and example they tried to instill in their children: attitudes of basic honesty and fair-mindedness towards others, and the sense of personal self-respect and moral integrity that infused their attitude towards the world around them.

In this regard, Nio Hoei An played a crucial role as the parent who was most involved with their upbringing during their early childhood, and who helped to shape their attitudes towards their immediate environment. By the time Hok-gie began to display an interest in political issues, the bond between mother and son was a secure one. Although her formal education was limited and her understanding of politics and national affairs unsophisticated and rapidly overtaken by that of her teenage son, Nio Hoei An nevertheless enjoyed gossiping with him about some of the important political issues of the day, while Hok-gie listened respectfully to his mother's opinions. 87

By the time he was a student at SMP level, Hok-gie was already a keen reader of the press. At his home at Kebon Jeruk throughout the 1950s there was always Keng Po, the cautious but widely respected newspaper popular among the Sino-Indonesian community. 88 However whenever he could, Hok-gie eagerly scanned the pages of those newspapers that adopted a more openly critical stance towards the government and its policies. The two he particularly sought out were Indonesia Raya and Pedoman. 89 As a

---

87 Many years later, Soe Hok-gie was able to recall that in the mid 1950s, when Jakarta newspapers were clamouring to support Fatmawati after the shock announcement of the president's marriage to Hartini, it was his mother who had reminded him about Sukarno's earlier marriage to Inggit Garnasih. See his article 'Tjita2 Kartini dlm pengalaman seorang mahasiswa Indonesia' (Kartini’s ideals in the experience of an Indonesian university student), Kompas, 20 April 1968.

88 Interviews with Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979; and Dien Pranata, 20 February 1982. Keng Po had supported the PSI during the 1955 general elections. For commentary on the vigorous free press that prevailed in Indonesia until the late 1950s, see Feith 1962: 323-4 and 576.

89 'Tjita2 Kartini dlm pengalaman seorang mahasiswa Indonesia', Kompas, 20 April 1968. See also 'Mengapa saja memilih pendjara - Mochtar Lubis dan politik' (Why I chose jail - Mochtar Lubis and politics), Mahasiswa Indonesia, 31 July 1966.
thirteen-year-old schoolboy he sought to avoid the conductor collecting the fares on the Jakarta tram he took to school each day so he could use the money to buy these particular newspapers. *Indonesia Raya*, a provocative and occasionally sensationalist daily edited by Mochtar Lubis, was renowned for its scathing attacks on the government. It had broken the story about President Sukarno's secret marriage to Mrs Hartini Suwondo in September 1954. *Pedoman*, edited by Rosihan Anwar and widely associated with the small but influential Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI), was less sharply critical but often very penetrating in its analyses. On 21 December 1956 Mochtar Lubis was arrested in one of the early manifestations of a new authoritarian trend that became very strong in 1958. He was held for more than four years without any charges ever being announced. *Indonesia Raya* staggered on despite numerous temporary bans, but finally had to cease publication in January 1959.90 When President Sukarno officially opened a Department of Mass Communications at the University of Indonesia in late 1959, Soe saw a bitter irony in this event:

> The opening of that department is meaningless because independence of the press does not exist. This is the state of independence of the press in Indonesia - cut off a person's arms and legs, then put him in a 2 x 3 metre cell and give him his freedom. This is press independence in Indonesia. Anyone courageous enough to attack corruption is then arrested without cause. Mochtar Lubis is arrested without reason. *Harian Rakjat* is muzzled because it's bold enough to publish articles that are unfavourable to the government. I'm not a communist but muzzling *Harian Rakjat* is a violation of democracy. We make a big fuss about our basic human rights but then we tear them to shreds. We praise democracy but cut out the tongue of anyone daring enough to express an opinion that is damaging to the government.91

Six months later, when the executions were announced of three young men who had been convicted of attempting to assassinate President Sukarno in Jakarta on 30 November 1957, Hok-gie recorded his disappointment over the president's refusal to accept a plea for clemency, reiterating his sense of disillusionment with what he believed

91 SHG Diary, 12 December 1959. The new department was located in the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences. (See Oei 1971: 185-6.) *Harian Rakjat* was banned briefly on several occasions during the 1950s. Its editor was jailed for three months in December 1957 following his conviction for libelling Mohammad Hatta. (See Smith 1969: 234.)
to be the failure of Indonesia's leaders to live up to the high ideals that had surrounded the struggle for independence from Dutch colonial rule.\textsuperscript{92}

In addition to newspapers, Hok-gie's thinking about the direction that Indonesian politics had taken since independence was informed by his wider reading, especially of modern Indonesian history. During his final year at SMP he was profoundly influenced by his reading of Sutan Sjahrir's \textit{Renungan Indonesia} (Indonesian reflections).\textsuperscript{93} As a result, he gradually began to identify with the PSI cause. He was clearly deeply disturbed by the rapid political changes that were taking place during the late 1950s following the collapse of Western-style parliamentary democracy. In a long passage written in mid 1960, the seventeen-year-old tried to clarify for himself what he thought the independence struggle had been about and what had subsequently gone wrong:

As human beings we have certainly thought about the '45 Revolution. Was it the means (to achieve a more noble purpose) or was it the objective of the entire people? If victory in the revolution is considered to have been the objective then the '45 Revolution was a success. But I think that the revolution was only the means to achieve justice and prosperity. It is clear that we were not just concerned about the economy. Under colonialism we had already achieved economic success. A prosperous, secure Indonesia and so forth.

However Sukarno, Hatta, Sjahrir, Tjipto and others demanded something that was not merely concerned with the stomach but rather freedom in the wider sense, including the right to determine our own destiny. It was at this point apparently that these ideas were about to be implemented and the '45 Revolution was the means to bring this about. The objective of the '45 Revolution was political independence and this was also the means for attaining the supreme ideal of justice and the realisation of humanitarian ideals of the highest order. We have already achieved political independence. But this doesn't mean that the purpose of the revolution has been fulfilled. That's still a long way off. We tried to bring about those noblest humanitarian ideals (my understanding of this also includes democracy, politics, individuality, social justice, the elimination of class differences and such like) with the acknowledgement of sovereignty. But what we find is a tragedy. We could only survive for eight years like this. In 1958 our independence and human liberty ended. Since 1958 Indonesia has been colonised by its own people but this colonisation is identical with the exploitation of man by man (l'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme). The reality of our revolution is quite tragic. The French Revolution sought liberty, equality and fraternity but what resulted was the totalitarianism of Napoleon from then on; the aggravation of class differences (as opposed to equality) and the terror of their peers (Robespierre, Danton and the like).

The October 1917 Revolution sought to wipe out class society but what resulted was a new class within the Communist regime exactly as described in \textit{The New Class} by Milovan Djilas.

\textsuperscript{92} SHG Diary, 12 June 1959. On this occasion Hok-gie expressed his anger over Sukarno's refusal to commute the death sentences handed down by the court in the following unfortunate terms: 'I think President Sukarno's morals are no better than those of a becak driver'.

On the assassination attempt and subsequent trial, see Surjo Sediono 1958.

\textsuperscript{93} See his article 'Kenang\textsuperscript{2}an untuk seorang kawan - Zainal Abidin' (Reminiscences for a friend - Zainal Abidin), \textit{Mahasiswa Indonesia}, No 49, Week 4, May 1967. See also Sjahrir 1947.
The Indonesian Revolution, however, was even more tragic. Yes, the tragedy of all tragedies. During the Dutch period we already had security, economic stability and the rest. We desired something more noble. Not just these basic values.

Unlike the French and Russian Revolutions where they faced the irony of opposition to their own ideals, the Indonesian Revolution not only experienced that but also lost something it had already possessed during the Netherlands Indies period, namely that most valuable commodity national unity.

So the Indonesian Revolution was more tragic than the French and Russian revolutions. Indonesians have lost their spirit. We know that our independence (the means) is not yet 100% lost. Remnants of it still survive in certain places. Because of that the results of the '45 Revolution must be rescued by restoring democracy in Indonesia as Dr Hatta wrote in *Demokrasi Kita*. We have not yet been able to weigh up the '45 Revolution. But so far we find:

a. Disintegration on almost every side

b. An attitude of indifference and its consequences such as corruption, bureaucracy, antidemocratic trends, and so on.

In the past we fought for independence of the press, and what we have got is censorship in the name of public security. The same sort of label that was used by the old Netherlands Indies government. We have experienced fundamental change. In the past the colonisers were the Dutch and the Japanese, and now a small group of intoxicated individuals. They are not leaders, but imposters.\(^4\)

It is evident from these passages in his diary that during his teenage years Soe had become strongly committed to democracy and individual rights and freedoms. Consequently, he viewed with growing alarm the manner in which the democratic system was being systematically dismantled and freedom of speech and the press eroded. Closely related to this was his strongly expressed antipathy for totalitarian forms of government, in particular communism:

> I can only think how unfortunate is the fate of those nations that only have one alternative: totalitarianism. Let's hope especially for Indonesia that there is only one choice: democracy.\(^5\)

It must be kept in mind that although he was extremely critical of many of his teachers throughout his secondary schooling and remained unpersuaded by the claims of its religious environment, five of those years were spent in the Catholic school system where the prevailing view of the world was extremely hostile to Marxism and radical

---

\(^4\) SHG Diary, 24 July 1960. Dr Tjipto Mangunkusumo was a prominent radical nationalist during the pre-war period. Note Soe's sarcastic repetition of one of President Sukarno's favourite foreign-language political slogans. The diary entry was written only a few weeks after Mohammad Hatta's critical article 'Demokrasi Kita' (Our Democracy) appeared in the Jakarta weekly *Pandji Masjarakat* on 1 May, 1960.

\(^5\) SHG Diary, 9 August 1960
social revolutionary parties and movements.\textsuperscript{96} During at least one of his years at Canisius, Hok-gie was taught civics by a highly articulate University of Indonesia law student, Liem Bian Kie, who was already active in anti-communist Catholic political organisations and who was to play key roles during the 1960s and in later decades as a political activist.\textsuperscript{97} A lively and popular teacher, Liem was admired by his students at Canisius for his forthright opinions and open criticism of public figures.

Much of Soe's opinions and his growing understanding of politics also drew heavily upon his own reading during his frequent visits to the Museum library. He had developed a good general knowledge of historical developments in other parts of the world, including Europe, China and the Soviet Union, although it seems doubtful that his views were based on any close reading of political theory or a systematic study of the history of revolutionary movements in other societies. He was also certainly strongly influenced by the outlook of particular sections of the Jakarta press, especially those opposition newspapers that had attracted his attention from the mid 1950s and which combined hostility to the government and President Sukarno on the one hand with suspicion of communism on the other. Soe Hok-gie, along with many other young intellectuals of his generation, read the translations of Milovan Djilas' book, \textit{The New Class}, which appeared in \textit{Indonesia Raya} in serialised form in late 1957 and was deeply influenced by its scathing attack on the communist party in Yugoslavia.\textsuperscript{98}

\textsuperscript{96} Based on his interviews with a group of 1966 generation leaders, Frank Weinstein (1976: 61) makes the following interesting observation about Catholic schools in Indonesia during the 1950s and 1960s: 'Of the various Indonesian schools, only the Catholic ones appear to have had much impact on their students' view of the world; their explanations of Marxism and descriptions of the horrors of life in Communist countries instilled a strong anti-Communism in the students'.

\textsuperscript{97} Interviews with Jusuf Wanandi (Liem Bian Kie), 22 February 1985; and Arief Budiman, 15 April 1979.

\textsuperscript{98} SHG Diary, 24 July 1960. The English edition of Djilas' book had appeared in the West earlier in 1957 and had created something of a sensation in intellectual circles for its insider revelations. The book quickly provided ammunition for the Cold War offensive against international communism. Mochtar Lubis, despite his arrest, remained able to write and had prepared a translation which appeared in \textit{Indonesia Raya} towards the end of 1957.
At this point it is necessary to turn aside from Soe Hok-gie's own life and examine the broader context of Indonesia's post-independence society and politics. It is only by considering some of the key events in Indonesian political life during this period, and by paying special attention to the fundamental changes that were taking place after 1957, that it is possible to understand more completely this particular young man's intellectual development and emerging political perceptions. It is only with this background in mind that it is possible to appreciate why Soe Hok-gie was drawn to certain kinds of political activism and involvements during the early 1960s, leading on to his participation in the crucial events of 1966.
Chapter 2

CONTEXT

Early in the morning of 17 August 1945, two days after Japan's capitulation, Indonesia's independence was declared by Sukarno and Hatta in a brief, simple but dramatic proclamation read from the steps of Sukarno's house in central Jakarta. In the weeks and months that followed, as the Japanese occupation ended and Allied forces began to arrive throughout the region, it became clear that a further period of intense struggle would have to be endured before these nationalist aspirations could be translated into reality. In fact, it was to take more than four years before the Netherlands government was to concede that its reign as a colonial power in Southeast Asia had ended. Throughout this period of 'the revolution', protracted diplomatic negotiations were punctuated by bitter fighting between the Dutch and the Republican forces, although some of the bloodiest conflicts occurred within the Indonesians' own ranks as the result of the deep internal political divisions that erupted in several parts of Java and Sumatra.1

During the early stages of the revolution the city of Jakarta became contested territory between the returning Dutch civil administration and the Republican-appointed officials. Acts of violence and terror on the part of Republican supporters and counter-terror by Dutch troops became commonplace in certain parts of the city, including the crowded streets and alley-ways leading from the Molenvliet, not far from the Soe family home in Kebon Jeruk.2

When these climactic events were occurring, Soe Hok-gie was a small boy growing up in Jakarta; but there is no mention of this early period in his life in either his diary or

---

1 The classic account of Indonesia's quest for independence is Kahin 1952. See also Anderson 1972 and Reid 1974 for substantial reinterpretation, and Kahin 1985 for an account of developments in the regions. For a study of the revolution from the perspective of the Jakarta region, see Cribb 1991.

2 Cribb 1991: 63-7
his other writings, and so there is no way of knowing what impact, if any, these events may have had upon the young boy. 3 Nothing is known about his impressions of the wider political world until the mid 1950s - his early teenage years - when there is firm evidence for an awareness of national affairs and the shaping of a political consciousness. Yet a general overview of the turbulent world of post-independence Indonesia during the 1950s and early 1960s is essential to any attempt to understand Soe's developing political outlook and his eventual emergence as a committed political activist in the years that followed.

The collapse of parliamentary democracy

At the Round Table Conference that was convened at The Hague between August and November in 1949, the final terms of Indonesia's independence from the Netherlands were thrashed out. 4 The Indonesian delegates, both from the Republic of Indonesia and from a group of fifteen Dutch-established states, were persuaded eventually to accept some important compromises - principally, the deferral of a decision over the status of West Irian, and the acceptance of a burdensome Netherlands Indies debt. Yet this settlement represented a victory for those Indonesian leaders who had championed the cause of negotiation and diplomacy and who had a strong personal commitment to seeing the consolidation of a post-revolutionary state based upon Western-style democratic values. It was this relatively small group of politicians who were in the ascendancy during the first years of independence and who held the key positions in the cabinet of the short-lived federal Republic of the United States of Indonesia (December 1949 - August 1950) and in the first three cabinets of the unitary

---

3 During his university years, however, the revolution became a subject of serious academic interest to him. See Chapters 3 and 6.
4 See Kahin 1952: 433-45 on the terms of the agreement. Within eight months, the Dutch-imposed federal structure, the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI), had collapsed under the impact of a surge of nationalist resentment after an attempted coup d'état involving a recently demobilised officer of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army, Captain Westerling and Sultan Hamid, the federalist leader from West Borneo. The unitary Republic of Indonesia was inaugurated on 17 August 1950.
Republic under Prime Ministers Natsir, Sukiman and Wilopo. Yet during the middle years of the 1950s - the period when Soe Hok-gie was beginning to display a keen interest in the wider world around him - parliamentary democracy was under assault from many quarters throughout the country. By March 1957, when Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo resigned his mandate, Indonesia had experienced the rise and fall of seven different governments in little more than seven years. None of these cabinets had lasted more than two years. Whatever positive achievements they were able to claim, this was a depressing record of instability, contributing to the sense of disillusionment that pervaded the political elite and spread throughout the wider political public. Within the broader reaches of traditional Indonesian society, there was little understanding or appreciation of the conventions upon which a Western-style democracy depended, such as the concept of an institutionalised opposition. Dutch colonial rule had generated a widespread belief in democracy but little experience of its practices, while some pre-colonial traditional political institutions based upon strong authoritarian rule had been reinforced. Consequently, when the assault on parliamentary democracy began few Indonesians were disposed to come to its defence.

Fragmentation and disunity had characterised the nationalist movement before 1942. Throughout this period no single united nationalist organisation had emerged with sufficient kudos and broadly-based support to form the basis for the development of a strong political party in the post-independence period. Instead, the competing claims of regional, ethnic and religious loyalties produced a cluster of political parties, each with strong bases of support but none powerful enough to make any claim on forming government in their own right. Consequently, throughout the 1950-57 period, cabinets were based on a shaky series of coalitions between several parties. Given the shifting power balances within the political parties making up these coalitions, the low level of

---

5 For the most comprehensive account of the period of constitutional democracy in Indonesia, see Feith 1962.
6 See Anderson 1966 for an account of the way anti-democratic and authoritarian elements had been encouraged during the Japanese occupation.
party discipline and the inability of cabinet to exert any authority over party members sitting in the parliament, instability was almost guaranteed.

During the early 1950s, especially under the first four cabinets led by Prime Ministers Hatta, Natsir, Sukiman and Wilopo, the administrative machinery of government was strengthened and a start was made on the difficult tasks of rebuilding the national economy after the devastation of war and revolution. These successes, however, were largely offset by the abject failure of government to solve some of the difficult and potentially divisive issues that were increasingly demanding attention. Some of these problems were caused by the inflated expectations of former revolutionary fighters who believed that independence would guarantee new opportunities and instant rewards. In particular, successive cabinets were unable to control the rapid expansion in the size of the government bureaucracy or to rationalise and reorganise the armed forces, which required the demobilisation of large numbers of personnel. One cabinet, that of Wilopo, was forced to resign when it attempted to clear large numbers of squatters from government estate lands in North Sumatra, but was constantly thwarted by the strength of parliamentary opposition.

None of the cabinets of the 1950-57 period was able to deal effectively with two issues, both of which had the potential to split the country asunder. There was a seemingly insoluble wrangle about the nature of the Indonesian state and society and the place of Islam within it. The increasingly sharp divisions between the major parties, especially between the Indonesian Nationalist Party (Partai Nasional Indonesia, PNI) and the Muslim Masyumi, made it impossible to achieve any solution to this issue inside the parliament. The other major divisive issue was regional rebellion. At no time throughout the 1950s was Indonesia ever free from this problem. Islamic extremists had taken up arms against the Jakarta government under the banner of Darul Islam in both West Java and South Sulawesi beginning in 1948, while Acehnese dissidents had joined this rebellion in 1953. In addition, the South Moluccas in eastern Indonesia was also in rebellion against Jakarta throughout the 1950s. The inability of the central government to
deal effectively with these challenges to its authority did nothing for its declining prestige. In fact, by the mid 1950s the conflicts between the centre and the regions had increased dramatically as a number of other provinces - South, North and Central Sumatra and North Sulawesi - became the focus of renewed discontent as 'native son' regional army commanders began to give voice to various grievances arising from within their territories.

After the formation of the Ali Sastroamidjojo Cabinet in August 1953 - a coalition between the PNI, the Muslim Scholars' party (*Nahdatul Ulama*, NU) and some of the minor parties - there was an alarming increase in instances of patronage, nepotism and institutionalised corruption involving the government and its political supporters. The exposure of many of these scandals in the free press then in operation further tarnished the reputation of civilian politicians, political parties and the system of government of which they were a crucial part.

The fundamental cleavage within political system and the inability of the political parties to produce an effective formula that would render cabinet government workable were clearly demonstrated at the 1955 elections. Although the holding of these elections, the first in the country's history, was something of a triumph in the face of adversity, the occasion did not provide the panacea for Indonesia's problems that some were expecting. Not only did the long period of campaigning exacerbate existing political party rivalries, but the tensions and animosities were spread throughout the country, right down to the small towns and villages in rural areas.

The results merely confirmed what many feared. No single party received anything like a mandate to govern in its own right. Four parties - the PNI, Masyumi, NU and the Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, PKI) - won significant blocs of seats in the new parliament. Almost half of the Masyumi total vote came from the outer

---

7 See Feith 1962: 366-84.
8 For a thorough analysis of the 1955 elections, see Feith 1957.
islands while the other three parties each received 85% of their vote from Java. The elections reduced several parties, such as the Indonesian Socialist Party (*Partai Sosialis Indonesia*, PSI), to minor party status and obliterated several others that had played important parts in previous coalition cabinets. The strong electoral support for the PKI, especially in Central and East Java, was a shock to many of its political opponents. This unexpected result was confirmed in the elections for regional assemblies held in mid 1957 when the PKI increased its support, securing the largest percentage of votes of any party in Java.9

Despite an attempt in March 1956 to cobble together a coalition under Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo, with participation from all the major parties except the PKI, the result soon proved unworkable. The government, racked by internal dissension and under attack from its critics, especially those in the regions, barely managed to struggle on. Towards the end of 1956 it was obvious that the system was untenable, and by January of the following year the Masyumi cabinet ministers had all resigned.

One of the most significant factors contributing to the eventual collapse of parliamentary democracy in Indonesia was the existence of two powerful political forces that were ultimately to be ranged against it. Both President Sukarno and the country's armed forces were deeply troubled by the direction of national affairs. During the first half of the 1950s both had been effectively excluded from playing any active role inside government and parliament. President Sukarno, despite his great prestige and considerable popularity, had been effectively elbowed to one side to a purely formal role as head of state by those Westernised political leaders who had held high office in most of the revolutionary cabinets of the 1945-49 period.10 It was this group who had concluded the negotiations with the Dutch at The Hague and who continued to be primarily concerned with the technical, legal and administrative problems of government

---

9 See Feith 1962: 582.
10 For a study of Sukarno's life and political career, see Legge 1972; also Dahm 1969. For a colourful but not necessarily historically accurate autobiographical account, see Adams 1965.
during the early years of the 1950s. Sukarno, however, believed that many national causes that he personally held to be of supreme importance, such as the pursuit of Indonesia’s claim to West Irian, had been abandoned by those who held office during those years. In such circumstances he was not content with his role as a figurehead president. Although cabinet and parliament were the foci of executive and legislative authority under the 1950 Constitution, there was sufficient ambiguity about the position of the presidency for Sukarno to adopt the role of a spoiler whenever he chose to do so. To a very large extent, the successful operation and the longevity of successive cabinets throughout this period was dependent upon the personal relations between Sukarno and the prime ministers and their circle of senior advisors. As a Javanese, Sukarno’s relations with most Masyumi leaders, many of whom were Sumatrans and devout Muslims, were poor. In those cabinets where Masyumi politicians were prominent, he contributed to the undermining of their authority through his frequent speeches and public commentary upon cabinet decisions and government policy.

The Indonesian armed forces had been established during the struggle for independence against the Dutch between 1945 and 1950. Their own perceptions of the critical role the military had played throughout the revolution led many of the senior members of its officer corps to believe they were entitled to express their views about national policies. For much of the 1950s, however, the leadership of the armed forces was deeply divided on many issues. As well as certain personal rivalries between senior military figures and inter-service tensions, especially between the army and the other services, there was growing antagonism between the small group of officers in senior command positions who had been educated in Dutch military academies and the much larger group who had received their military training under the Japanese during the

11 Under the 1950 Constitution the position of the president was ‘inviolable’: there was no clear provision for removing him from office, and there was nothing to prevent the president vetoing or refusing to approve legislation of which he did not approve. Furthermore, only the president had the power to dismiss parliament. For a succinct discussion of the terms and provisions of this constitution, see Mackie 1963.

12 For an account of the development of the armed forces after the revolution, see McVey 1971 and 1972; and Sundhaussen 1982: 51-111.
occupation period. Some of these conflicts were reflected in the divisions between those senior members of the officer corps who were close supporters of the president and those who were bitterly opposed to him.\(^\text{13}\) In addition, there were also serious disagreements between the army's central leadership and many regional army commanders, especially those who shared the concerns and grievances of those areas of the outer islands for which they were responsible.

Despite this disunity within the armed forces, there was widespread dissatisfaction among senior officers about the political problems that the parties and parliament seemed unable to solve. There was also growing contempt for the civilian politicians and the political parties for their corruption and self-serving ambitions. Increasingly, senior army officers began to feel that they must assume responsibility for rescuing the nation from the political morass into which they believed it was sinking.

### The push to Guided Democracy: 1957-1959

As political instability increased in the latter half of 1956, President Sukarno began to show signs that he would move to play a more active role in political life than the constitutional constraints of the presidency had so far permitted. In several rousing speeches Sukarno delivered in October and November, he began to make explicit his criticisms of Western-style parliamentary democracy.\(^\text{14}\) He attacked the 'disease' of the political parties and called for them to be 'buried'. He also criticised 'liberal democracy' and advocated for the first time what he called 'guided democracy', that is democracy.

\(^{13}\)Many of these conflicts came to a head during and after the 17 October Affair in 1952, when a group of senior army officers, frustrated by the weight of political opposition to their plans for the creation of a more modern, skilled and professional army, attempted to pressure President Sukarno into dissolving the parliament. For a full account of this complex affair and its impact on factionalism within the armed forces, see Feith 1958: 103-39; Feith 1962: 246-73; McVey 1971: 143-52; and Sundhaussen 1982: 69-79.

\(^{14}\)For translated excerpts from two of these speeches, see Feith and Castles 1970: 81-3. Sukarno's criticisms of parliamentary democracy helped widen the breach with his vice-president Mohammad Hatta who resigned in late November 1956. The standard account of this 1957-9 period in Indonesian politics is Lev 1966a.
with leadership. As to what he thought should happen next, Sukarno informed the nation that he had his own 'concept' (*konsepsi*) that he would soon reveal.

In late December the long-simmering resentment felt in the outer islands towards the central government moved a stage closer towards open conflict. Regional councils were established in North, Central and South Sumatra, calling for the resignation of the Ali government and its replacement by a non-party 'working cabinet' led by Hatta. At the same time, the regions began to bypass Jakarta by trading directly with foreign buyers in export commodities. Sympathetic to many of the regions' grievances, the Masyumi cabinet ministers resigned early in January 1957.

On 21 February, Sukarno delivered his long-awaited *konsepsi* speech in which he not only continued his attack on the unsuitability of Western-style democracy for Indonesian conditions, but also revealed his alternative proposals. The president called for the establishment of a 'Mutual Assistance' (*Gotong Royong*) Cabinet in which all four major parties, including the PKI, would be represented. He also proposed the formation of an entirely new body, a National Council, with representation from a wide cross-section of 'functional groups' within society, such as workers, peasants, youth and women. This body, Sukarno suggested, should arrive at decisions by consensus rather than voting, and he would himself lead such a council.

Only weeks later, with regional resistance to central government authority also spreading to Eastern Indonesia, Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo formally resigned, having first agreed to sign a martial law decree. Both Sukarno and the armed forces were now in a position to begin to move against the existing system. The army chief of staff, Major General Nasution, was appointed as Central War Administrator and the armed forces were empowered by the martial law regulations to become involved in civilian affairs. Sukarno, appointing himself *formateur* as 'citizen Sukarno', established a

---

15 North Sumatra was quickly enticed back into the fold by the central government.
16 For a translation of sections of Sukarno's speech, see Feith and Castles 1970: 83-9.
'Working' Cabinet (*Kabinet Karya*) under the prime-ministership of Djuanda, a widely respected engineer who was not aligned with any political party and a minister in the previous Ali cabinet. The structure of the new cabinet fell rather short of the principles Sukarno had outlined in his *konsepsi*, for the Masyumi refused to participate and PKI members were not included. But the other half of Sukarno's plan was put into effect in May 1957 with the establishment under emergency decree of a 45-member National Council. This body had wide representation, including several PKI members, although what role it would play in national politics vis-à-vis either the elected parliament or the Djuanda Cabinet was not immediately clear.

For the next few months attention was directed at attempting to solve the serious conflict between the regions and the central government. These efforts were largely the work of Prime Minister Djuanda who was responsible for convening a National Conference (*Musyawarah Nasional*) to which both civilian and military regional leaders were summoned. The conference, held in Jakarta from 10-14 September, was an attempt to examine the range of issues that were dividing the regions and the central government, including the serious problem of military dissension between the army's central leadership and its regional commanders. At the same time, efforts were made to bridge the differences between Sukarno and his former vice-president, Hatta.

The possibility of a compromise between Jakarta and the regions dwindled in late November and early December when a series of dramatic events suddenly created an atmosphere of political crisis throughout the country. On 30 November there was an attempt to assassinate Sukarno in Jakarta when a group of Islamic extremists tossed hand grenades into a crowd outside a school in Cikini during a presidential visit. Sukarno escaped unscathed but a number of innocent bystanders were killed or seriously injured. Colonel Zulkifli Lubis, a longstanding rival of the army chief of staff, Major General

---

17 For further details, see Lev 1966a: 18-23.
18 Lev 1966a: 23-8
19 For details of the conference and subsequent initiatives, see Lev 1966a: 31-2.
Nasution, and an officer with close ties to the disaffected regional commanders, was quickly implicated in the affair. 20

The day before the assassination attempt, Indonesia had failed to gain the required two-thirds majority in the United Nations General Assembly for its motion requiring the Netherlands to negotiate a settlement to the West Irian dispute. Sukarno had been threatening that Indonesia would take decisive action if no satisfactory progress on the West Irian issue was forthcoming, and this was a diplomatic rebuff to one of his long-cherished political goals. On 3 December, left-wing unionists and youth, apparently acting with Sukarno's tacit approval, began to take over Dutch businesses in Jakarta. These actions rapidly spread throughout the country, and within days virtually all Dutch factories, plantations, banks, trading firms, and shipping companies had been seized and placed in indigenous hands. During the following weeks tens of thousands of Dutch nationals were forcibly expelled. Although the president certainly encouraged these events, there was also a strong element of spontaneity about them. Many members of the government, including Prime Minister Djuanda and Nasution, were alarmed by the seizures and quite unprepared for what occurred. In an attempt to halt the resulting confusion, Nasution acted under his martial law powers to authorise army commanders throughout the country to take over all seized Dutch enterprises in a caretaker capacity until the situation could be clarified. It was soon apparent, however, that the radical actions had widespread popular support and the nationalisation of Dutch interests was quickly accepted as a fait accompli.

These dramatic events had a number of important consequences. In a single blow, the Dutch economic stake in Indonesia was completely destroyed. Although this appealed to those who had long regarded Dutch control over the commanding heights of the economy as inimical to Indonesia's nationhood and an unwanted legacy of the colonial past, it had disastrous consequences for an economy that was already

20 This was the first of five assassination attempts on the president. For details of the incident and the subsequent trial, see Surjo Sediono 1958.
experiencing serious difficulties. The country's transport and communications networks were seriously disrupted, there was an immediate shortage of technical and managerial expertise, and production levels of crucial export-earning commodities gradually sagged over the following three years.\(^{21}\)

The anti-Dutch campaign also served to drive a wedge between the president and his critics, thereby guaranteeing that any flickering hope of a solution to the regional crisis was quickly snuffed out. Masyumi and PSI leaders criticised the takeovers as extreme and economic madness, and they in turn were attacked and harassed for their lack of patriotism.

The crisis also inadvertently played into the hands of the armed forces and its central command. The emergency martial law measures that had been adopted in March had resulted in the army becoming actively involved in civilian affairs with very wide powers. The caretaker role it now assumed in a number of key economic enterprises was a further significant enhancement to its power.

By the beginning of 1958 the deadlock between Jakarta and the regions quickly moved towards open rebellion. In early February the dissident Colonels Hussein, Simbolon and Lubis had been joined in Padang by several senior Masyumi leaders, including ex-Prime Ministers Natsir and Burhanuddin Harahap, and the prominent PSI politician and former cabinet minister, Professor Sumitro Djojohadikusumo. The December-January crisis precipitated their decision to force a showdown with Sukarno and the left. After issuing a defiant ultimatum on 10 February, calling for the resignation of the Djuanda Cabinet and its replacement by one led by Hatta and/or the Sultan of Yogyakarta, a final breach was announced five days later with the proclamation of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (*Pemerintah Revolusioner*

\(^{21}\) For an account of the nationalisation measures and further discussion of the impact these actions had upon the economy, see van der Kroef 1958a: 59-63; and Thomas and Glassburner 1965: 158-79.
Republik Indonesia, PRRI), led by the then Governor of the Central Bank and former Finance Minister, Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, as Prime Minister.22

The rebellion drew support initially from Central Sumatra, certain parts of North Sumatra, and North Sulawesi. Other regions expected to join, such as South Sumatra, adopted an ambivalent attitude.23 Although the central government reacted cautiously, when it finally engaged the rebels, it met with little serious resistance in Sumatra though there was stiffer opposition in North Sulawesi. The rebellion dragged on until 1961, but all major towns and cities in rebel areas were under central government control by mid 1958 and the challenge to Jakarta was effectively over. Although the rebellion was a net drain on national resources, politically the position of both the president and the central army leadership was significantly strengthened. President Sukarno's regional critics were crushed, while his most outspoken political opponents, the Masyumi and the PSI, had been compromised by the participation of their leading members in the rebellion.

As far as the armed forces were concerned, the central army command was more united than it had been at any time since independence. The power and authority of the dissident regional commanders was substantially broken and the military career of Nasution's rival, Zulkiflı Lubis, was destroyed. The regional rebellion and martial law had created a situation where a united army leadership was able to play a more active and self-confident role in politics, in public administration and in economic affairs. By the end of 1958, Sukarno and the army were effectively partners intent on finding a way to build a new and more authoritarian political structure that would guarantee the primacy of their own power and authority.24

---

22 For an account of the course of the rebellion and its resolution, see Feith and Lev 1963; also van der Kroef 1958a and 1958b. For a detailed study of the rebellion in North Sulawesi where resistance was somewhat stronger, see Harvey 1977.
23 Much later, in February 1960, the PRRI joined forces with the Darul Islam rebels in Aceh and South Sulawesi to form the Indonesian Federal Republic (Republik Persatuan Indonesia, RPI). See Feith and Lev 1963: 38-40.
24 For a thorough account of the complex manoeuvrings in Indonesian politics that culminated in the decisions taken by Sukarno in July 1959, see Lev 1966a.
The immediate problem was how to achieve these goals. Sukarno realised that the Djuanda Cabinet and the National Council that had been created back in 1957 had fallen far short of the plans that he had announced in his konsepsi. What was required was some means of increasing the representation of the so-called 'functional groups' in the formal councils of government to achieve a political system that was more amenable to Sukarno's personal guidance and reflected his increased authority. Such a change, however, could only be achieved at the expense of the existing political parties who controlled both parliament and the Constituent Assembly. Although the president's strongest critics within the political parties had been mortally weakened by the events of 1958, the parties as a whole were resistant to any proposals by which their position would be seriously eroded.

Beginning in late December 1958 and continuing into early 1959, Sukarno held wide-ranging discussions with a broad cross-section of party leaders and political figures in an attempt to persuade them to accept and implement his proposals for new electoral arrangements. The president was seeking to reduce the parliamentary representation of the political parties by half and to replace them with representatives from the functional groups. Slightly less than a quarter of the functional groups were to be allocated to the armed forces and the remainder were to be chosen by a national front organisation. When it became clear that with the single exception of the PKI, the parties were either stalling on the proposal or, as in the case of the Masyumi and NU, were fundamentally opposed to it, the president decided to push for a more dramatic means of securing his political objectives. In February he took up a cabinet proposal for a return to the 1945 Constitution. This idea had the strong support of the army; it had first been floated in cabinet during 1958 by Nasution. Under the 1945 Constitution, which had operated throughout the period of revolutionary struggle, the president was vested with much
stronger executive powers. Returning to it would enable Sukarno to play the more central role in national politics that he desired.25

A campaign to restore the 1945 Constitution quickly gathered pace, putting the political parties under mounting pressure to accept both this proposal and also the changes to the electoral system. Sukarno himself, in a major speech to the Constituent Assembly on 22 April, put the case for constitutional change. Over the following two months the president's proposals were exhaustively debated inside and outside the Constituent Assembly.26 The issue was finally put to a vote at the end of May, but on this and two subsequent attempts the proposal failed to gain the two-thirds majority required for ratification. The political situation was now at an impasse, with the civilian politicians weakened and discredited but refusing to approve any further diminution in their power.

Sukarno, who had been on an extensive overseas tour for the previous two months, returned to Indonesia at the end of June. On 5 July, without any constitutional authority but with the full backing of the armed forces, the president dissolved the Constituent Assembly and proclaimed the 1945 Constitution by presidential decree. Guided Democracy was now a reality.

**Guided Democracy becomes established: 1959-1963**

Although Guided Democracy may be said to have properly begun with President Sukarno's bold initiatives taken on 5 July, the institutions of the new system of government were only gradually put in place over the following two years. An account of the institutional structure of Guided Democracy alone does not fully come to terms

---

25 For details of the 1945 Constitution and an account of the powers of the presidency compared with the legislature, see Mackie 1963.

26 For the proposal to gain acceptance, it became clear that the support of the NU representatives would be the critical factor. During the debate, however, a deadlock arose over the question of the place of Islam in the constitution. The Djuanda government refused to accept the inclusion of a subsidiary clause in the constitution based on the so-called Jakarta Charter. The Islamic parties in the Constituent Assembly held firm to the end in their opposition over this ideological principle. See Lev 1966a: 257-68.
with the real nature of politics during these years. Of critical importance were the complex relationships between the main power holders within the system: the president, the army and the PKI. Furthermore, the nature of these relationships was a changing one, so that throughout the six years of Guided Democracy the character of the system itself underwent a significant transformation.

On 9 July, under the new presidential system of government that gave him wide executive powers, Sukarno appointed a 43-member cabinet, with himself as Prime Minister but with Djuanda retained as First Minister. Eleven posts went to military personnel, reflecting the key power-sharing role the armed forces were playing. Cabinet ministers, like all senior officials in government posts, were henceforth required to resign their party affiliations. Throughout the course of Guided Democracy, cabinet was forced to compete for power and authority with a range of other institutions of government and never really operated as an effective decision-making body.

The existing National Council was transformed into a 45-member Supreme Advisory Council, headed by Sukarno and with Roeslan Abdulgani as its vice-chairman. This body became a central element of Guided Democracy, since many crucial aspects of state policy were canvassed at its meetings and it was deeply involved in the fashioning of state ideology. A new body, the National Planning Council, was established at the same time under the chairmanship of Muhammad Yamin, and charged with responsibility for drawing up ambitious national development goals and strategies.

In a system where Sukarno sought to play the central role in the political life of the nation, presidential speeches and public utterances played a major part in the fashioning of symbols and ideological constructs. The president's Independence Day speech, delivered on 17 August 1959, was an especially significant event in the development of Guided Democracy. The speech, 'The Rediscovery of Our Revolution', quickly

27 For a full explanation of the structure and political character of Guided Democracy up to 1963, see Feith 1963a.
28 By the end of the Sukarno era, cabinet had become an unwieldy body with almost a hundred members.
assumed the status of an ideological tract for the entire nation.\textsuperscript{29} The Supreme Advisory Council declared it to be the Political Manifesto (\textit{Manifesto Politik}, Manipol) of the state. Its five central principles, enunciated as the 1945 Constitution, Indonesian Socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy and National Identity, quickly became known by their Indonesian acronym USDEK.\textsuperscript{30} Although Sukarno's domestic political opponents, especially the Masyumi and the PSI, were dismissive of what they regarded as the intellectual shallowness and empty sloganeering of this and other ideological planks of Guided Democracy, it was taken up with considerable enthusiasm. To many Indonesians who had been dismayed by the bitterness and divisions that had plagued the nation over the previous four years, the stress placed on unity and forward movement, and the appeal to national pride were reassuring.

The parliament (the Peoples' Representative Council, \textit{Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat}, DPR) that had been established on the basis of the 1955 elections continued for a time to operate as a temporary body. In March 1960, however, when the parliament refused to accept what was judged to be a quite unsatisfactory budget placed before it for ratification, President Sukarno immediately acted to dissolve it. By June a new 'Mutual Assistance' Parliament (DPR-\textit{Gotong Royong}) was established with half its members appointed from the 'functional groups'. The remaining seats were allocated to the political parties, but the Masyumi and the PSI were not included. In this new parliament there would not be voting; instead its decisions were to be arrived at through consultation and consensus (\textit{musyawarah}, \textit{mufakat}). In fact, the DPR-GR was a weak and ineffectual body, playing a relatively minor role in Guided Democracy politics.

Under the 1945 Constitution, representative and elected bodies had only a very limited role. Early in 1960 Sukarno established an Interim Peoples' Consultative Assembly (\textit{Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara}, MPRS), the highest organ of

\textsuperscript{29} See Feith and Castles 1970: 99-111.
\textsuperscript{30} USDEK: \textit{Undangan-undangan dasar 1945; Sosialisme à la Indonesia; Demokrasi terpimpin; Economi Terpimpin; Kepribadian Indonesia}. The whole was generally referred to as Manipol-USDEK.
state under the constitution. It was required to meet at least once every five years, and was formally responsible for electing the president and setting the 'broad outlines of state policy'. Although it was supposed to be an elected body, Sukarno invoked certain transitional provisions to ensure that a large bloc of its members were appointed from the so-called 'functional groups'. It did not actually meet in session until the end of that year, when, under the chairmanship of Chaerul Saleh, a radical leftist associated with the small national-communist Murba Party, it endorsed both the political program of Manipol-USDEK and the grandiose Eight Year Development Plan that had been drawn up by the National Planning Council.

After July 1959 the political parties remained under something of a cloud. Despite Sukarno's earlier demand for the parties to be 'buried', by 1960 he had come to realise that they were a necessary element on the political landscape. Their survival - or at least the survival of those parties he believed he could control - was essential if the growing power of the army was to be balanced with a countervailing political force. Sukarno continued to promote the role of 'functional groups', establishing a National Front in August 1960 to coordinate the activities of all such groups in line with Manipol-USDEK and his renewed emphasis on the spirit of the revolution. Yet the president was concerned about the possibility that the army would use its organisational and administrative reach throughout the country to build an effective 'functional group' organisation of its own. Consequently, political parties remained a necessary evil, although the two parties that Sukarno regarded as implacable enemies, Masyumi and the PSI, were both banned in August. A month earlier, in July, Sukarno had issued a

---

31 The army had established its own functional group umbrella organisation, the Body to Develop the Potential of Functional Groups (Badan Pembina Potensi Karya, BPPK). For a full account of the background and development of the functional group concept and its application under Guided Democracy, see Reeve 1985: especially 108-262.

32 In addition to the participation of some of their principal leaders in the regional rebellions, activists from both parties had further angered the president by their participation in a short-lived oppositional movement known as the Democratic League (Liga Demokrasi). Organised in April 1960 after Sukarno's dismissal of the elected DPR, it had come into existence while Sukarno was away from the country on one of his overseas tours. Though it briefly attracted support from some sections of the military, it was quickly eliminated once Sukarno returned. See Feith 1963a: 343-4.
presidential decree on 'party simplification', aimed at restricting and managing those parties that were to be permitted to remain legal.\textsuperscript{33} By April of 1961, eight parties were declared to have fulfilled these requirements, including the three largest parties the PNI, PKI and NU.\textsuperscript{34}

The central feature of Guided Democracy politics throughout its early years was the relationship between its two principal architects, the president and the army. Both had wanted a more centralised and authoritarian form of government and both needed the other to make the system work.

Sukarno's power and authority derived from his skills as an orator and a manipulator of ideological symbols. His personality, his words, his actions were central to the way Indonesian politics were conducted during this period. Although he shared power with various other forces, especially the army, when it came to matters of ideology, the direction of domestic politics and the pursuit of foreign policy, Sukarno's views usually held sway. He was the creator of Manipol-USDEK, the central ideological plank of Guided Democracy. But above all there was his deep and abiding conviction about the need to return to the spirit of the 1945 revolution. Sukarno constantly evoked the symbolism of the revolution in his public addresses, as he berated those who had held office throughout the 1950s. Fired by 'the romance of the revolution', he claimed for himself the titles of Great Leader of the Revolution and Mouthpiece of the Indonesian People. He also presented himself as bearer of the Message of the People's Suffering (\textit{Amanat Penderitaan Rakyat}, Ampera). Under his leadership the 'exploitation de l'homme par l'homme' would be eliminated.\textsuperscript{35} These were bold and dramatic gestures

\textsuperscript{33} According to presidential decree, political parties were forced to declare their allegiance to Manipol-USDEK, submit their membership lists to the government, and fulfill certain minimum-size requirements.

\textsuperscript{34} The other five parties were the League of the Upholders of Indonesian Independence (\textit{Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia}, IPKI), Murba, the Catholic Party (\textit{Partai Katolik}), the small leftist Indonesia Party (\textit{Partai Indonesia}, Partindo), and the Indonesian Islamic Association Party (\textit{Partai Sarikat Islam Indonesia}, PSII). Three months later the total number of legal parties was increased to ten when the Indonesian Christian Party (\textit{Partai Kristen Indonesia}, Parkindo) and the small Islamic Educational Movement (\textit{Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiyah}, Perti) were added to the list.

\textsuperscript{35} For details of these political symbols, see Feith 1963b.
and Sukarno, a brilliant orator, was able in the early years of Guided Democracy to appeal to and unite many Indonesians, providing them with reassurance following the doubts and uncertainties of the 1950s.

The armed forces, its power flowing ultimately from its control over the means of coercion, but with a stronger legal basis than previously for its involvement in civil administration and politics, was now more united than at any time in the previous decade. Under martial law it had acquired a zone of authority that it was determined to preserve. During the first two years of Guided Democracy the army became an increasingly powerful element in the regional government structure, while it also cornered a controlling interest in the state enterprise sector of the economy, a direct result of the nationalisation of Dutch assets.

Although both Sukarno and the armed forces began as partners sharing power, there was a high degree of suspicion on both sides. Many senior army officers regarded the president as an unreliable and unpredictable figure, and there was increasing concern in military circles about his apparent attraction towards the PKI, or at least to leftist political symbols and ideas. Sukarno, for his part, was wary of the possibility of the armed forces dominating the political landscape. Without any obvious power base of his own, and requiring an ally to balance this threat, he found the political parties an essential tool for this purpose. The PKI, in particular, provided him with strong support and soon began to play a critical role in Guided Democracy politics.

Although the PKI had been caught off-guard by the collapse of constitutional democracy in 1957-59, under the astute leadership of Aidit and his fellow politburo members, the party quickly managed to trim its sails to the prevailing political winds of Guided Democracy. Of all the parties, the PKI had given the most unqualified support for the proposed changes Sukarno was signalling in early 1959, and it rallied to support

---

36 The most complete account of the PKI during the Guided Democracy era is Mortimer 1974. See also Hindley 1964.
the president in his establishment of Guided Democracy. For Sukarno there were obvious attractions. With his fascination for the symbolism of the revolution and his fondness for Marxist imagery and rhetoric, the president and the PKI appeared to speak much the same language. But more importantly, the PKI as the largest and best organised of all the political parties was able to provide the mass following throughout the country that Sukarno needed at his public appearances and rallies.37

For these reasons, the president gave the party his support and protection against its natural enemy, the armed forces. As early as September 1959, the army had moved to prevent the holding of the PKI's sixth national congress. Not only did Sukarno intervene to permit the congress to go ahead, but he addressed its closing ceremony, speaking with great enthusiasm about the party and its leaders. This set the pattern for the following years, as Sukarno not only fought to protect the PKI from army harassment, but moved steadily to bring the party into all the central councils of Guided Democracy government.38 Towards the end of 1960 the president began to canvass the idea of bringing the PKI into the cabinet in accordance with Nasakom, the principle of cooperation between the nationalist, religious and communist streams that he regarded as crucial for the achievement of national unity.39 Although the army was able to oppose this move successfully, when the cabinet was reshuffled in March 1962 Sukarno managed to give the PKI two minor posts.40

Delighted as the PKI was to have the president's protection, this was not achieved without important concessions. In order both to remain legal and retain Sukarno's

37 By 1960, the PKI's membership had grown to over 1.5 million. The party membership continued to grow rapidly over the next five years to the point where it claimed a membership of 3.5 million by August 1965 with another 24 million in affiliated bodies and front organisations. See Mortimer 1974: 366.
38 The communist daily Harian Rakjat was banned on several occasions for short periods during the early 1960s, while regional commanders in several areas used their martial law powers to prohibit all PKI activity in their area of authority.
39 Sukarno's ideas about Nasakom were first enunciated in an essay written in 1926. For an English translation of this work and a perceptive introduction to Sukarno's ideas, see McVey 1970.
40 PKI Chairman Aidit was appointed Third Deputy Chairman of the MPRS, and his deputy Lukman was appointed Third Deputy Chairman of the DPR-GR. These positions were accorded ministerial rank in the new cabinet and membership of the newly created State Leadership body.
support, the party had not only to fulfill the same bureaucratic conditions as the other parties, but it also had to give its public support to Manipol-USDEK and eschew class struggle in favour of national interests.41

By the end of 1960 the formal structures of Guided Democracy were more or less established and the general character of the regime was becoming increasingly evident to Indonesia's people. In contrast to the sober and pragmatic style of government pursued by most of the cabinets during the period of parliamentary democracy, the Guided Democracy years were characterised by a high degree of political theatre as Sukarno strove to create and then manipulate the symbols of his office.

Although many Indonesians, especially among the broader reaches of society, were attracted by Sukarno's leadership and rhetoric, there remained a significant minority who were implacably opposed to him. Many people in academic and intellectual circles were quietly cynical of Guided Democracy ideology, suspicious of Nasakom, and resentful of the loss of freedom of speech and the press and the destruction of those democratic values that had largely underpinned the political order throughout most of the previous decade. Fear of reprisals on the part of the government, however, ensured that such people did not express their opinions publicly.42

It would be a gross exaggeration to see Indonesia as a totalitarian state during this period, for power was too diffuse and the implementation of control measures was often lax and inconsistent. Yet under Guided Democracy, the government made some effort to indoctrinate certain sections of society, especially through courses in Manipol-USDEK for students and civil servants. At the same time, various control measures were put in place. The activities of political parties were carefully controlled and in January 1962

---

41 For an account of the PKI's ideological position towards Guided Democracy during this period, see Mortimer 1974: 77-140.
42 The repressive nature of Guided Democracy politics was quickly evident. The former vice-president, Mohammad Hatta, broke a long public silence with a sober and carefully worded critique of Guided Democracy and President Sukarno's political reforms that appeared in an article entitled 'Demokrasi Kita' (Our Democracy) published in the Jakarta weekly Pandji Masjarakat on 1 May 1960. The issue was immediately banned.
certain leading members of the Masyumi and PSI were arrested and held without trial.\footnote{Included among those detained was the PSI's leader and former prime minister, Sutan Sjahrir. Other high profile political prisoners during the Guided Democracy years were newspaper editor, Mochtar Lubis, and several senior army officers who had been involved in the PRRI regional rebellion.} The Indonesian press, which since the implementation of martial law in 1958 had already been working under strict constraints, was now more closely controlled than ever before. Certain newspapers deemed hostile were closed down permanently, while the editors of those newspapers that were permitted to continue were required to give an undertaking of their loyalty to Manipol-USDEK and were ultimately forced to publish a large amount of government news and propaganda.

Although propaganda and indoctrination appeared to be working in the lower reaches of the education system, the universities and institutes of higher education remained bastions of doubters and cynics. At the onset of his attack on parliamentary democracy, Sukarno had railed against the limitations of 'text-book thinking'. In March 1961 he appointed the radical-nationalist Iwa Kusumasumantri to the post of Minister of Higher Education and Science in an attempt to intensify the Guided Democracy indoctrination campaign in the universities. Although this move was largely unsuccessful - Iwa was replaced a year later with a more moderate minister - university lecturers realised that promotion depended upon a display of active loyalty to the person of the president and to state ideology. Those seen to be out of step with the regime through any expressions of criticism or opposition risked being branded as 'anti-Manipol' or opposed to the revolution (kontra-revolusi). As in other areas of the civil service, such charges could lead to demands for 'retooling'.

The growing authoritarian trend in Indonesian politics was matched by the government's failure to address the serious and rapidly deteriorating conditions of the Indonesian economy. Throughout the 1950s successive governments had struggled to rebuild the economy, at times with moderate success, despite massive problems inherited
from the years of war and revolution. In the late 1950s, however, the national economy was thrown into disarray by a series of sudden and dramatic measures.

The considerable chaos and confusion accompanying the seizures of Dutch enterprises that occurred in December 1957 have already been referred to earlier. Then in May 1959 the Minister for Trade announced a ban on retail trade by 'aliens' in rural areas that was aimed directly at Indonesia's ethnic Chinese community. Ultimately, this led to the exodus of about 100,000 Chinese out of the country, raised tensions between the governments of Indonesia and China and seriously disrupted the local economy creating difficulties both for Chinese traders and shopkeepers and Indonesians everywhere who were dependent upon them for the distribution of goods and services.

In August 1959, in a desperate attempt to check spiralling prices and arrest inflation, the government launched a sudden 'monetary purge'. These drastic measures caused widespread hardship to many individuals and had a disastrous effect on many private firms and small businesses that were faced with ruin.

In a sense the economy never recovered from the cumulative effect of these three shocks. The impact of the August 1959 measures on prices and inflation was short-lived and ultimately futile. By late 1961 the economy had again slipped into a period of rapid decline that was marked by sharp price rises, chronic inflation, serious shortages of many essential items and a slump in production of those commodities on which the national economy depended for foreign exchange earnings.

Given the great stress placed on political slogans and national symbols under Guided Democracy, and the stepping up of the campaign to wrest West Irian from the

44 The ban was finally promulgated in November 1959 as a presidential regulation, known as PP10/1959. For a detailed account of this issue and the complex mix of racial, political and economic factors involved, see Mackie 1976a: 82-97; and Somers 1965: 194-223.
45 On the August 1959 'monetary purge' and its consequences, see Mackie 1963: 28-30. The Indonesian rupiah was devalued by nearly 400% against the US dollar, while 90% was wiped off the face value of large denomination banknotes. Bank accounts with more than Rp 25,000 were confiscated by the government.
Dutch throughout 1961, those members of the government who were seriously concerned about the grave problems facing the economy found it increasingly difficult to instigate effective reforms. As far as economic development was concerned, the government's principal focus of attention was the Eight Year Development Plan that had been drawn up in 1960 by the National Planning Council. Yet this was a totally unrealistic document that bore no relationship to the country's actual problems. When the plan was inaugurated at a hoe-swinging ceremony on 1 January 1961, President Sukarno himself described it as 'rich in fantasy'. By the end of 1961 and throughout the following year, the effect of the serious structural problems of the economy were being felt throughout Indonesia as the prices of key commodities and the cost of living rose alarmingly, and as the rupiah was put under substantial pressure. Shortages of basic foodstuffs and consumer goods affected all Indonesians on salaries and fixed incomes who were increasingly forced to resort to a range of emergency measures to supplement their salaries.

**Guided Democracy moves towards crisis: 1963-1965**

The year 1963 was a critical turning point in Indonesian politics. By the end of that year the balance of forces appeared to shift significantly in favour of the left. Yet at the beginning of the year, there were several hopeful signs that serious attention might at last be directed towards solving the problems of the Indonesian economy. With the successful resolution of the West Irian conflict in Indonesia's favour in August 1962,

---

46 The plan had been prepared without the advice of any expert economists. Its importance lay in its symbolic aspects: it was presented to the president in eight parts, seventeen volumes and 1945 paragraphs, representing the date of Indonesia's declaration of independence. For a summary and evaluation of the plan, see Pauker 1961. For a more realistic assessment of its economic and political context, see Mackie 1967: 26-8.

47 For a sound overview of the deteriorating state of the economy in the 1961-2 period, see Mackie 1967: 30-7.

48 The changing balance of forces in Indonesian politics in this period is discussed in Feith 1964.

49 An agreement was reached with the Netherlands on 15 August whereby the United Nations was to administer the disputed territory until 1 May 1963 when it was to come under Indonesian control. A plebescite was to be conducted under UN supervision before 1969 to determine whether the inhabitants wished to remain part of Indonesia.
many Indonesians, including some of the more pragmatic government leaders, such as First Minister Djuanda, began to urge such a course of action.

Much depended, however, on the views of President Sukarno, at the apex of the Guided Democracy system and the skillful balancer of the political forces with whom he shared power. For several months it seemed that the president would indeed direct Indonesia down the path of urgently needed economic reform. Against the backdrop of negotiations between the Indonesian government and officials from both the International Monetary Fund and the United States government and after careful consultation with government councils, the president announced his long-awaited Economic Declaration (Deklarasi Ekonomi, Dekon) on 29 March. Despite its Guided Democracy rhetoric, the Dekon gave considerable weight to the economic stabilisation measures that the IMF and US officials were recommending. After further consultation, on 26 May the government announced a package of economic reforms, including a drastic devaluation, the abolition of price controls, and measures to liberalise foreign trade, increase domestic competition between government firms, and stimulate production. These reforms, underwritten by guarantees of US-backed IMF support, were a dramatic reversal of the Guided Economy principles that had prevailed since 1959. But the reform package also aroused considerable opposition from various quarters, with the PKI being the most outspoken in its criticism.50

At the same time as the possibility of a new economic direction was being contemplated, President Sukarno was toying with the adoption of an aggressive stance towards the proposal to create a new state of Malaysia from the existing Federation of Malaya and the British Borneo territories of Sarawak and Sabah. After the Azahari revolt in Brunei in December 1962 by opponents of the Malaysia proposal, the Indonesian government had denounced the scheme as a neo-colonial project, and began to talk of a campaign of confrontation (konfrontasi) against the new state.51 During the first four

51 For the most complete account of the Indonesia-Malaysia dispute, see Mackie 1974.
months of 1963, as the economic reforms were being considered, Indonesian leaders continued to make hostile noises culminating in the first military incursion into Sarawak by Indonesian-led insurgents on 12 April. However, at the end of May when Sukarno unexpectedly invited Malayan Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman to meet him in Tokyo for private talks, it seemed that Sukarno was preparing to back away from foreign policy adventurism and embark instead on the implementation of the pro-Western economic reforms that had just been announced. Further hopeful signs emerged during the following months. However, when Kuala Lumpur announced on 29 August that Malaysia would be formed on 16 September in advance of the release of a UN fact-finding report, Sukarno seized the occasion to renew the offensive. Indonesia rejected the UN report’s pro-Malaysia findings issued on 14 September, condemned Malaysia as a neo-colonial puppet state, and announced it would press ahead with its konfrontasi campaign to ‘crush’ its new neighbour. These announcements were accompanied by violent demonstrations against Malaysia and Britain in Indonesia, including the burning of the British embassy and attacks on British houses and property throughout Jakarta on 18 September.

These actions signalled the death knell of the economic stabilisation program. The IMF-US aid package was immediately cancelled and the May program of economic reforms was quickly abandoned, setting off a new round of price rises and a rapid surge in inflation. The defeat of the economic reform measures was soon accompanied by a more aggressive posture by the PKI within domestic politics, as the party’s leaders seized the opportunity to strengthen their position.

The reasons why Indonesia rejected the economic stabilisation measures in favour of what appeared to be a risky and adventurist foreign policy are complex and not easily reducible to simple or brief explanation. It is apparent, however, that each of the three

---

52 Foreign ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines met for talks in Manila in early June which resulted in a request to the United Nations to send a mission to determine the wishes of people in the Borneo territories.
53 For an account of these events and their immediate consequences, see Mackie 1974: 183-94.
key power holders in Guided Democracy had convincing reasons to support confrontation. The attitude of President Sukarno was a crucial element in Indonesia adopting the course it ultimately chose to follow. Although for several months he had appeared to give serious consideration to the arguments of those proposing domestic economic reform, the path of konfrontasi was more in keeping with Sukarno's personality and temperament and his own anti-colonial experiences. More importantly, the domestic political conflict that the proposed economic reforms had already unleashed alerted him to the fact that his own position would be threatened by these potential uncertainties. By contrast, the anti-Malaysia campaign offered Sukarno a situation ideally suited to his skills as an agitator and balancer of the conflicting forces within the system. It enabled him to demand the involvement of the armed forces as defenders of the national interest and allowed him to continue his encouragement of the PKI.

The reaction of the armed forces to these issues was also a mixed one. Although most senior army officers did not want konfrontasi to lead to outright war, given the anti-colonial origins of the Indonesian armed forces there was a certain amount of support in military circles for the anti-Malaysia campaign. Some senior army officers were undoubtedly in favour of economic reform, but it was also widely recognised that this would involve a sharp reduction in the armed forces' budget and probable demobilisation. There was already mounting concern that the lifting of martial law on 1 May 1963 would effectively reduce the political power of the military throughout the country. Most senior officers quickly appreciated that konfrontasi would enable them to continue to play a major role in the nation's affairs and prevent the armed forces from being sidelined in Indonesian domestic politics.

The PKI was also initially equivocal about the anti-Malaysia campaign, fearing that konfrontasi would justify a return to martial law and repression of the party by the army; but its leaders soon realised that the agitational politics of the konfrontasi campaign were
a golden opportunity to involve its large mass base in political action.\textsuperscript{54} Support for \textit{konfrontasi} would be a clear demonstration of the PKI's commitment to national goals, further entrenching the party within the Guided Democracy power structure and making it harder for its enemies in the army to attack it.

By the end of 1963 it was evident that the PKI's tactics - an extension of its long held 'national unity' strategy - were paying handsome dividends as Sukarno began to shift the Guided Democracy power balance in favour of the left. Defence Minister Nasution had already been outmanoeuvred by Sukarno in June 1962 when he had lost his command post as chief of staff of the army to a rival, Colonel Achmad Yani. Following the death of First Minister Djuanda in early November, the resulting cabinet reshuffle saw Nasution emerge in a weakened position when he was not included in a newly created presidium of Deputy Prime Ministers, made up of Foreign Minister Subandrio, Leimena and Chaerul Saleh. Encouraged by these moves, and the president's 'retooling' of a number of strongly anti-communist governors and regional heads, the PKI began to press its claims for greater influence within the government itself.

The president's leadership of the \textit{konfrontasi} campaign and his spirited support for what he identified as the New Emerging Forces of the world encouraged the PKI to adopt a more militant campaign against the Old Established Forces of colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism (Nekolim) in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{55} In early 1964 PKI unions embarked on takeovers of British plantations in Indonesia, while PKI leaders began a vociferous anti-American campaign with a series of demonstrations against the import of US films and attacks on United States Information Service centres and US property in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Medan. At the same time the PKI sought to exploit the substantial gains it had made domestically, especially its growing strength in rural areas where the party's effective organisation and dedicated cadres had been responsible

\textsuperscript{54} See Mortimer 1974: 203-26 and 239-46.
\textsuperscript{55} On Sukarno's definition and exploitation of these ideological constructs, see Modelski 1963 and Weatherbee 1966; also Mackie 1974: 329-34. For a general survey of Guided Democracy foreign policy, see Bunnell 1966.
for recruiting and building an impressive following within the Indonesian peasantry. In early 1964, PKI leader Aidit responded to pressure from the party's rural cadres to conduct a land reform campaign based upon the land reform and share-cropping legislation that had been promulgated by the government in 1959 and 1960 but never properly implemented. This was a bold and potentially dangerous step by the PKI leadership for it was a significant departure from the 'national unity' policy that had brought it so much success throughout the previous decade.

By April 1964 the land reform campaign was underway in many rural areas throughout Java, Bali and North Sumatra. Violent clashes soon erupted as PKI-led landless peasants attempted to seize and redistribute land in a series of unilateral actions (aksi sepihak). In certain areas, especially where the PNI and NU had a strong following, the PKI cadres met with active resistance. The land reform campaign continued throughout 1964, but the increasing number of violent incidents and the bitter communal tensions that were aroused, caused widespread concern and finally led to the land reform issue being discussed at a special meeting of party leaders called by President Sukarno in December. In East Java in particular, santri Muslims began to organise themselves effectively and were beginning to get the better of the PKI in the rural struggle. The PKI leadership, recognising the danger signs, finally decided to scale down the campaign in early 1965. The failure of this class-based political campaign had important implications for the PKI's subsequent policies. But the intense passions that had been aroused by the aksi sepihak campaign in many areas were also to have their denouement in the wholesale slaughter of communist-aligned peasants at the end of that year.

The steadily rising political profile of the PKI under Guided Democracy, resulting from the outbreak of konfrontasi and President Sukarno's continued support and protection, was deeply disturbing not only to the strongly anti-communist senior army

---

56 For a detailed account of the PKI's land reform campaign, see Mortimer 1972 and 1974: 276-328.
57 The PKI leadership's change of direction is discussed in Mortimer 1974: 300-3.
officers but also to many of the civilian politicians who saw their own power and positions threatened and recognised the need to undermine the PKI and check its momentum. Throughout 1964, a group of these politicians - principally Murba Party activists led by Trade Minister Adam Malik - attempted to outmanoeuvre the PKI by projecting President Sukarno's own utterances and previously expressed ideas and opinions as an ideological counterweight to communism.

One such initiative was a proposal to set up a one-party system - based on Sukarno's 1957 notion that the parties should be 'buried'. Another was the Body to Support Sukarnoism (Badan Pendukung Sukarnoisme, BPS) initiated in September 1964, which drew support from the Deputy Prime Minister, Chaerul Saleh, a number of prominent newspaper editors and some army leaders.\(^{58}\) There were several months of vituperative exchanges in the Jakarta press between PKI leaders and BPS supporters as the latter attempted to demonstrate the ideological superiority of Sukarnoism. It was not long, however, before the president denounced this as an attempt to undermine his Nasakom policies. On 17 December the BPS was banned, and in early January 1965 a number of Murba leaders were arrested and the Murba Party was declared 'frozen'. By February more than twenty newspapers in Jakarta and Medan that had supported the BPS campaign had been banned, including the prominent and influential Jakarta dailies, *Merdeka* and *Berita Indonesia*.

By 1965 the principle of Nasakom had been confirmed as a fundamental element of Guided Democracy politics. To question Nasakom was now to risk the charge of 'communist-phobia'. The PKI began to press home its advantage with demands for the 'retooling' of its political opponents in the government.\(^{59}\) In addition, the PKI leaders launched vociferous attacks on those it labelled as capitalist-bureaucrats within the armed

\(^{58}\) For an account of the BPS affair, see Crouch 1978: 64-6; Mortimer 1974: 375-9; and Pauker 1965: 88-95.

\(^{59}\) Both Adam Malik and Chaerul Saleh were singled out for 'retooling'. Although they survived the PKI's campaign against them, each received demotions in the March 1964 Cabinet reshuffle.
forces and angry denunciations of other so-called counter-revolutionary elements within society such as the Islamic Student Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, HMI).

The first six months of 1965 were marked by the aggressive posture of the PKI under Sukarno's patronage, its apparent dominance over its political rivals, and the dramatic leftward thrust of foreign policy as Indonesia withdrew from the United Nations in January and moved into closer alignment with the People's Republic of China. It seemed to some observers that there was a sense of inevitability about an eventual PKI victory.60

However, there was still considerable evidence that the PKI remained as far as ever from being able to achieve ultimate power. The party's single foray into class-based political action during the aksi sepihak movement of 1963-64 had been checked by Muslim assertiveness. Various of President Sukarno's initiatives had been to the PKI's advantage, but the party was still dependent upon his support for its present position and future survival.61 Despite Sukarno's calls for increased PKI representation in the various high councils of Guided Democracy government, a fully Nasakom cabinet remained far away. Most importantly, the PKI faced a major problem as regards arms. In the event of a showdown, its opponents within the armed forces retained a monopoly over the use of force. Despite the public political role played by PKI leaders and the party's significant organisational growth - all signs of the party's obvious successes in the agitational politics of Guided Democracy - the PKI appeared unprepared for an armed struggle.

Throughout 1965 politics became increasingly polarised as the PKI continued to exploit its favoured position with the president in an attempt to weaken its enemies within the armed forces. PKI leaders called for the president to extend the principle of Nasakom into all fields, including the armed forces through the establishment of Nasakom advisory boards in each of the four services. At the same time the PKI proposed that workers and

---

60 For assessments of this kind, see van der Kroef 1965 and Pauker 1965.
61 A case for the 'domestication' of the PKI had been first argued by Hindley 1962.
peasants be given military training to form a 'fifth force'. Although there was serious concern within military circles about both the leftward drift of Indonesia's foreign policy and the PKI's apparent ascendancy in domestic politics, senior army officers remained confident of the army's ability to match the PKI in any ultimate showdown.

The army command had been caught off guard by the escalation of the *konfrontasi* campaign to a dangerous level with landings of Indonesian-led insurgents on the Malay peninsula in August and September of 1964. Consequently, the army leaders had moved to ensure that the conduct of the anti-Malaysia campaign was placed firmly under its own control. Several trusted senior officers were transferred to key command posts to ensure that matters did not again get out of hand. Major General Soeharto, the head of the Army Strategic Reserve Command (*Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat, Kostrad*) was appointed as deputy commander of the Mandala Vigilance Command (*Komando Mandala Siaga, Kolaga*) formed in October 1964 to pursue the operation of the *konfrontasi* campaign. Soeharto's appointment was a check to the authority of Kolaga's Sukarnoist commander, Air Marshal Omar Dhani. Brigadier General Kemal Idris, a long-standing opponent of the president, was appointed to head the North Sumatra Kolaga combat command. In addition, the establishment in September 1964 of a new military command structure as part of the *konfrontasi* campaign, the Regional Authority to Implement Dwikora (*Penguasa Pelaksana Dwikora Daerah, Pepelrada*), had restored to the army most of the martial law powers it had lost in the previous year.

Throughout 1965 the senior army leadership moved to check the PKI's challenge to the armed forces' military supremacy. With a combination of skillful manoeuvring and determined defiance, the Nasakom threat and the proposal for a 'fifth force' of armed workers and peasants were both dealt with effectively. Against a backdrop of rapidly rising prices, spiralling inflation, falling production, and the collapse of much of the country's essential economic infrastructure, Indonesian politics began to take on an air of

---

63 For details of the army leadership's tactics against the PKI and the president, see Crouch 1978: 86-94.
heightened expectancy. In August and September there was new evidence that Sukarno was seriously ill. As tension mounted, the possibility of a coup was the subject of frequent speculation and rumour.

* * * * * * *

It was against this background of political turmoil that a new generation of young Indonesians grew up in the years after their country's achievement of independence. Soe Hok-gie was one member of that generation, but one who took an unusually keen interest in political events and national affairs. Some of this is reflected in the strong moral views and political judgements about the country's leaders that from time to time he had jotted down in his private diary. During the early 1960s Soe made the transition from school to university where he was to find a larger and more diverse circle of friends and acquaintances to stimulate his thinking about the world around him. It was here also that he was to be confronted with the opportunity to translate his ideas into political action.

---

64 The rapid deterioration of the economy during 1964 and 1965 is outlined in Mackie 1967: 41-2.
Chapter 3

THE EARLY UNIVERSITY YEARS: A POLITICAL ACTIVIST EMERGES

In August 1961, both Soe Hok-gie and his older brother successfully completed their secondary schooling and decided to continue their education at university. The pressure for admission to Indonesia's state and private universities had increased dramatically by the beginning of the 1960s as the rapid expansion of secondary schooling began to be felt at the tertiary level. Each of the Soe brothers applied to a number of institutions to ensure a place. During September both learned that they had been admitted to the faculties of their first choice at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta. Hok-djin, who had taken the science stream at Canisius, entered the Faculty of Psychology, while Hok-gie elected to pursue the subject that had captured his interest during his final school years by enrolling in the Faculty of Letters (Sastra) as a student in the History Department.

Entrance to the university and participation in its community added an important new dimension to his intellectual and emotional world. The debates and discussions on and around the campus in which he eagerly took part, and the new friendships and alliances he formed there with a range of groups and individuals, gave shape and meaning to his germinating perceptions of Indonesian politics and society. Above all, these experiences stiffened his determination to reject the policies of the Sukarno government and ultimately led to his commitment to work actively to bring about its downfall.

---

1 For a general discussion of the impact of demographic trends on the Indonesian education system during the late 1950s and early 1960s, see Harsja Bachtiar 1968, and Thomas 1969.
Despite the rapid expansion in the number of state and private universities and other institutions of higher education during the late 1950s and early 1960s, the University of Indonesia occupied a commanding position as one of the prestige tertiary institutions in the country. Though established as a university only in January 1946, during the Dutch re-occupation of Jakarta in the midst of the independence struggle, it traces its origins back to the establishment in Batavia of a Higher Law School in 1924 and a Higher Medical School in 1927. The only other institutions to rival its position in the tertiary education sphere in the early 1960s were the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), which emerged from the Higher Technical School that had been established there in 1920, and Gajah Mada University in Yogyakarta, established in the late 1940s when that city was the Republican capital during the independence struggle.

During the 1950s the University of Indonesia was emerging only gradually from its colonial origins. Until the mid fifties, many of its senior teaching staff were Dutch and the Dutch language remained the medium of instruction in many areas of the curriculum. However, after the takeover of Dutch firms in late 1957 and the subsequent sudden exodus of Dutch nationals, the character of the institution changed rapidly as Indonesian staff assumed all senior positions within the university and teaching came to be conducted entirely in the national language.

Of the various faculties that had been established, Law and Medicine remained the most prestigious, although Economics steadily developed in size and reputation throughout the 1950s. In contrast with Bandung, which had become the centre for the

---

2 For a brief account of the meagre colonial origins of the Indonesian university system and its subsequent development and expansion after independence, see Bachtiar 1968: 180-6. See also Thomas 1973.
3 Bachtiar 1968: 184
pure and applied sciences, Faculties of Science and Technology were slow to develop on the University of Indonesia campus and were not actually formed until the late 1950s.4

The development of the social sciences and the humanities was also strongly influenced by the university's colonial beginnings. Although a Faculty of Letters had been established in Jakarta as early as 1940 as part of the plan to establish a single institution based on the existing Higher Schools, the departments it encompassed and the teaching and research it conducted were dominated by Dutch colonial academic traditions where philology, languages and literature were the principal areas of interest. Consequently, disciplines such as political science, sociology and modern history were not included in the structure of the curriculum during the first phase of the institution's development.

When Soe Hok-gie enrolled as a student in late 1961, the Faculty of Letters was one of the smallest and least prestigious in the university.5 The largest of its departments seems to have been anthropology, and the remainder, apart from archaeology and history, were concerned with the teaching of languages and literature. These included Indonesian, English, Chinese, Javanese, Arabic and Russian. Some departments had no more than a handful of students in any year and the total enrolments in the whole faculty probably never rose much beyond five or six hundred during the early 1960s.

Nevertheless, the Faculty of Letters possessed a certain esprit de corps that was readily apparent to each new intake of students. The small numbers of both students and staff created a greater sense of intimacy where individuals were soon known by most other members of the faculty. In addition, a separate institutional identity prevailed after the Faculty of Letters was relocated in 1960 away from the main University of Indonesia campus at Salemba, on the edge of Menteng in central Jakarta, to an entirely new campus

---

4 A Faculty of Agricultural Science at Bogor, which was originally part of the University of Indonesia, was transformed into the Bogor Institute of Agriculture (IPB) in 1963.

5 This account of the Faculty of Letters is derived from a number of interviews in Jakarta and elsewhere with students who were Soe Hok-gie's contemporaries during the early 1960s.
at Rawamangun, several kilometres away on the eastern perimeter of the city. The faculty's various departments were established there in a complex of new buildings containing classrooms and offices, a central library, and a large auditorium. There was also a housing complex for staff and dormitories for students nearby. The buildings on the new campus, though adequate, were hardly inspiring and lacked the imposing scale and sense of tradition associated with the university's Salemba headquarters. Nevertheless, the isolation from the university's main campus reinforced a sense of distinctiveness that pervaded the Faculty of Letters, which to a very large extent operated as a separate and autonomous unit under the control of its dean and with its own bureau of student affairs handling admissions and registration.

Soe Hok-gie began his university career there by taking part in the faculty's initiation program in the final week of September 1961. Mapram (*Masa Prabakti Mahasiswa*), the period of initiation for new university students most commonly known as *perpeloncoan*, had become a traditional and indeed a compulsory part of the university calendar by the late 1950s. An essential feature of the program was a series of ordeals directed by senior students that were designed to intimidate and ridicule the newcomers, who were often compelled to shave their heads and wear absurd costume. Like most of the other initiates Soe found much of the process humiliating and degrading. Yet he was determined to endure the taunts and insults of the senior students since he realised that it was something that all students had to experience, even those from privileged and protected backgrounds. In any case, Mapram was an opportunity to meet students from across the faculty, including many of the senior students. Soe made the acquaintance of

---

6 The University of Indonesia's Faculty of Medicine occupied buildings at Salemba which had once been the headquarters of the STOVIA, the original school established in the late nineteenth century for training 'native' doctors and from where, in 1908, a group of aristocratic Javanese medical students had launched Boedi Oetomo, one of the earliest manifestations of the nationalist movement.

7 Mapram had its origins in the practices of some of the early elite student clubs and societies where initiation activities were modelled on Dutch student fraternities. In most cases the program consisted of harmless pranks, although in some institutions matters occasionally were taken to extremes. Soe's experiences during his Mapram are described in his diary (SHG Diary, 20 October 1961).
several individuals during that week who were to become close friends over the next few years.

History had only emerged as a distinct discipline within the Faculty of Letters in the late 1950s. The fledgling department, headed by Dra Marwati Pusponegoro, was still very Dutch, had only a few trained historians able to offer courses and the number of students was still small. In keeping with the style of education offered by other departments within the faculty, Soe and his fellow history students received a remarkably narrow and rigid training in their chosen discipline during the five years of study that was required for the full sarjana degree. There was little opportunity to supplement their study of history with any sociology, economics, or philosophy, although there were additional courses in foreign languages such as English for those students who needed them. Students were required to take several history courses each year. Ancient and European history was taught but the emphasis was on Indonesian history, with courses covering the history of the archipelago from ancient times to the modern era. Since there were so few trained historians in the department, some courses were offered by members of other departments such as Chinese and Indonesian Studies.

In spite of these limitations Soe threw himself into his studies with great enthusiasm during his first year at university. A serious and committed student, he was eager to follow his own interests and intent on creating his own challenges through his wide reading and independent study. He soon came to the attention of his teachers and contemporaries as one of the most promising students in the faculty.

---

8 This paragraph draws on interviews with Onghokham, 5 February 1982, and R.Z. Leiressa, 20 February 1985.
9 After three years of formal study and the successful completion of a minor thesis, students were accredited with the sarjana muda degree. After a further two years of courses and the submission and defence of a major thesis, students were admitted to the full sarjana degree. Although in theory this was a five-year program, in practice most students took much longer to complete their studies. There was also a significant number who never reached the final stage of thesis work and who never qualified for the full sarjana.
Pessimism and a crisis of confidence

Yet below the surface, he seems to have found the first months of student life deeply troubling. During his reflective moments Soe's private thoughts were clouded by anxiety and confusion, while his mood was one of growing pessimism as he contemplated the world around him. A number of prominent themes recur in the occasional diary entries written during these months, some of them reflections upon problems that had been troubling him since his Canisius years. There is a repeated rejection of any belief in a God in the conventional sense and a strong hostility towards organised religion, Christianity in particular, which he regarded as a total distortion of Christ's teaching. His own kernel of belief centred around a firm commitment to certain essential human values:

For me there is something that is of the utmost value and reality in life: 'the capacity to love, to be compassionate, to feel sorrow'. Without all of that, we would be nothing more than inanimate objects. Fortunate is the person who still possesses feelings of love, who has not yet lost this thing of supreme value. If we lose that, then our lives become absurd.

In addition, Soe remained perplexed and troubled by several fundamental problems of human existence. To what extent, he wondered, are men and women capable of controlling their own destinies - or is everything guided and controlled by some greater power beyond human experience? His thoughts on this dilemma were compounded by a deep sense of pessimism about the meaning and purpose of life.

These inner doubts and confusion and his overriding pessimism are evident in one long diary entry written at the end of March 1962, and prompted by a conversation with a fellow student and Catholic activist, Harimurti:

According to Professor Beerling, a person can only live as long as he still has hope. But now I'm wondering how far anyone can remain genuine when he doesn't get anything. Anyone is prepared to make a sacrifice for something, say ideas, religion,

---

10 SHG Diary, 10 and 16 December 1961
11 SHG Diary, 16 December 1961
12 Futility, emptiness, misery, suffering, treachery, tragedy: these are the words that are prominent in the intense and often confused diary entries Soe wrote during these months as he attempted to grapple with his own gloom and apparent despair. There are also several reflections upon death. SHG Diary, 5, 15 and 22 January 1962
politics or a lover. But can they make a sacrifice for nothing? I'm now in the midst of thinking about this. Extremely pessimistic and hoping for nothing. I don't have any faith in the integrity of prevailing ideas, I don't believe in God in the sense of religion as such. But I want to live. I don't know what motive lies in my own unconscious mind. My rather gloomy opinions, in fact this scepticism, Harimurti calls destructive. He says that in the past he was influenced by Berdjajev nihilism but now he possesses something positive (Catholicism perhaps). But what if life is one debacle after another? Must we ignore these facts? I think not. As far as I'm concerned a religious person doesn't face up to this. Yes, why must we ignore it? Harimurti also says, so that as a history student I look for something [that] lies in our future, but what if there is nothing there. The more I study history, the more pessimistic I am, the more critical and sceptical I am about anything. But surely there is some reason why I'm like this. It seems as though I have already accepted life for nothing as a fact. Perhaps there is some other motive behind it. Maybe I want to make a sacrifice or feel like a hero ... [illegible] is understood. Who knows? Will peace of mind be achieved if I make a sacrifice? For instance, always burdening myself in situations that people find most disagreeable. If this really is to be the basis of my outlook on life, the situation will be rather peculiar. I've never done anything just for show. A moral perspective only feels content with the happiness of all. Now it seems too soon to analyse myself. Moreover in the past I always ridiculed older people who talked about and believed in destiny. The more I read the more I realise that there is some supernatural force, irrational and unable to be understood, that is controlling the whole of society and all individuals. It's as if human beings are unable to prevent it. Is the sense of betrayal an absolute force? I don't know. But I think it is. Several months ago I believed history was a locomotive created by human beings, but humans themselves are unable to control it. Now I'm more inclined to say that human beings are commanded to create such a locomotive, that cannot be restrained or resisted by its own circumstances and humanity is unaware of this. Why did inventing the wheel unconsciously change small groups of contented people in the past, creating a hell within society? Harimurti also says that we (he means the intelligentsia) are the makers of society. But are we able to plan something? If I become part of the making or shaping [of] the society it would be a very peculiar situation. Man in the past had to read a magic formula to awaken Dracula but he himself was unable to restrain him and dies. Histoire se repete is more and more logical for me. Who can forget the saying of Herodotus (or Thucydides) The king that had been is that shall be. I add to be human is to be destroyed.

This and other diary entries written during these months reveal a very serious and intense young man struggling to come to grips with some of the deep and abiding dilemmas posed by human existence. His own reading of history appears to have concentrated his attention on such issues, but in any case it would be astonishing, in view of his already declared opinions while still a schoolboy, if the conditions of his own society and the direction of Indonesian politics during the early 1960s were not contributing both to his own gloom and sense of foreboding and also to his thoughts about what active role he himself might play in the near future.

---

13 SHG Diary, 30 March 1962. Professor Beerling was a philosopher who taught at the University of Indonesia. Harimurti was chairman of the Catholic university students' association (Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia, PMKRI).
Resistance to Sukarno's ideology

As is clear from the discussion in the preceding chapter, the figure of President Sukarno and his Guided Democracy ideology and political rhetoric had already begun to have an enormous influence on intellectual life, both depressing to orthodox PSI-type liberals and exhilarating to PNI and more radical elements. Consequently, the academic world was also affected to an increasing degree after 1959. The Faculty of Letters at Rawamangun was not immune to this influence. Soe saw this predominantly as a corrupting process. Two incidents in particular stand out in his diary.

On 27 January 1962 in a public lecture delivered at the University of Indonesia on the occasion of his promotion as a full Professor (Guru Besar), the recently appointed Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Sutjipto Wirjosuparto, launched an extraordinarily personal attack on several of his fellow academic colleagues, in particular Dr G.J. Resink, a professor of international law in the University of Indonesia's Faculty of Law. Resink had rejected as myth the widely held claim that the Indonesian region had been colonised for 350 years.¹⁴ In his public lecture, Sutjipto took issue with Resink's views and sought to undermine them with a variety of historical evidence. However, to the alarm of many of his listeners, including Soe Hok-gie, he went further, claiming that Resink and his supporters held views which were out of step with the opinions of Indonesia's own president and the central ideological tenets of the state. Soe's response was unusually independent for an Indonesian student at that time:

But Sutjipto's method was extremely naive and constituted a debasement of scholarship. He claimed that they were not Manipol-USDEK, not in accordance with Pancasila and so forth. This is a political issue and it was improper in such circumstances to accuse a person of being anti-USDEK. USDEK is a trauma and anyone who is branded non-USDEK is placed in a dangerous position. And he said 'In other words Resink has claimed that 350 years of colonial rule is incorrect, whereas His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Sukarno has acknowledged this in such and such, page so and so, etc, etc.' Heaven knows how many dozen times he quoted and cited Sukarno as the justification for his theories. Sukarno is an inadequate human being

---

but Sutjipto treated him like a prophet and the source of truth. This is the tone of a bootlicker.\textsuperscript{15}

Such a performance by a senior member of his own academic community shocked and appalled him, for it seemed to him no different from attempts elsewhere in the world to defend totalitarianism by stigmatising independent thought and dissident opinions as 'anti-Party' or 'anti-national'.

Two months later Soe was himself directly on the receiving end of exactly the same kind of treatment when he became embroiled in an unpleasant and protracted argument with a group of fellow students about the nature of Indonesian politics and society. He quickly found himself isolated and attacked for his opinions:

I said that I didn't believe that Bung Karno was a socialist, considering the situation in Indonesia at the present time.... One of their number, Adam Batubara, said that we could only accept matters passively without criticism. We only have duties and have no rights whatsoever. According to him, Guided Democracy is nothing more than dictatorship. And humanitarianism (I had said that I placed emphasis on that aspect) was something that has to be tossed aside during the process of development. We have to be ready to shoot 10 million for the sake of the other 80 million. Look at Bung Amir [Sjarifuddin], shot because he committed treason. Basically, in the person of Batubara, we encounter the elements of a dictator. I argued with these views by keeping right away from the present political situation. He had already threatened to report me because I had 'insulted' Bung Kamo (not believing that he was a socialist). I don't want to get involved in this but if I have to face jail because of my convictions I wouldn't be too upset.\textsuperscript{16}

The discussion then switched to the question of the ethnic Chinese inhabitants of Indonesia. Soe immediately found himself confronted by blind prejudice and racist stereotypes, for his opponents, insisting that all Sino-Indonesians were materialistic and treacherous, refused to accept his counter arguments about the changing nature of national identity:

How hard and difficult the struggle for truth is. How persistently pseudo-scientific thinking endures. And how we must fight against it. We act correctly adopting the side of reason and intuition, while they only inflame opinions and then leave just like that. How antagonistic Batubara is towards the Chinese. And his group have not yet been able to learn from Hitler and the experience of history. Now I can understand how the scapegoats of society (in Indonesia = the Chinese) are so easily victimised. Yes, and we must clear a path struggling to eradicate the roots of prejudice which are deep

\textsuperscript{15} SHG Diary, 27 January 1962. Sutjipto also included in his attack Dr Mohammad Ali (Head of the National Archives in Jakarta), the prominent PSI intellectual Soedjatmoko, and Dick Hartoko, a Catholic teacher and writer in Yogyakarta.

\textsuperscript{16} SHG Diary, 12 April 1962
inside the unconscious realm. The weeds of prejudice grow easily while the trees of truth are so difficult.\textsuperscript{17}

Soe's reaction to both these incidents was a clear indication of those unique personal qualities that were to contribute to his stature as a political activist in the years to come, in particular his social conscience and his concern for his responsibilities as an intellectual. Both of these aspects of his personality were reinforced by his evident intelligence and the breadth of his own reading and knowledge.

Yet exposure to hostile anti-Chinese sentiments was clearly a troubling experience. Such an episode undoubtedly contributed to his decision to join a group of like-minded individuals a few months later as they set about establishing an organisation to promote the idea of assimilation as the solution to the problems facing Indonesia's ethnic Chinese community.

**The assimilationists**

Soe Hok-gie's participation in the political manoeuvring within Indonesia's ethnic Chinese community in the early 1960s was prompted initially by his friendship with two fellow students in the Faculty of Letters, Onghokham and Tan Hong-gie.\textsuperscript{18} When Soe first met them in late 1961, both Ong and Tan had already been involved for some time in the continuing public debate about the problems facing the Chinese in Indonesia.

Throughout the 1950s the position of Indonesia's Chinese inhabitants had been called into question on two fronts. Firstly, there was the confused issue of their legal and civil status in the new Republic, centring on the problem of deciding who already legitimately held Indonesian citizenship and who should be entitled to claim it in the near

\textsuperscript{17} SHG Diary, 12 April 1962
\textsuperscript{18} Onghokham was born in Surabaya in 1933, and came from an old *peranakan* family. After completing high school in Bandung, he arrived in Jakarta in 1956, initially to study law at the University of Indonesia. However, after a period working as a research assistant for the American scholar, William Skinner, he abandoned his law course in favour of history, beginning in the Faculty of Letters in 1960. Tan Hong-gie had worked as a journalist for *Star Weekly* during the 1950s before enrolling as a student in the Department of Archaeology in 1960. Interviews with Onghokham, 5 February 1982; and Siswadhi (Tan Hong-gie), September 1978
These questions also required complex and protracted negotiations with the Peoples' Republic of China over the issue of dual nationality. Secondly, there were the problems surrounding the Chinese penetration of all sections of the Indonesian economy. Chinese economic activity aroused considerable antagonism in many quarters, especially from the smaller and less successful indigenous or *pribumi* Indonesian business class. This was most clearly in evidence during the Assaat movement of 1956 (an attempt by a group of *pribumi* businessmen to pressure the government into providing stronger support for their cause), and the moves to ban aliens from conducting retail trade in rural areas that came into effect with the PP10 regulations in late 1959. Towards the end of the 1950s, the heightened tension and emotional trauma surrounding these events contributed to a growing sense of insecurity on the part of the Sino-Indonesian community. As public expressions of hostility and anti-Chinese sentiments became more commonplace, a new debate developed within the Chinese community on proposals for Chinese to become more assimilated to indigenous Indonesians.

*Star Weekly*, a popular magazine widely read by the *peranakan* Chinese throughout Indonesia, was one of the forums where this new approach was canvassed. Towards the end of 1959 and again in early 1960, the magazine published a series of articles by Onghokham that attempted to address some of the serious problems facing Indonesia's ethnic Chinese community. In the last of these articles, Ong suggested that the only way for the Chinese to overcome the prejudice and discrimination that were so widespread in Indonesia was for the members of the minority Chinese community to 'assimilate' themselves into the majority indigenous community.

---

20 On the Assaat movement, see Feith 1968: 481-7; and Somers 1965: 154-7. On the retail trade ban, see Mackie 1976a: 82-97; and Somers 1965: 194-223.
21 *Star Weekly*, edited by Auwjong Peng Koen (P.K. Ojong, 1920-80), was published by the same company that produced the Jakarta daily *Keng Po*. Both *Star Weekly* and *Keng Po* were forced to cease publication during 1960 after contravening martial law press regulations.
22 *Star Weekly*, 27 February 1960
A month later, in March 1960, a group of ten prominent Sino-Indonesians signed a manifesto advocating voluntary assimilation as the solution to the Chinese community's problems. During the months that followed, the correspondence columns of *Star Weekly* were filled with letters by supporters and opponents of the assimilation concept. The strongest criticism came from spokesmen representing Baperki (*Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia*, the Consultative Body for Indonesian Citizenship), the organisation that had been founded in 1954 to promote Indonesian citizenship for ethnic Chinese and combat all forms of discrimination.

Baperki had come into existence as a broadly-based and ideologically non-aligned body with the quite specific mandate of representing the interests of the ethnic Chinese. However, as politics became more strongly polarised in the 1956-58 period it had moved to a left position, partly because of the close personal relations between its chairman Siauw Giok Tjhan and President Sukarno. Consequently, a number of prominent figures with links to the PSI and others who were Catholics and Protestants had resigned their membership. Nevertheless, Baperki retained firm support within the Chinese community since it continued to provide a strong public defence of Indonesia's Chinese against all forces of discrimination.

The critics of assimilation claimed that any such policy would be a fundamental infringement of individual human rights, arguing instead for the acceptance and integration of the Chinese within the Indonesian nation as a separate and distinct ethnic minority (or *suku bangsa*) retaining its own social and cultural identity.

---

23 *Star Weekly*, 26 March 1960. The signatories included Onghokham, Auwjong Peng Koen and Injo Beng Goat, the editor-in-chief of *Keng Po*. The remainder were prominent *peranakan* academic and professional identities. A key participant was Drs Lauw Chuan Tho, an economist educated at the Nederlandse Economische Hogeschool in Rotterdam who had only recently returned from the Netherlands. Lauw was already an ardent advocate of assimilation, and quickly became one of the leading organisers of the movement during the following months.

24 See, in particular, the letters in *Star Weekly* by Siauw Giok Tjhan (2 April 1960) and by Yap Thiam Hien (16 and 30 April, and 21 May 1960).


26 For a detailed account of the conflicting views of the assimilationists and the integrationists, see Coppel 1976: 44-63; Coppel 1983: 43-51; and Somers 1965: 251-81.
integrationists had the support of the majority of the Sino-Indonesian community in this debate. The assimilationists, however, began to attract some followers. By the end of 1960 they were able to organise a 'National Consciousness' seminar that met at Bandungan in Central Java in January 1961 with participants from various parts of Java. The seminar produced an Assimilation Charter that called for

... the entry and acceptance of individuals of Chinese descent into the single body of the Indonesian nation in such a way that the special group they have originally belonged to will eventually cease to exist.22

When Soe Hok-gie entered the Faculty of Letters in late 1961 the debate over assimilation was well under way. As a result of his friendship with Ong and Tan, Soe quickly became a participant in their discussions about the Sino-Indonesian community.28 During the following months he was introduced to some of the older supporters of the assimilation movement, including Auwjong Peng Koen.

As a young and idealistic Indonesian, educated in Indonesian-language schools during the post-war period, without any strong ties to the wider peranakan Chinese community, and with little interest in its distinctive traditions and culture, Soe was easily drawn to the assimilation cause. In a sense he was already a perfect example of an assimilated Chinese. He identified completely with the country of his birth and was intensely concerned about its history, its present condition and its future. He mixed easily with Indonesians from across a wide ethnic spectrum. At the university, although some of his close friends were ethnic Chinese, many more were not. Yet these same qualities made it hard for him to be sympathetic or understanding of those Sino-

22 The Assimilation Charter was issued on 15 January 1961. For the complete text and a list of the thirty signatories, see Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa 1965: 29-31. An English translation appears in Suryadinata 1979: 152-3. As Coppel (1978: 54) has observed, the advocates of assimilation never came to grips with certain fundamental questions about what such a process actually involved. In particular, they failed to identify the nature of the cultural identity that they were expecting Sino-Indonesians to adopt. Was it one of the numerous indigenous suku cultures such as Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese or Malay? Or was it the modernised and Westernised superculture of Indonesia's major urban centres? This was never made explicit and neither were the other numerous practical problems associated with such a policy.

28 Interviews with Onghokham, 5 February 1982; and Siswadhi (Tan Hong-gie), September 1978. Soe Hok-gie's diary entries during this period contain only a few scattered cryptic comments on this issue, although there is one lengthy account of a discussion with Tan about the reasons why Sino-Indonesians were invariably among the best students in the Faculty of Letters (SHG Diary, 8 February 1962).
Indonesians from quite different social backgrounds. He rejected the exclusivism that he observed among many of his fellow Sino-Indonesians, especially when it was combined with what he judged to be an obsession with the world of business and money, qualities that he believed contributed to the prejudice and racism that was so widespread within the community. Since he himself did not come from a family with a background in trading or commerce, he was inclined to be dismissive of those Sino-Indonesians who were involved in these pursuits, judging them to be too 'money-minded' or 'middle-class'.

Soe’s interest in the issue of assimilation in particular and his understanding of the position of Indonesia’s ethnic Chinese community in general were given a further stimulus in mid 1962 when he began to work as an assistant for Mary Somers, an American doctoral candidate in political science who was conducting research on the politics of the *peranakan* Chinese. For the next twelve months he was employed on a part-time basis to read the files of various *peranakan* Chinese newspapers of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s held in the Central Museum Library, in particular the Surabaya daily *Sin Tit Po*, and the Jakarta *Hong Po* and *Kung Yung Pao*. This research work strengthened Soe’s commitment to the discipline of history and gave him skills that he was to apply in pursuing his own research interests in the years that followed. It also deepened his understanding of the historical processes that underpinned the politics of the *peranakan* Chinese community in Indonesia throughout the twentieth century and extended his knowledge of some of the most important figures in that circle. These were insights that Soe was soon able to place at the disposal of the assimilation movement, for

---

29 SHG Diary, 22 July and 12 August 1962. These diary entries contain cryptic comments about his ‘aversion to *peranakan* society’ for these reasons. As for the *totok* Chinese community, Soe seems to have had no point of contact whatsoever.

30 Soe had been recommended to Somers by his friend Onghokham who was already well known to Cornell scholars since his work for G. William Skinner several years previously. Although Soe was already nineteen at the time, his slight figure and boyish appearance made him look much younger and Somers at first doubted that he would be mature enough for the task. However, he not only soon proved to have good judgement and a keen sense for the issues in which she was interested, but he also helped her establish contact with older *peranakan* leaders who had been active in politics or journalism during the pre-war and World War II periods. Personal communication, Mary Somers Heidhues.

31 Coincidentally, *Hong Po* was the newspaper where his father Soe Lie Piet had been employed as a journalist for some time from the late 1930s. Yet there is nothing in the careful notes he took for Somers to indicate whether he was aware of this fact or discussed his research with his father.
in the latter half of 1962, steps were taken to place that movement on a proper organisational footing.

After signing the Assimilation Charter in January 1961, Lauw Chuan Tho and others had established a Committee for Assimilation Information (*Panitia Penyuluhan Asimilasi*) and had set about looking for wider support for the movement. In the politically charged atmosphere of Guided Democracy it was essential for the movement to have powerful supporters if it was to survive (especially since Baperki had the strong support of the PKI). Not surprisingly, the assimilationists approached certain sections of the armed forces and found that General Nasution (Minister of Defence and army chief of staff) and a number of his subordinates were supportive. As a result, the Bureau for the Promotion of National Unity (*Urusan Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa*, UPKB) was established under the sponsorship of the army's front organisation, the Body for Developing the Potential of Functional Groups (*Badan Pembina Potensi Karya*, BPPK), which was the army's counterweight to the National Front. Early in August 1962 Soe attended the formal installation in Jakarta of the UPKB, where he met Lauw Chuan Tho and some of the other supporters of assimilation, including a number of *pribumi* sympathisers.32

When it was announced several months later that martial law would end in May of the following year - a victory for Sukarno over his army partners in power - it became clear that the assimilationists would have to find a new patron since the increasingly powerful National Front appeared likely to take advantage of this situation to eliminate the BPPK, its army-sponsored rival.33 From this point on Soe became closely involved with the core group of assimilation activists who decided that it was necessary to establish an independent body to promote the cause.

---

32 SHG Diary, 12 August 1962
33 Coppel 1976: 56. Many of the leading figures in the National Front, such as its Minister, Sudibjo, were ardent leftists who were believed to be unsympathetic to the assimilation cause.
After seeking and obtaining President Sukarno's approval for their ideas in February 1963, this group hastily arranged an Assimilation Conference (*Musjawarah Asimilasi*) for 10-12 March in advance of a Baperki congress that was to begin several days later. At the conference, the formation of an Institute of Promoters of National Unity (*Lembaga Pembina Kesatuan Bangsa*, LPKB) was announced. Soe was one of those elected to the organisation's central leadership which was headed by a Navy legal officer, Sindhunatha.

This appeared to be a promising beginning, but the following weeks and months proved to be an extremely difficult period for the new organisation. Despite his early expression of support for assimilation, President Sukarno continued publicly to praise Baperki and its policies. When serious anti-Chinese riots broke out in several parts of West Java in May, Baperki leaders projected themselves as defenders of the rights of Indonesia's Chinese community. Consequently, the LPKB leaders felt dangerously isolated and began to press for some formal association with the government. On 18 July the LPKB (the organisation's name now changed to *Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa*, the Institute for the Promotion of National Unity) was placed by presidential decree under the control of the Department of Information and its minister, Roeslan Abdulgani.

---

34 In addition to the continued backing of their allies within the army, the assimilationists had actively canvassed support from other quarters. Various prominent political figures including Sunarjo of the PNI, Ipik Gandamana (Minister for the Interior and Regional Autonomy), Roeslan Abdulgani (Minister for Information), Chaerul Saleh (Minister for Basic Industries and Mining, and chairman of the MPRS) and Muljadi Djokomartono (Chairman, Muhammadiyah) either attended the conference or sent messages of support. For details of the conference and its resolutions, see *Assimilasi dalam rangka pembinaan kesatuan bangsa* 1963.

35 Kristoforus Sindhunatha (formerly Ong Tjong Hai) was born in Jakarta in 1933. He studied law at the University of Indonesia during the late 1950s when he became deputy chairman of PMKRI, the Catholic university student society. After graduating in 1961, he joined the legal affairs bureau of the Indonesian Navy. Interview, 1 March 1985; *Apa dan Siapa* 1986: 852-3

36 Onghokham and Tan Hong-gie were also elected to the LPKB leadership along with several *pribumi* supporters of assimilation. See *Assimilasi dalam rangka pembinaan kesatuan bangsa* 1963: 58 and 70.

37 Coppel 1976: 56-8

37 On this change in the organisation's status, see *Assimilasi dalam rangka pembinaan kesatuan bangsa* 1964.
During the following two years Soe played a prominent part within the councils of the LPKB. He was particularly active in the planning and research section of the institute's work, where his knowledge of history and his research skills were called upon and where a number of academics and intellectuals collaborated on specific projects. Soe helped produce a number of information booklets and pamphlets setting out the LPKB's views on assimilation. He was especially concerned to locate the issue of Chinese assimilation within the broader context of Indonesia's historical development as an independent nation. Soe argued that national unity had been threatened throughout the course of the nationalist movement and the subsequent struggle for independence by groups attempting to maintain narrow sectional interests. In addition, the policies of the Dutch colonial government had promoted divisions within society along racial, ethnic and regional lines. This had been a deliberate tactic to maintain colonial power by strengthening ethnic identities and fostering racial prejudice to the detriment of national unity. Viewed from this perspective, 'assimilation' was a policy that was inherently patriotic, drawing inspiration from the example set by such early nationalist figures as Douwes Dekker, Dr Tjipto Mangunkusumo and Ki Hadjar Dewantoro. On the other hand, the LPKB argued that 'integration' had more in common with those who had tried to elevate minority interests over the interests of the nation at large.

In the latter half of 1963, Soe was appointed to the editorial board of Gelora Minggu, an apparently short-lived weekly published by the private foundation established to support the LPKB's work. In May of the following year, the LPKB established its own journal, Bara Eka. Soe, who was also a member of its editorial board, wrote a

---

38 This section of the LPKB was initially under the leadership of Drs Jahja Wullur (formerly Oei Tjin San), a social psychologist at Padjadjaran University, Bandung, and the president of the LPKB's West Java branch. For certain details of the LPKB's operations and Soe Hok-gie's role within the organisation in this and the following paragraphs, I am indebted to Charles Coppel who made available information he obtained from LPKB official archives held by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Jakarta.

39 See Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa 1964. Soe was one of the compilers of this anthology which combined excerpts from the speeches and writings of Sukarno, Ki Hadjar Dewantoro, Muhammad Yamin and Roeslan Abdulgani. Soe included an article he had written himself on the Youth Oath of 1928, 'Sumpah Pemuda (28 Oktober 1928) detik kelahiran bangsa Indonesia sebagai satu nasion' (The Youth Oath [28 October 1928] the moment of birth of the Indonesian people as one nation), pp 65-71. See also Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa 1965a. This was a shorter pamphlet written with Drs C.S.T. Kansil. The material was reprinted in an article of the same title in Bara Eka, 3/13, March 1966.
number of articles for this monthly magazine throughout the following eighteen months. These included brief studies of the work of particular individuals whom he believed were among the pioneers of the spirit of assimilation and national unity that the LPKB's work was directed towards promoting.  

Soe was one of the youngest of the LPKB's activists. Despite this, his views were listened to with respect by the older members of the organisation who recognised his intelligence and his seriousness of purpose. However, difficulties arose between Soe and his fellow assimilationists once the LPKB was placed under the authority of the Department of Information in July 1963. The LPKB's political rival, the left-aligned Baperki, was a larger and much more powerful organisation. It continued to have the ear of President Sukarno, and also received substantial financial support from the Sino-Indonesian business community. The LPKB, on the defensive politically and with limited financial resources, was struggling to build an effective national organisation with branches throughout the country. Consequently, the institute's leadership was eager to secure whatever recognition and material and financial resources it could through becoming an official organ of government.

But the LPKB's acquisition of official status caused Soe some uneasiness. That uneasiness turned to alarm during 1965 when he discovered that the private foundation that had been established to support the LPKB's work had arranged to accept a 'deferred payment permit' from the government's Central Bank. After his appointment as Minister for Central Bank Affairs in November 1963, Jusuf Muda Dalam had transformed the bank into his personal political fiefdom. His own profligate life-style

---

40 'Pelopor kesatuan bangsa: Dr Tjipto Mangunkusumo' (Pioneer of national unity - Dr Tjipto Mangunkusumo), Bara Eka, 1/1, May 1964; 'Liem Koen Hian dan perjuangan pembinaan bangsa' (Liem Koen Hian and the struggle for nation building), Bara Eka, 2/6, July-August 1965. See also his article 'Ichter sar sedjarah tjiä assimilasi' (An outline of the history of assimilation ideals) in the same issue.

41 Interview with K. Sindhunatha, 1 March 1985

42 As the Indonesian economy plummeted into decline in the final years of Guided Democracy and as inflation rocketed out of control, the value of the rupiah was rapidly eroded and foreign exchange became increasingly difficult to obtain. In such circumstances, bureaucrats and government officials with the right connections were able to obtain these permits and sell them on at high profits to businessmen urgently in need of foreign exchange credit facilities.
and corrupt reputation were common knowledge in Jakarta political circles. The bank’s resources were used to finance many of the president's favourite grandiose construction projects but it was also a source of patronage and largesse for those with political connections. Consequently, Soe regarded any LPKB involvement in such dubious business affairs as totally unacceptable. When he spoke out against the matter within LPKB circles in the latter half of 1965 he was opposed by those who adopted a more pragmatic point of view, and who argued that the organisation urgently needed these funds if it was to operate effectively. Soe, however, refused to compromise with what he regarded as a matter of principle. After a bitter confrontation inside the LPKB leadership, in particular with the Catholic Party activist Harry Tjan who was a prominent member of the LPKB's supporting foundation, Soe finally tendered his resignation at an LPKB meeting in January 1966.

The LPKB involvement was Soe's first practical experience of political activism. Although the LPKB circle included a few individuals who shared many of Soe's views about the Sukarno government, the assimilationists as a group were forced to court the president's support if their movement was to survive. Ironically, it was this political imperative that provided Soe with several unique opportunities to meet face to face with the man whose personal style and policies he had come to despise.

43 On Jusuf Muda Dalam’s period in charge of the Central Bank, see Glassburner 1971: 363-83.
44 Interviews with K. Sindhunatha, 1 March 1985; and Harry Tjan Silalahi, 22 February 1985. Some of the funds that the LPKB obtained were used to purchase vehicles for the institute's work. Soe Hok-gie's mother (interview with Nio Hoi An, 5 February 1985) recalled that he had been given an LPKB motor-scooter in 1965 but passed it on to a friend in the organisation. According to Arief Budiman (interview, 12 September 1995) Soe had learned of a plan to purchase houses which were to be made available to some of the LPKB pribumi supporters. Correspondence in the LPKB archives indicates that the organisation was certainly involved in some questionable financial dealings.
45 SHG Diary, 8 January 1966. Soe's diary entry mentions a conflict and his resignation but gives no details.
Meeting the Great Leader of the Revolution

On 22 February 1963, Soe was one of the small group of assimilationists who visited President Sukarno to seek his endorsement for their activities.46 The deputation had been arranged suddenly by an intermediary and there was some initial uncertainty about who should represent their movement. At first Soe's friend Onghokham was considered, but because of his authorship of the Star Weekly articles that had created so much controversy, it was finally decided that it would be more prudent not to include him. Soe himself had no suitable clothes for such an occasion but at the last moment a jacket several sizes too large was hastily borrowed. The party, consisting of five Sino-Indonesians and four pribumi supporters, assembled at the presidential palace in Jakarta at 6 am before being ushered in to Sukarno's presence for an early morning meeting.47 Also present throughout the discussions were Chaerul Saleh, the Minister for Basic Industries and Mining and Chairman of the Provisional Peoples' Consultative Assembly, and Dasaad, a wealthy businessman. Both men were prominent members of the presidential palace circle during the early 1960s.

The members of the delegation were introduced by Colonel Soetjipto, one of the senior army officers who had supported the assimilationist cause during the previous year.48 Sindhunatha, as spokesman for the group, then outlined the assimilationists' position and explained their proposal for solving the problem of minorities in Indonesia.

---

46 Soe's detailed account was written two days later (SHG Diary, 24 February 1963). According to a later diary entry (7 January 1966) he visited the presidential palace on at least three separate occasions, although this is the only visit described in his journal. In contrast to the candid comments recorded there, the occasion is also mentioned - in more positive terms - in Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa 1965: 22-3.
47 The delegation consisted of Soe, Sindhunatha, Junus Jahja (the economist, Lauw Chuan Tho, who had only recently changed his name), T.A. Hardjanegara (formerly The Han Liem, a Bandung businessman with interests in the transport sector) and a Dr Arifin. The pribumi members were Soeharto Hasirin (a Department of Foreign Affairs official, recently returned from a posting in the Indonesian embassy in Moscow), Anis Ibrahim (a Minangkabau student who headed the Indonesian Student Press League, IPMI) and Safioedin (an official of the Department of Home Affairs, who was in charge of a bureau with responsibilities for ethnic minorities).
48 Soetjipto was the chief of staff of the Supreme War Command (Peperti) and general secretary of the Consultative Council of the Leadership of the Revolution (MPPR, a Guided Democracy body advising the president).
He concluded by asking for the president's comments and invited his admonishment if he believed that they were in error.

The assimilationists were delighted with Sukarno's response. In general terms the president expressed his agreement with their ideas. He emphasised that he had always been opposed to racism in any form, so any initiative that would strengthen national unity such as intermarriages between ethnic groups had his blessing. During the discussion that followed, the delegation extracted from Sukarno his own novel explanation of Indonesia's national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). The president, with his usual love of foreign words and phrases, explained that the *Bhinneka* (Diversity) should be regarded as *das Sein* (what is), while the *Tunggal Ika* (Unity) implied *das Sollen* (what shall be). Here was a presidential statement that could be used to justify assimilation and undermine the integrationist policies of their Baperki opponents.

Once the delegation's serious business had been dealt with, the conversation became more informal. Sukarno, who apparently had no pressing matters of state that morning, was obviously enjoying himself. Discussion about the problem of the Chinese minority had involved consideration of the issue of marriage. This naturally led the president to reflect on matters in which he claimed special expertise. He began to regale his listeners with his own impressions of how female beauty, as he had observed it at close quarters in various parts of the world, had been enhanced by inter-ethnic marriages.

The president was also eager to hear the latest Jakarta gossip about his Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, and his affairs with various prominent local film stars, one of whom was rumoured to be of part-Chinese descent. The conversation turned to homosexuality. Sukarno gave his views on its causes, described how a homosexual foreign state guest had savagely beaten a local transvestite, and declared that he had been reliably informed that Arab countries were full of transvestites. He was now warming to one of his favourite subjects, sex. To the acute discomfort of at least one member of the
assembled company, he went so far as to reflect on

... what it would feel like to fondle the breasts of a woman who had been injected with
gelastic.

Soe remarked in his diary:


Throughout the course of the conversation whatever seemed inviting was taken up by
Bung Karno, Chaerul Saleh and Dasaad (and Hardjo also it appears) with complete
freedom. I felt rather strange...

As a human being I think I like Bung Karno, but as leader, no. How can there be any
social responsibility with the state led by people like that? Bung Karno, like Ariwijadi,
full of jokes with obscene mobs and with such immoral interests. Especially seeing
the pot-bellied Dasaad who is still attracted to pretty girls. He declared that he would
also have married a Japanese if he had still been young. Bung Karno said that he
wanted something (a helicopter?) as a present and Dasaad said, everything will be fine
when the papers are clear...

I only have one impression, I cannot believe in him as a leader of state because he is so
immoral.49

By the time they left the palace, the audience with the president had lasted nearly
three hours. Soe came away feeling angry and disturbed. Sukarno's sexual exploits
were common knowledge in Indonesia, especially among Jakarta's political public. Yet,
even allowing for Soe's own strong streak of moral prudishness and his relative
innocence with the ways of the world, it had been a bizarre experience. He was shocked
by the president's behaviour, his open display of braggadocio, his obvious coarseness
and his crude immorality. Moreover, this had occurred at a time when publicly Sukarno
was forever promoting the cause of Indonesia's cultural identity (kepribadian Indonesia)
and attacking Western culture for its immorality and decadence.50 Soe was also
dismayed by the other signs of sordid venality he had observed: the easy familiarity of
corrupt figures like Dasaad who were so clearly entrenched within the palace circle; the
sycophantic demeanor of the president's aides; and the female assistants he treated as his
personal sex objects.51

49 SHG Diary, 24 February 1963. Ariwijadi was a friend of Soe's at Rawamangun; 'he would also have
married a Japanese' is a reference to Sukarno's fourth wife, Dewi, whom he had met in Tokyo in 1959.
50 Kepribadian Indonesia was the 'K' in Sukarno's Manipol-USDEK.
51 Soe's views about the president's personal flaws were further strengthened by a chance meeting in
Bandung during the following year with Sukarno's long-forgotten first wife Inggit Garnasih. Soe's
account of their meeting, during which Ibu Inggit described her feelings when Sukarno had abandoned her
for Fatmawati, are related in his Kartini Day essay: 'Tjita2 Kartini dlm pengalaman seorang mahasiswa
Indonesia' (Kartini's ideals in the experience of an Indonesian university student), Kompas, 20 April
1968.
Soe’s diary entry does not indicate what conversations he himself had with Sukarno on this occasion, although his appearance in an ill-fitting jacket guaranteed that his presence did not pass unnoticed. The president, an intensely vain man, punctilious in his own personal appearance and a fastidious dresser, singled out the young student for some humorous banter.  

Little is known about Soe’s other meetings with Sukarno, though these may have occurred at the presidential palace in Bogor. On 18 July 1964, the president hosted a reception for LPKB delegates who were attending a conference held to mark the first anniversary of the organisation’s formation. Soe was almost certainly present on this occasion. According to LPKB official records, on 21 January 1965 Soe travelled to Bogor with Sindhunatha, Anis Ibrahim and members of the Liem family, including Liem Bian Khoen, to present President Sukarno with a bronze deer, a Liem family heirloom.  

Although these visits to the presidential palace did nothing to enhance Soe’s opinion of the Great Leader of the Revolution, Sukarno, for his part, apparently found something attractive about the sharp-eyed young student with the borrowed jacket. After one of his meetings with the president, Soe was offered an official position in a history museum planned to be part of the National Monument in Merdeka Square, one of President Sukarno’s favourite construction projects. But by the time even the first of these visits to the presidential palace took place, Soe was already thinking about ways and means to involve himself in practical efforts to oppose the Sukarno regime. The president’s offer was quietly ignored.

52 SHG Diary, 24 September 1963
53 The Bogor reception is reported in Bara Eka, 1/3, August-September-October 1964.
54 The visit is recorded in a note in the LPKB archives. Catholic supporters of the assimilation movement - both Chinese and *prihumi* - were actively involved in the LPKB’s affairs, though more particularly in the private foundation that supported its work. Liem Bian Khoen (Sofjan Wanandi) is a younger brother of Liem Bian Kie, and had also been a student at Canisius College. In 1965 he was studying economics at UI and was already a prominent activist in PMKRI. Soe also met other Catholic activists in LPKB circles including Cosmas Batubara and Jakob Oetama.
55 It is not known precisely when this occurred, although the presidential offer was common knowledge among Soe’s family and friends. Arief Budiman (interview 11 September 1995) believes that it may have been after a subsequent meeting in Jakarta and may have involved his teacher at the Faculty of Letters, Nugroho Notosusanto, who was a member of the museum’s planning committee.
Gemsos and the urge for action

One group of people who greatly influenced Soe's responses to Sukarno was the Socialist University Students' Movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Sosialis, Gemsos), a small student political organisation that attracted those in student circles who were supporters of the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI). As a schoolboy, Soe had already been drawn to the PSI, especially since he saw in its leader, Sutan Sjahrir, those qualities of integrity and honesty that he admired but seldom found in political leaders. In the period from late 1956 onwards, when President Sukarno began his drive for greater power and authority that led to his eventual successful assault on Indonesia's fragile democratic institutions, it seemed to Soe that the PSI leaders were among the very few politicians who were prepared publicly to voice their opposition. The fact that the PSI's hostile stance towards Sukarno and his policies eventually resulted in its being declared illegal in August 1960 probably contributed to his admiration for the party as a principled political underdog of the Guided Democracy system.

Since its foundation in 1955, Gemsos had never attempted to attract large numbers of students to its membership. Although no formal affiliation with the PSI existed, that party's declining fortunes under Guided Democracy ensured that Gemsos remained a weak and ineffectual organisation. When Soe became a student at the University of Indonesia in the final months of 1961, Gemsos was a small and fairly inconspicuous group. The arrests of PSI leaders, including Sjahrir and the party's former parliamentary leader Soebadio Sastrosatomo, in January 1962 was further reason for Gemsos and campus-based supporters of the PSI to adopt a low profile.

Soe was attracted to Gemsos initially through the friendship he struck with one of its leading Jakarta organisers, Zainal Zakse. When they met at Rawamangun in

56 See Chapter 1, p.39.
57 Interview with Maruli Silitonga, 16 February 1982
58 Zainal Abidin Katung Sikumbang Enang ('Zakse') was born in Binjai, North Sumatra in 1938, the eldest son of a Minangkabau trading family who had settled in that area. For a colourful pen-portrait, see
October 1961, Zakse was already in his second year in the History Department. After completing his secondary schooling at an SMA in North Sumatra where he had already been active in student affairs, Zakse had arrived in Jakarta in 1960 and had immediately joined Gemsos. On the campus he quickly developed a reputation as something of a Bohemian. Like many students from humble out-of-town backgrounds who came to the national capital to further their education, Zakse barely managed to eke out a precarious existence there. His clothes were shabby, he had few personal possessions and he was perpetually short of money. Many students in the faculty regarded him as an oddball. For Soe, whose own family circumstances were relatively modest and who was inclined to regard many of his fellow students as far too bourgeois, these were qualities to be admired.

He was immediately drawn to the Gemsos circle when he learned that Zakse was a determined and principled opponent of the Sukarno regime, for he was delighted to have found someone on the campus with whom he could share his contempt for what he regarded as the hypocrisy and shallowness of Guided Democracy ideology. Zakse, who had managed to find a room in the building that had been the PSI's national headquarters on Jalan Cisadane in Menteng, was able to introduce Soe not only to other Gemsos students in both Jakarta and Bandung but also to some of the older PSI activists who took an interest in building up support within the younger generation.

Towards the end of 1962, as Soe entered his second year at university, he began to look for ways of encouraging his fellow students to adopt a more positive and critical attitude towards the world around them.\(^5^9\) It was already apparent to him, as it was to others in his circle, that President Sukarno's two Guided Democracy partners, the military and the PKI, would face one another in a struggle for power at some time in the future.

---


\(^5^9\) SHG Diary, 4 December 1962
By early 1963, impatient with the stultifying limits upon free speech that Guided Democracy enforced through its censorship of the press and its harassment of political opponents, Soe began to question the role independent-minded intellectuals should play in these circumstances:

Now the situation is increasingly serious. Apparently the struggle between the military and the PKI must reach a decisive point. Whether this will take the form of a clash or just an internal struggle, who knows. Prices are increasingly on the rise, the capitalists are more and more rapacious destroying the people and the nouveau riche are beginning to cause trouble. In this situation, the intelligentsia ought to act, do something. Under no circumstances do I intend to tell them to do something foolish. The scholar's task is to think and be creative. They must be free from all disturbing social pressures. They should be able to think calmly because of that scholarly status (even if they are not scholars). But they cannot escape their social function, to act responsibly when the situation is urgent. Intellectuals who remain silent in such circumstances have lost all their humanity. When Hitler's cruelty began, the Inge School group said no. These German young people had the courage to say 'no'. Although still young they were brave enough to oppose the gangster leadership, that was identical with the Nazi regime. That they died is not a problem for me. They had fulfilled their calling as thinkers. There was no beauty (in the romantic sense) in their punishment but what could be more poetic than speaking the truth.

In Indonesia I think that we have also arrived at the moment to say 'no' to Sukarno. Of course Sukarno is no Hitler. In fact he's a tragic figure and ought to be pitied. But the people around him, both military and civilian, are thieves and scoundrels of no more value than mongrel dogs. I don't know what measures these humanitarian thinkers should take. Do they exist and are they brave enough to speak the truth?...

In a situation like this they should say no to Sukarno's monuments, Sukarno's palaces and Sukarno's wives and prostitutes. Now we need factories, roads, education and moral standards. And Sukarno offers palaces, immorality and monuments that are of no benefit to the people. We are all starving. And in this situation, intellectuals [must] speak honestly and truthfully. That they are frightened, perhaps, but about...? They must overcome fear. Recently I have wanted to issue an appeal concerning the courage to speak out, and if possible have it published. I don't think there is anyone who would want to print it. We need an intellectual framework at the present time. Every effort we can possibly make must be directed towards its creation. And for me, what must be done is to study and try to understand present-day problems.

Drawing on their Gemsos connections, Soe and his friend Zakse decided to organise a discussion group, as a first step towards a more activist approach to these problems. A number of fellow students and young intellectuals were invited to take part and arrangements were made for various prominent Indonesian intellectuals to address the group. The first of these meetings was held at the home of Gemsos's Jakarta
chairman, Maruli Silitonga, only days before Soe's visit to the presidential palace in February 1963. The prominent PSI intellectual and publisher, Soedjatmoko, addressed the meeting and took as his theme the role of intellectuals in Indonesia's development and their failure to comprehend the real nature of its problems. A lively discussion followed as various members of the group attempted to press him on the position they should adopt in facing the current situation and the sort of ideas that should be guiding their actions:

Koko [Soedjatmoko] denied that intellectuals did not have an intellectual framework [konsepsi]. He himself has a konsepsi. The problem now is how to revive Indonesian intellectual life from its paralysis. I then stressed that the people had suffered so much and needed rapid improvements and if we were hoping for a konsepsi that was ready to put into action/mature from the intelligensia then maybe it would be a long time. If we don't have a plan for the future who does? Saudara Soedjono also spoke in the same vein. Koko replied rather hotly. He said that that was their characteristic weakness at present, waiting for a konsepsi. We cannot entrust our fate to a konsepsi, but must be inspired and bear it mind.

The group met on a number of subsequent occasions in the following months. However, after the May 1963 anti-Chinese riots in Bandung in which a number of Gemsos activists were involved and subsequently arrested, their meetings were temporarily abandoned.

In fact 1963 proved to be a decisive year for Soe and other young intellectuals who shared his views about Sukarno and the direction in which the country seemed to be headed. After a period of uncertainty, in September of that year Sukarno decided to press

---

63 Soedjatmoko (1922-1990) was from an aristocratic Javanese family background. His father, K.R.T. Saleh Mangundiningrat, was a medical practitioner educated in the Netherlands who later served in one of the royal courts of Surakarta. Soedjatmoko had abandoned his own medical studies in Jakarta during the Japanese occupation, eventually becoming part of Sutan Sjahrir's circle. He represented the new Republic overseas, including at the United Nations, from 1947 to 1951. As a prominent member of the PSI throughout the 1950s, he was active in both publishing and journalism, editing the weekly Siasat and the daily Pedoman. He was involved in the 'Liga Demokrasi affair' in 1960; after the PSI was banned he spent a semester as a visiting lecturer at Cornell University. See Apa dan siapa 1986: 896-7, Feith and Castles 1970: 482-3.

64 Soe recorded his own summary of Soedjatmoko's talk and the discussion that followed in his diary. SHG Diary, 19 February 1963. Koko was Soedjatmoko's nickname. Soedjono was the Gemsos secretary-general. The term konsepsi is not easy to render simply in English. It was in vogue after President Sukarno's use of it in important political speeches in 1956 and 1957. Soedjatmoko's use of the term in 1963 was an indication of the intensely ideological atmosphere of that time with Sukarno laying down an official position and the PKI strongly asserting an alternative ideology. Their opponents were shackled by their inability to offer a rival set of democratic or liberal ideas that would make any headway against either.

65 See Soe Hok-gie, 'Kenang2an untuk seorang kawan - Zainal Abidin' (Reminiscences for a friend - Zainal Abidin), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No 49, Week 4, May 1967. According to Soe, the meetings were resumed later that year in the form of a cultural discussion group.
ahead with his 'Crush Malaysia' campaign, whereby turning his back on the IMF rescue package for the ailing Indonesian economy that had been announced several months earlier. As the president and his supporters began to direct their energy towards konfrontasi, economic conditions in Indonesia rapidly deteriorated with sharp price rises of basic commodities and an upward surge in inflation. By the end of the year it was clear that Sukarno had significantly shifted the domestic political balance in favour of the left because of the collapse of the Djuanda-led stabilisation scheme. In the highly charged political atmosphere that prevailed, those daring to question the policies of the government ran the danger of being denounced as counter-revolutionaries (kontra-revolusi) who had departed from the 'rails of the revolution'. Such individuals had to be 'crushed' or at least 'retooled'.

One of the most striking illustrations of the ideological conformity that the regime attempted to impose occurred during the 'Manikebu affair' of late 1963. In August a small group of writers and artists associated with the literary journal Sastra, many of them young and relatively unknown figures, joined together to produce what they called a Cultural Manifesto (Manifes Kebudayaan) in support of the cause of freedom of expression and what they called 'universal humanism' in art and literature. Although on the surface the manifesto's principles seemed innocuous (and the accompanying explanatory statement was deliberately couched in obscure language that was difficult to penetrate), it was quickly identified as a direct challenge to the leftist advocates of social realism and 'art in service of the people', in particular those writers and artists who were members of the Peoples' Cultural Institute (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat, Lekra) that was closely aligned with the PKI. In the months that followed a bitter campaign was waged against the manifesto and its signatories with a series of vitriolic attacks in the

---

66 Manikebu was the acronym coined from Manifes Kebudayaan and quickly became a term of abuse used by the group's political opponents. For one account of the affair, including the events that led to it, see Foulcher 1969. For an insider's view, see Goenawan Mohamad 1988 and 1993: 11-54.

67 The text of the Cultural Manifesto appears in Sastra, 9/10, 1963, with the names of twenty-two signatories, explanatory notes and an account of its formulation.

68 On Lekra, see Foulcher 1986.
press and angry denunciations in public speeches. Finally, on 8 May 1964 the Cultural Manifesto was banned by presidential decree. As a result, all the participants found that their artistic work was no longer publicly accepted and several individuals were dismissed from their official positions.

Soe Hok-gie had good reason to be alarmed by these developments. Although he himself was not directly involved in the 'Manikebu affair', his older brother Hok-djin, one of the young writers and essayists associated with *Sastra*, was among those who had signed the manifesto. Soe also knew several of the other participants. Some, like Wiratmo Soekito, the Catholic intellectual who was the principal author of the document, had also taken part in Soe and Zakse's study group during the previous year. Others, like Goenawan Mohamad and Bur Rasuanto, were known to him through his brother Hok-djin.

Since the long silence between the brothers that had begun in their teenage years continued unabated throughout their early university years (a situation that was recognised but not really understood by friends who knew them both), the issues of the Cultural Manifesto and Hok-djin's participation were never openly discussed between them. It appears that Hok-gie did not agree with the Cultural Manifesto group's actions although his reasons for this are not entirely clear. It seems unlikely that he would have had any fundamental objection to the views of the group or the ideas expressed in the published manifesto itself; he may well have considered their actions ill-timed or

---

69 As a schoolboy, Soe Hok-djin had made the acquaintance of H.B. Yassin, the prominent literary critic, and began to submit stories and essays for publication in literary journals. At the University of Indonesia, Hok-djin had pursued an interest in philosophy and aesthetics in the Department of Psychology. When the crackdown on the Manikebu circle began in 1964, he accepted an offer of a year's overseas study in Europe supported by the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Interview with Arief Budiman, 8 March 1982

70 Interviews with Goenawan Mohamad, 14 February 1982; and Bur Rasuanto, 17 March 1982. Many of the Manifesto's younger supporters also used to meet at Jalan Cisadane where Soe's friend Zakse was living.

71 There is an oblique reference to his opposition in his diary (28 February 1964) but the issue is left unexplained.
politically inept, playing into the hands of their political opponents and presenting themselves as an easy target to attack.

Whatever his own opinions about the manifesto actually were, the reaction it provoked was a clear demonstration to him of the escalating tensions and deepening political divisions that were emerging within Sukarno's Guided Democracy by the early months of 1964. The fundamental issue was how to respond to this situation. In the middle of March, after a long argument about Sukarno with his friend and fellow history student Onghokham (who was trying to convince him to consider the president as a successor to the traditional rulers of Java), he wrote in his diary:

If we accept the notion that he is in fact nothing more than a traditional ruler, the problem now is whether we can put the entire future of Indonesia in the hands of a person like this. As far as I'm concerned, clearly not. I also accept Pancasila and Manipol in an honest fashion. However I think these are things that have to be fought for as Indonesia's ideals. If Pancasila and Manipol are just slogans then it's a different matter. The problem now is that we must give meaning to these aspirations to achieve the objective of the revolution. Previously Wiratmo had said to Peransi that we are committed to the aims of the revolution but not to the leadership of the revolution. And as members of the younger generation we have to provide it with some content. Wiratmo really tried to do this with his Cultural Manifesto.

When I spoke with Peransi this afternoon, he was also feeling the same way I was. We have grave doubts about whether there is still any point studying, discussing and so on, while the people are starving everywhere. He was gripped by a powerful urge to act, to take an action.

I told him that these problems had also been bothering me several weeks ago. The important thing is to gather together the necessary forces, because if we don't look after our forces and just continue to study, we will be wiped out by the opposition group. I have already accepted Soedjono's principles that now we must really marshal our forces. In politics morality doesn't exist. As far as I'm concerned politics is something that's utterly dirty, it's filthy mud. But at a certain moment where we cannot restrain ourselves any further, then we will leap into it. Sometimes the moment arrives, as it did previously in the revolution. And if by some chance this moment comes I'm going to leap into this mud.72

72 SHG Diary, 16 March 1964. D.A. Peransi was a student in the Department of Indonesian Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters at UI and a friend of the Soe brothers. He had known them both for some years since he had taught art classes at Canisius College. Though a member of the circle of young artistic and literary figures in which Hok-djin moved, he appears to have shared Hok-gie's doubts about the Cultural Manifesto and was not a signatory. He was, however, an active member of the discussion group that Soe and Zakse had formed early in 1963 (SHG Diary, 14 and 19 February 1963; Foulcher 1969: 440). Soedjono was the Gemsos activist who was also a prominent member of that group.

The full impact of Soe's final sentences is lost in translation:

It seemed to Soe that the time for talking about Indonesia's deteriorating fortunes had long passed. What was now required were practical measures to set matters right. Like his friend Peransi, there was an urgency to become directly involved in these events. Nevertheless, the final sentences of this passage are a powerful reflection of the tension between engaged commitment and a deep sense of revulsion for what he regarded as the corrupting influence of the world of politics. This tension was to re-emerge as a prominent *leitmotiv* in Soe's experiences throughout the years that followed.

For the moment, however, the heightened sense of urgency and the desire for political action increased his frustration with what he had come to regard as certain critical failings within the Gemsos-PSI circle. Although Soedjatmoko continued to command his respect, he was dismayed by the sense of intellectual superiority and arrogance that he believed many PSI people displayed. How far this reflected Soe's own social background in Kebon Jeruk is difficult to say, but he was certainly contemptuous of the life-style and values of many in this circle, seeing them as too comfortable and too bourgeois to have a serious commitment to political action:

> They think that they are the greatest. Their group (the remnants of the PSI) are so comfortable and highly regarded, so bourgeois, that they have become cowards. Socialism for them is just slogans and *lip service*. 'Our enemy is poverty and ignorance' is the emptiest slogan that has ever been touted. That's the reason the PSI has been defeated and is disliked by the people.73

Their socialism he believed was now that of the armchair. Frustrated by their lack of action, he was one of those who popularised the derisive label *'kaum sosialis salon'* (salon socialists) for the PSI remnant.

 Were there other options in 1964 for a man who saw the mainstream PSI people as ineffectual and incapable of providing the kind of active leadership he believed that the situation required? Were there any other political forces inside Indonesia with the courage and political will to oppose the regime, to whom he might give his support?

---

73 SHG Diary, 20 March 1964. His diary entry singles out the former editor of *Pedoman*, Rosihan Anwar, for some especially sharp criticism. Soe saw him as a prime example of someone displaying many of those qualities he deplored about the PSI circle.
The radical left: an alternative path?

Of late I have become more sympathetic to the left. I can accept the arguments of the communist side's literature more easily than that of their opponents. I think this is because between us there is a lot in common. We are both moved by feelings of justice, by social injustice of the crudest kind. We are equally opposed to and revolted by bourgeois morality. And we both have the same ideals of freedom. It's a pity our methods are different. In the present critical situation they are the only ones to strike out and talk boldly about land reform and the corruption of the big shots. Yes, Nyoto has even attacked the immoral goings on at the Hotel Nirwana. Where are the voices of the other parties? Apart from that there are only bold and honest noises from Pak Said...

In my opinion one day there will be a conflict between the populist left and the capitalist right. The beginning of this is already starting to be felt now.74

As a profoundly idealistic young man, moved by a deep sense of social justice, Marxism and the radical aspect of politics it expressed must have exerted considerable appeal to him. This diary entry indicates that Soe was certainly attracted by certain elements of the PKI's radical reform agenda. From his capital city perspective, he was strongly in sympathy with the communists' frequent vigorous attacks on big business, bureaucratic capitalists and official corruption. Although he had no real understanding of rural affairs or first-hand experience of the problems of village Indonesia, his commitment to notions of equality led him to support the PKI's land reform campaign when it was first announced by the party's chairman, Aidit, in the final months of 1963.

Soe would almost certainly have been quite aware that of all the political parties, the PKI alone had earned a reputation for the dedication, hard work and moral probity of its leaders and senior cadres. Furthermore, his own study of modern Indonesian history - both in the formal courses he took at the Faculty of Letters and during his frequent visits to the Museum Library - had alerted him to the important role that a number of radical nationalists and early communists had played during the course of the struggle against colonial domination. These included some of the earliest advocates of racial equality and social justice, men such as Douwes Dekker, Soewardi Soerjaningrat (Ki Hadjar Dewantoro) and Dr Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo who had together founded the Indische

---

74 SHG Diary, 28 February 1964. Nyoto was the PKI's second deputy chairman. Mohamad Said was a prominent educationist and a leader of the Taman Siswa movement noted for his simple style of life.
Partij (Indies Party) in 1912. But he also came across other lesser-known figures, including Mas Marco Kartodikromo, the radical writer, journalist and Sarekat Islam activist who had joined the PKI after its formation in 1920 and who had ultimately perished in Boven Digul following his exile there after the abortive PKI rebellions of 1926. Attracted by his principled opposition to poverty and injustice, Soe prepared a paper on Mas Marco during 1963 for a course he was taking on the history of the nationalist movement. The paper was later rewritten and published in 1965.\(^{75}\)

This small piece of research encouraged him to look more closely at the important role that a group of committed radicals had played within the Semarang branch of Sarekat Islam in the years prior to the formation of the PKI in 1920. Towards the end of his third year in the History Department, as part of the requirements for the \textit{sarjana muda} degree, Soe had to write a short thesis based on original research. This was an ideal opportunity to examine this local strand of the nationalist movement. Detailed studies of this particular episode had not yet appeared and there was only a brief outline of these events in the general accounts of the nationalist movement.\(^{76}\) Soe relied heavily on the available contemporary newspaper sources, especially \textit{Sinar Djawa} and \textit{Sinar Hindia}. He also sought out and interviewed both Semaun and Darsono, two of the principal protagonists in these events.\(^{77}\) The thesis, entitled \textit{Di Bawah Lentera Merah: Riwayat Sarekat Islam Semarang 1917-1920} (Under the Red Lantern: An Account of the Sarekat Islam in Semarang 1917-1920), was successfully submitted in early September 1964.\(^{78}\)

\(^{75}\) See 'Mas Marco Kartodikromo: pahlawan jang dilupakan' (Mas Marco Kartodikromo: A forgotten hero), \textit{Indonesia}, No. 2, August 1965: 100-7. See also his brief essay 'Mas Marco Kartodikromo' published in \textit{Komunikasi}, 10 February 1970. On Mas Marco, see also Tickell 1981.

\(^{76}\) Ruth McVey's masterful account of the early history of the communist movement in Indonesia, encompassing the political role of the Semarang Sarekat Islam activists, did not appear until the following year. See McVey 1965.

\(^{77}\) The two ex-revolutionaries were both then in their mid-sixties and living quietly in Jakarta. Both had retired from active politics, although Semaun had maintained ties with the Murba Party during the 1950s. On the acknowledgements page of his thesis, Soe thanks both of them profusely for their invaluable assistance and for their willingness to read and comment on his work. See Soe 1990.

\(^{78}\) The original copies of this thesis have disappeared from the Faculty of Letters library. In 1990, however, Soe's study unexpectedly appeared as a slim volume published by a group calling itself the Frantz Fanon Foundation. The book was banned by the authorities some months later. See Soe 1990.
Although by no means an uncritical account, the thesis remains a largely sympathetic study of the activities of the Semarang radicals. Soe points out the rather limited understanding of orthodox Marxist-Leninist theory of many of the leaders and the disparate sources of discontent on which the movement drew for its support, including disaffected Islam and traditional Javanese strains of protest. Yet Soe also recognised the idealism of the principal activists, their patriotism and the strength of their determination to fight against poverty, ignorance and social inequality.

In spite of his admiration for some of these pre-war communists, his own fairly humble background and his attraction to some of the causes that the PKI leaders were espousing during the 1960s, Soe never seriously considered joining forces with the radical left-wing forces in Indonesian politics.79 Although he remained unconvinced by the claims of organised religion, Soe's Catholic education had almost certainly laid the foundations for a deep suspicion of the totalitarian dimension to communism that had emerged in the Soviet Union and elsewhere.80 By the early 1960s he was evidently quite strongly influenced by some of the critiques of Stalinist-style communism to which he had access. His diary entries indicate that he had read and been impressed by Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* and some of the works of George Orwell.81

At the Faculty of Letters, Soe never came under the influence of any lecturers or formed close friendships with any fellow students who might have offered him a different perspective on Marxism or the PKI's role in Indonesian politics. There was a small number of known left-wing sympathisers on the teaching staff but none in the History Department and Soe appears to have had little contact with them.82 As for the

---

79 'It's a pity our methods are different'. Apart from this enigmatic sentence, nowhere in his own writing does Soe provide an explicit discussion of his attitude towards communism and the PKI during this period of his life. His diary entries suddenly stop after 20 March 1964 and are not resumed until January 1966.
80 See Chapter 1, pp.40-1.
81 SHG Diary, 27 January 1962
82 The Indonesian Scholars' Association (HSI), the academic body promoted by the PKI, had attracted less than a dozen members in the Faculty of Letters, mostly in the Departments of Chinese Studies, Anthropology and Indonesian Language and Literature. The group was never very active and only began to hold meetings during 1965. Confidential interviews, December-January 1984-5
student body at the Faculty of Letters, Soe developed no close relationships with anyone who held strong left-wing convictions.\textsuperscript{83} The communist-oriented student association, CGMI, attracted only a small number of followers - mostly students from small-town and village backgrounds or students who were implacably opposed to the compulsory initiation program that occurred at the beginning of each academic year.\textsuperscript{84} Soe knew the most prominent students in this circle but never became close to any of them.

Outside the campus world, there was much about the PKI's political role during the Guided Democracy years that he would have found extremely distasteful. He probably found the rabble-rousing, the demonstrative political slogans and the highly emotional and aggressive speeches of many PKI leaders to be excessive and an unnecessary fueling of the already highly-charged political tensions. However, above all he was almost certainly repelled by the alliance that the PKI had managed to forge with President Sukarno during those years. For an uncompromising idealist such as Soe, this was a cynical political power play that betrayed all claim to political principle.\textsuperscript{85}

The single most important influence on his own intellectual development in those years was undoubtedly Drs Nugroho Notosusanto, the outstanding lecturer in the History

\textsuperscript{83} There was one important exception. One of Soe's closest friends in the faculty had been very closely involved with the left in campus politics during his early student years. However, by the early 1960s he had distanced himself from his left-wing acquaintances and had joined the independent-minded students in Soe Hok-gie's circle. Confidential interviews, January 1985.

\textsuperscript{84} The Unified Movement of Indonesian University Students (Consentrasi Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia, CGMI) was formed in 1956 as a result of an amalgamation of three small, local student organisations in Bandung, Bogor and Yogyakarta. It only emerged as a communist-oriented body after 1960, and even then only a small fraction of its members could really be said to be communists. Its leaders were strongly opposed to what they regarded as the pseudo-Dutch attitudes and elitist behaviour of students in the established universities. By 1964-5 it claimed a membership of over 35,000 but few of these were in Jakarta and fewer still at elite institutions such as the University of Indonesia. Most of its support came from places like Yogyakarta and from private institutions such as the Baperki-sponsored Res Publica Universities. Confidential interviews, 14 March 1982 and 23 February 1985. See also Hindley 1964: 196-8; and McVey 1990: 20. The total membership of CGMI at Rawamangun was never more than about twenty. Confidential interviews, December-January 1984-85.

\textsuperscript{85} Ruth McVey (1990: 20) makes the following astute comments on the PKI's failure to attract support among students in the established universities:

\begin{quote}
University students, from elite families and with their eyes on bureaucratic careers, were also not attracted to the PKI. Moreover, the idealists among them were alienated by the corruption and hypocrisies of Guided Democracy, and they considered the PKI particularly culpable for supporting that system, so that (as the post-coup student demonstrations would show) class attitudes and anti-Establishment ideals combined among them to produce a virulent anti-communism.
\end{quote}
Department after his return from overseas in 1962. Nugroho's own research interests were military history, principally the origins and role of the Indonesian armed forces during the revolution. As a former member of the Student Army himself during those years, Nugroho had maintained strong links within the armed forces. In 1964, he was appointed to a research post as head of the Armed Forces History Centre (Pusat Sejarah Angkatan Bersenjata) while remaining in his university position. In addition he took up teaching positions at the Armed Forces Staff and Command College in Bandung and at the National Defence Institute (Lemhanas) in Jakarta. Nugroho's outlook was pro-military and strongly anti-communist, but he was also a man of wide intellectual interests and a mentor of Soe's friend Onghokham. Soe came to his attention as one of the most promising students in the faculty and Nugroho soon singled him out for special attention.

Soe regarded Nugroho as an excellent teacher and valued his advice and encouragement. He would have been impressed by Nugroho's experiences as a youthful nationalist during the struggle for independence, and he knew of and admired his strong anti-Dutch and anti-colonial stance as a student activist throughout the 1950s. From 1963 the teacher-student relationship between the two was an especially close one. In 1965 Soe assisted in one of Nugroho's military research projects by preparing a short

---

86 Nugroho Notosusanto (1931-1985) was born in Rembang, Central Java, into an aristocratic Javanese family. His father, R.P Notosusanto, was Professor of Law at Gajah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Nugroho's life was deeply influenced by his period of fighting in the Student Army (Tentara Pelajar) during the revolution. After completing his schooling in Yogyakarta in 1951, he came to Jakarta where he established a reputation as a short-story writer and student leader. Upon graduating from the Faculty of Letters at the University of Indonesia in 1960, he spent two years of post-graduate study at the University of London. In addition to his teaching responsibilities in the History Department, in 1964 Nugroho was appointed Assistant Rector in charge of student affairs. See Apa dan Siapa 1986: 602-3.

87 Nugroho was close to and a great admirer of Brigadier General Suwarto, the deputy head of the Army Staff and Command College (Seskoad), to whom he was related through marriage. In the early sixties, Suwarto was directly responsible for forging close ties between sections of the army and sympathetic academics in the universities, especially at the University of Indonesia. He was the principal architect of the scheme whereby university staff members conducted courses and seminars at Seskoad in Bandung. See Sundhaussen 1982: 138-41. The cooperation between Seskoad and academia is noted in Soe's diary in late 1962. SHG Diary, 31 December 1962

88 In mid 1967 Nugroho was awarded the titular military rank of Colonel. See Harian KAMI, 17 January 1968.

89 Nugroho had been involved in a sharp exchange with a Dutch writer during the early 1950s for his opposition to the teaching of Dutch in Indonesian schools. See Feith and Castles 1970: 68-71. Soe comments in his diary on Nugroho's role as a leader of the demonstrations to the French embassy in Jakarta in 1958 during the struggle for independence in Algeria (SHG Diary, 7 January 1966).
account of the military campaign against the 1950s regional rebellion in the South Moluccas.90

Although certain unresolved inconsistencies in his political outlook remained, Soe never found sufficient cause to consider seriously joining forces with the left in those years. Despite his admiration for some of the early left-wing nationalists and his sympathy with some of the policies advocated by PKI leaders of the 1960s, events during 1964 and 1965 pulled him into closer alignment with those elements in Indonesian politics that would ultimately set about the complete destruction of the PKI throughout the country.

Gerakan Pembaharuan: conspiratorial politics

During his occasional visits to Jalan Cisadane 6, the ex-PSI headquarters where his friend Zakse had lodgings, Soe had made the acquaintance of an older Gemsos activist whom he was delighted to find shared his views about the state of domestic politics and the failure of the PSI to respond effectively. Henk Tombokan was then in his late twenties and fairly recently returned from Makassar where he had been deeply involved in pro-Permesta activities.91

The regional rebellions that had broken out in Sumatra and Sulawesi during 1956-58 had had serious consequences for the PSI, for one of its most prominent figures, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, former Dean of the Faculty of Economics at the University of

90 See Soe 1965. This appeared as part of a series under Nugroho's general editorship.
91 Henk Tombokan was born in Manado in 1935. After schooling there and in Makassar he moved to Jakarta in the late 1940s to continue his education but never completed his tertiary studies. Soon attracted to the cause of the PSI, he had become a Gemsos activist after that party's failure at the 1955 elections. Detained briefly in Jakarta in March 1957 for distributing the Permesta Charter issued on 2 March, he had joined a small Jakarta student contingent who attended the 'Bhinneka Tunggal Ika' conference held in Makassar in May to attract support for the Permesta cause (Harvey 1977: 58). After several visits to Manado that year, he joined other young people working for Permesta in Makassar until arrested in May 1958 during the crackdown by army elements loyal to the central government. After serving eighteen months in gaol, he finally returned to Jakarta in 1961 following the collapse of the Permesta rebellion. When he first met Soe Hok-gie is unclear, but it was probably not until late 1962 or early 1963, during the period when Soe began to take a serious interest in Gemsos. Interview with Henk Tombokan, 18 February 1982
Indonesia and a cabinet minister on three occasions during the 1950s, had fled Jakarta to join the rebel cause. Sumitro's participation in these events provoked a bitter schism within PSI ranks. Despite the strong denial of its leader Sjahrir, the party was thereby exposed to the accusation of its political opponents that it was directly supporting the rebellions. This ultimately led to the PSI being declared illegal in August 1960. After the PRRI-Permesta rebellion ended in 1961, Sumitro chose to remain in exile rather than return. From various bases abroad he kept up a steady propaganda barrage against the Sukarno government, pouring scorn on the rhetoric of Guided Democracy and especially on its grandiose economic plan.

Tombokan, who had first met Sumitro in Jakarta and had visited him again on one of his visits to Manado in 1957, re-established contact after his return to Jakarta from Makassar in 1961. As he finally revealed to Soe, Sumitro had managed to set up an underground network of supporters throughout Indonesia known as the Reform Movement (Gerakan Pembaharuan) who were working to undermine the Sukarno regime. This network allegedly consisted of a whole series of autonomous cells led by 'case officers' (CO) who were in regular contact with Sumitro overseas. Since there was no direct contact between the groups, it was not known exactly how many there were and what - if anything - they actually did. However other 'case officers' were believed to exist elsewhere in Jakarta, and also in Bandung, Surabaya and Medan.

Sumitro, based in Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Hong Kong and various parts of Europe where he claimed to be working as an economics consultant, despatched his instructions to his supporters in Indonesia from what he mysteriously termed MHQ

---

92 Sumitro Djojohadikusumo was Minister for Trade and Industry in the Natsir Cabinet in 1950-1, and Minister for Finance in the Wilopo Cabinet in 1952-3 and the Burhanuddin Harahap Cabinet of 1955-6. He had attempted to challenge Sjahrir's leadership of the PSI after the party's poor showing in the 1955 general elections. See Apa dan Siapa 1986: 193-4; Feith and Castles 1970: 141-6 and 487. Sumitro, whose wife is from North Sulawesi, appears to have had particularly strong links with the Permesta part of the regional rebellion. See Harvey 1977: 69 and 110.

93 This underground network appears to have been established in late 1961. The first of a series of monthly bulletins entitled Pembaharuan (Reform) and issued by the Reform Movement, appeared in October of that year.
(Mobile Headquarters). He had prepared a 22-page manifesto for the movement in 1961 which Soe was able to read. In addition to a bitter attack on Sukarno for the political and economic chaos that his Guided Democracy had caused, the document contained a long list of essential reforms. These were divided into urgent, short-term and long-term measures that were required to return Indonesia to a state of political, social and economic stability and prosperity.

Henk Tombokan was the acknowledged leader of one of these small groups of Sumitro supporters, operating under the code name CO5. When Soe was actually recruited into the group is not entirely clear but it was probably late 1963 or early 1964. The other members of the group were almost all young Manadonese, some of whom had drifted to Jakarta after the collapse of the Permesta rebellion in North Sulawesi. Two of the most active members of the group, Boelie Londa and Jopie Lasut, quickly became close friends.

No doubt the need for secrecy drew the members of the group together, but Soe clearly felt comfortable with his newly-found political allies. There was a frankness and an honesty about their dealings with each other that appealed to his own sense of openness and candour. All were implacably opposed to Sukarno and regarded Guided Democracy as a hollow sham that had brought Indonesia to the edge of political disaster and economic ruin, and all saw themselves as outsiders - ethnically, socially, and politically - with little to lose by way of status or position.

95 There is no reference to the Reform Movement in Soe's diary during this period, although the entry written on 20 March 1964 (the last entry until the diary was resumed in 1966) is, in part, an account of a conversation with Henk Tombokan about the failure of the PSI and the weaknesses of its leaders. Even by 1966, when describing his friendship with a member of the group, Soe can only bring himself to write '...we are together in a certain organisation...' (SHG Diary, 16 January 1966).
96 Boelie Londa was born in 1939 in Manado, North Sulawesi, and had completed SMA in Jakarta before enrolling at the University of Indonesia in 1960. However he soon dropped out and found employment on various Jakarta construction projects. Jopie Lasut was born in 1941, also in Manado. His family moved to Jakarta while he was a small boy. His father had been Professor Sumitro's secretary in the Economics Faculty at UI during the 1950s. Jopie's secondary schooling was interrupted by the outbreak of the Permesta rebellion. He returned to North Sulawesi in August 1957 and fought in the rebel guerrilla forces until 1961 when he arrived back in Jakarta. Soe's own assessment of both young men appears in a diary entry, SHG Diary, 11 January 1966.
Despite their commitment to bringing about change, there was not much room for effective political activity during 1964 and 1965. The Sukarnoists and the PKI totally dominated the public politics of Guided Democracy and any open expression of dissent risked instant repression. Each month, copies of the movement's newsletter *Pembaharuan* were smuggled into Indonesia from overseas using airline crew as couriers. Most of the group's activities were directed towards spreading these around Jakarta. During 1964 they received funds enabling them to buy a duplicator and printing materials, to rent a safe place to store them and to reproduce copies of the newsletter locally. Soe began to prepare additional articles for inclusion in *Pembaharuan* as well as writing a few anonymous political pamphlets of his own.

During 1965, the CO5 group recruited another member to the cause whom Soe had already met a year earlier. Suripto was a Bandung law graduate who had been one of the Gemsos activists implicated in the anti-Chinese demonstrations and riots in Bandung which became known as the 10 May affair of 1963. He had moved to Jakarta after completing his studies and was actively involved in building up close ties with anti-communist and anti-Sukarnoist elements within the armed forces. He used his connections with the Siliwangi Division to secure a position as a civilian adviser within the political section of Koti. Early in 1965 he had taken up a position with Kolaga, that part of the armed forces with the responsibility for the conduct of *konfrontasi*.

---

97 This account of the Reform Movement's activities is based on interviews with Boelie Londa, 4 February 1982, Jopie Lasut, 2 March 1982, and Henk Tombokan 18 February 1982.
98 Some of this activity is referred to in Jopie Lasut's article, 'Perseroan terbatas pamplet gelap' (The underground pamphlet company), *Sinar Harapan*, 4 January 1970.
99 Suripto was born in Bandung in 1936. As a student in the Law Faculty at Padjadjaran University he had studied International Law and was an assistant to Professor Mochtar Kusumaatmadja until his politically-inspired dismissal in 1962. He was the Bandung chairman of Gemsos and had been arrested along with about ten other Gemsos activists after the 10 May anti-Chinese riots. Soe Hok-gie visited him in Bandung shortly afterwards. Interview with Suripto, 2 and 19 March 1982. Also SHG Diary, 16 January 1966
100 On the establishment of Kolaga and the political intrigue within the army over *konfrontasi*, see Crouch 1978: 70-4.
Suripto organised a series of covert anti-communist cadre-training courses for selected groups of university graduates and students at a military complex near Senayan in Jakarta.\(^{101}\) Suripto's military connections were to be important to Soe and his friends in the months that followed.

In one sense there was nothing unusual about the activities of Soe and his co-conspirators within the Gerakan Pembaharuan circle. Since the nature of the Guided Democracy system prevented the open expression of political dissent, opposition groups were forced into clandestine activity. As events in late 1965 revealed, there were many other groups - including Catholic activists and Islamic students - plotting and scheming away from public scrutiny. Behind the facade of Manipol-USDEK, \textit{konfrontasi} and Nasakom, even the major players had begun to draw up contingency plans of their own. As political tensions within Indonesia created a sense of impending crisis, most astute observers realised that a confrontation between the PKI and the armed forces was not too far away. For the time being Soe and his friends could only bide their time, quietly encouraging those around them not to lose heart while they waited for a crack to open in the system.

**Campus politics in the early 1960s: the GMNI offensive**

The establishment of Guided Democracy had resulted in the rapid politicisation of university campuses and university student forums throughout the country. During the early 1960s pressure steadily grew on all student bodies to express publicly their unqualified support for the central ideological planks of Guided Democracy, in particular Manipol-USDEK and Nasakom, and after 1963 to swing behind the campaign to crush Malaysia and condemn the forces of Nekolim.

---

\(^{101}\) Interviews with Suripto, 2 and 19 March 1982; and Rachman Tolleng, 6 and 22 March 1982. Suripto called on the assistance of several Bandung activists who shared his anti-communist perspective. During 1965 two courses of several months duration were conducted at Senayan for groups of approximately fifty volunteers. In addition to lectures on ideology and politics, the courses included basic military training.
With the significant shift to the left that had occurred in national politics during those years, the initiative in student forums increasingly lay with those organisations that were able to demonstrate their unquestioned allegiance to President Sukarno and his policies. Easily the most prominent and powerful student organisation in that category was the Indonesian Nationalist University Student Movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia, GMNI).\(^{102}\) Claiming a membership of over 100,000 students in the early 1960s and strongly represented in nearly every tertiary institution in the country, GMNI leaders had close ties with several PNI cabinet ministers and were frequently singled out for special attention by the president himself. Consequently, GMNI had particular appeal for those students who wished to establish useful connections for the future within government or the bureaucracy.

GMNI's largest rival, the Islamic University Students' Association (Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, HMI), found itself under mounting pressure when questions began to be raised about the genuineness of its commitment to Guided Democracy and its loyalty to the president.\(^{103}\) Although HMI had never been formally affiliated with any political party, it was widely alleged to have strong links with Masyumi, the Islamic political party banned in 1960 following the participation of many of its key leaders in the PRRI rebellion of 1958. HMI leaders and intellectuals and the Islamic modernists within Masyumi undoubtedly shared a common political outlook, and there was widespread sympathy and support for Masyumi among HMI rank and file members. Consequently, HMI was increasingly thrown on the defensive after 1960. In July 1961 at the fifth national congress of the Federation of Indonesian University Student Organisations

\(^{102}\) GMNI was founded in 1954 and was formally affiliated with the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI). Its leaders were a prominent 'young Turk' element in the PNI ranks, intent on challenging the old guard leadership and reforming the party from within. See Rocamora 1975: 265-9. The membership figure of 100,000 is based on the claims of the GMNI leadership. However, given the intense rivalry and jostling for power and prestige between student organisations in those years, the accuracy of all 'official' membership figures should be treated with a degree of caution. Rocamara (1975: 358) gives a more conservative estimate of 77,000.

\(^{103}\) HMI was founded in Yogyakarta in February 1947, the first new student organisation to be established after independence. By the 1960s it was probably the largest student organisation in the country with a membership reported to be well in excess of 100,000. On HMI see Tanja 1982 and Sitompul 1982.
(Perserikatan Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia, PPMI), HMI lost its position on the executive while GMNI's Bambang Kusnohadi was elected general chairman of the new PPMI provisional executive.\(^\text{104}\)

Tension within student politics increased rapidly after 1963, as GMNI, supported by the other leftist student organisations such as CGMI, Germindo and Perhimi,\(^\text{105}\) set out to dominate Guided Democracy student forums both on and off the campus. In tertiary institutions across the country the student-elected faculty-level senates and the university-wide student councils (dewan mahasiswa) rapidly came under the control of GMNI supporters. This was usually at the expense of both HMI and groups of students organised in intra-campus bodies.\(^\text{106}\)

At the fourth national congress of the Indonesian University Student Assembly (Majelis Mahasiswa Indonesia, MMI) held in April 1964 at Malino in South Sulawesi, representatives from institutions where the student councils were controlled by GMNI won 18 out of the 24 positions on the newly-elected executive.\(^\text{107}\) However a conflict

---

\(^{104}\) PPMI, founded in March 1947 at a conference of Indonesian students in Malang, was the peak organisation to which all university clubs and societies belonged. (See Amstutz 1958: 237-8 and Paget 1970: 153-61) Throughout the 1950s it had claimed the right to speak on behalf of all Indonesian university students as a kind of national union of students, sending delegates to international student forums such as the International Student Conference (ISC) and the International Union of Students (IUS). As a national body it was the forum where all member organisations competed for authority and influence. HMI's failure to gain a position on the executive was a serious blow to its prestige, since it had been one of PPMI's founding members.

\(^{105}\) The Indonesian University Students' Movement (Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia, Germindo) was the student affiliate of Partindo (Partai Indonesia, the Indonesia Party), a political party founded in 1956 and claiming to be the embodiment of Sukarno's left-wing, radical-nationalist, non-communist ideology. Germindo never attracted more than a few hundred members. The Indonesian University Student Association (Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia, Perhimi) was a small leftist student body that had been formed during the late 1950s out of an earlier Dutch-oriented and exclusively Chinese organisation, by a small group of radical Sino-Indonesian students. Most of its approximately 2000 members came from the Baperki-sponsored Res Publica university system. Confidential interview, 18 March 1985

\(^{106}\) The term *intra* was widely used throughout Indonesia for all political activity within the campus at the level of the various internal student-elected representative bodies (faculty senates and university student councils). The various student clubs, societies and associations that were linked either formally or indirectly to external organisations (political parties, religious bodies) were referred to as *extra*. Such organisations (eg GMNI, CGMI and HMI) invariably had their headquarters outside the university campus. The tension between *intra* and *extra* was a dominant theme in Indonesian student politics.

\(^{107}\) MMI was an *intra* university forum established in 1957 under the auspices of the Department of Higher Education and Science and was intended originally to make the universities more accessible to government influence. Under Guided Democracy it became even more heavily politicised and a degree of competition emerged between MMI and the *extra*-oriented PPMI as to which body spoke on behalf of all Indonesian students. See Paget 1970: 161-3.
immediately erupted within the congress when it was discovered that representatives from the student councils of the University of Indonesia and the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), both controlled at the time by non-GMNI student groupings, had failed to gain a place on the new body. Consequently, as the congress was closing, the ITB and the University of Indonesia representatives moved a minority report refusing to accept the election results on the grounds that this was an insult to two of the oldest and most prestigious institutions in the country. As a result, both student councils were suspended from MMI membership, with serious consequences for the independent students at these two institutions.¹⁰⁸

The anti-HMI campaign gathered pace in early 1964, with frequent public accusations that its supporters were anti-Manipol and counter-revolutionary and suggestions that it was an affiliate (onderbouw) of Masyumi. Leftist students and their supporters began to demand that HMI be banned. In May the acting secretary of the Law Faculty at the Jember campus of Brawijaya University in East Java, Professor Ernst Utrecht, suspended HMI from all activities within that institution, sparking off a fierce public campaign against HMI in other cities.¹⁰⁹ In October, the PPMI executive increased the pressure by suspending HMI from membership of the federation.

Student politics at Rawamangun: preserving independence

For some time, Soe Hok-gie's small campus at Rawamangun remained at a distance from the escalating tensions that were in evidence in other parts of the student world in the early 1960s.¹¹⁰ The politics of the GMNI-HMI contest did not intrude as much into students' lives at Rawamangun as it did on the main campus at Salemba. The

¹⁰⁸ The University of Indonesia Student Council, then under the leadership of Bakir Hasan (HMI), soon fell to a GMNI-controlled group led by Bambang Harianto, a law student and GMNI activist. The ITB Student Council under the control of independents led by Muslimin Nasution managed to survive but was subjected to intense pressure and constant demonstrations by leftist opponents. Interviews with Bambang Harianto and other former GMNI activists, 27 February 1985; and Fred Hehuwat, 29 January 1982.
¹⁰⁹ Utrecht was a staunch PNI activist. For his own version of this incident (including the suggestion that he was encouraged by senior NU figures), see Utrecht 1984.
¹¹⁰ The following account is based on a number of interviews with former students from various backgrounds and political affiliations who were at Rawamangun during the 1960s.
physical separation of the faculty and its comparatively small number of students is a partial explanation. More important, however, was the fact that the vast majority of the students there, a high proportion of whom were female, were simply not interested in politics. As a result, membership of student political organisations was extremely low and only the Indonesian Catholic University Students' Association (*Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia, PMKRI*)\(^{111}\) and GMNI succeeded in attracting members in any numbers. PMKRI, an efficient and well-organised association, naturally appealed to Catholic students of whom there was a significant minority, while GMNI attracted those students who were interested in increasing their career chances. Of the other nationally important student bodies, HMI had only a small membership in the faculty, while CGMI, always poorly represented at elite universities, never attracted more than a handful of followers.

Despite his own strong political convictions, Soe never tried to convince large numbers of other students to become political activists or to win them openly to his own political views. He was undoubtedly aware that many of his fellow students at Rawamangun were cynical and apathetic about politics; it seems that he began to sense that these attitudes could be turned to positive effect by encouraging students to believe in the idea of the university as a place free from the tainted, corrupting influences of the external world.\(^{112}\) Although he was probably aware that politics beyond the campus would ultimately beckon and demand his involvement, such views were also in keeping with his own inner doubts and his deep sense of moral ambivalence about that prospect.

With the support of prominent students who were determinedly non-political, the notion of pride in their own institution - their *alma mater* - gradually emerged. These students became the hard core of the so-called 'independent group' (*golongan*

---

\(^{111}\) PMKRI was affiliated with Partai Katolik and had been formed in 1947. It had a national membership of around 10,000 students.

\(^{112}\) Unfortunately it is impossible to illustrate this by pointing to anything Soe wrote along these lines at the time. However, I think it is implicit in all that is known of his activism and expressed opinions during these years and it is perfectly consistent with his post 1966-67 position on the university and its place in political life.
independent) within the Faculty of Letters. Some of these ideas developed during informal gossip on the campus and the leisure activities that Soe began to share with some close campus friends. Of these easily the most important was the founding within the faculty of a club to promote hiking, mountain-climbing and the love of nature. Soe was a central figure in this venture. Mapala (Mahasiswa Pencinta Alam, the University Student Nature Lovers) was established in November 1964 with only a handful of actual members, but soon large numbers of students were taking part in the club's activities. It set out to develop not the technical side of mountain-climbing but rather the free, spontaneous comradeship that the hiking trips encouraged. It had as its ideals simple and healthy living, courage, comradeship and a love of nature.

To some extent it was a deliberate reaction against the values and behaviour of some of their student contemporaries whose bourgeois urban life-style attempted to imitate the younger generation of Western countries. Yet it was also a rejection of ideology and politics that were saturated with hypocrisy. In an account of an early expedition Soe explained:

The purpose of Mapala is to try to restore idealism in student circles for an honest and true way to love nature, country, people and alma mater. This group of students does not believe that patriotism can only be implanted by slogans and on car windows. They believe that only by getting to know the people and land of Indonesia in a broader sense can a person become a real patriot.

Mapala was important to Soe in several ways. The group included some of his closest personal friends, students of his own age who became bound to one another over the years by a simple genuine friendship. Away from the tensions and constrictions of Jakarta they were able to discuss the problems of their own personal lives and those of the wider society around them with a frankness and honesty that would not have seemed possible elsewhere:

It's really strange. Matters that are never thought about in Jakarta suddenly emerged in the middle of the orchid slopes of Mount Pangrango. Certainly many matters of great

---

113 See Dwi windu Mapala Universitas Indonesia for details of the formation and development of Mapala.
114 'Mengikuti kembali djalan jang sudah hilang di Pangrango' (with Mahasiwa U.I.) [Rediscovering lost trails on Pangrango (with U.I. students)], Bara Eka, 3/13, March 1966
importance to human life have been stunted by the atmosphere of Jakarta, full of falsehood and materialism.

As a campus-based organisation Mapala existed on a basis of complete autonomy: it kept itself apart from the party-linked student organisations, and students of different religious and political affiliations were always welcome to take part in its activities. It also represented resistance to the attempt of the government to diffuse its ideology into all areas of activity, all clubs, societies and organisations. Mapala was thus a rejection of two kinds of politicisation of society, one flowing from the political parties and the other from the regime itself.

One of Soe's closest campus friends was a collaborator in the Mapala venture. Herman Lantang was a tall, physically imposing young man who had entered the Faculty of Letters in 1960, a year earlier than Soe, as a student in anthropology. During 1964 a warm friendship steadily developed as they discovered a mutual respect and a shared moral outlook, and as they began to confide in each other about the problems and dilemmas of their personal lives.

Herman was a gregarious, socially confident figure at Rawamangun with a wide circle of friends. He was also a typical example of those students who were not interested in politics and strongly opposed to the party-linked organisations meddling in campus affairs. Consequently, when the chairmanship of the student senate fell vacant at the end of 1964, Herman was a logical candidate. Sensing that his personal qualities would ensure that the independent group's interests were well represented, Soe encouraged his candidature. Throughout the election process, which he won comfortably by defeating an old friend who had drifted into the GMNI camp, Soe was a close supporter and advisor.

115 Herman Lantang was born in Manado in 1940 into an elite Dutch-educated family. Both his father and grandfather had served as officers in the KNIL. Brought up in a privileged conservative background, he moved to Jakarta in early childhood and completed his education there while living in the elite area of Menteng. During his SMA years, however, contact with peers began to provide new perspectives, and he became sympathetic to people with a broader outlook on the world around him. Interview with Herman Lantang, 10 February 1982
Herman's speech at the ceremony marking the transfer of office and announcing the installation of the new senate was a clever piece of work. Although dressed up in the language of Guided Democracy, it nevertheless contained a strong appeal to his fellow students to guard against allowing the divisions and conflicts of outside political forces to disrupt campus life:

In preparing this list, we are also very pleased because it appears that the proposal of the faculty leadership and formateur to form a senate based around Nasakom has been sympathetically received by all comrades. But Nasakom is not a koe-handel, alias the long out of date political horse-trading à la liberal. Nasakom is the samen bundeling van alles revolutionaire krachten, the union of all revolutionary potential within our faculty. And as Bung Karno, the Great Leader of the Revolution, stressed in his Tavip speech, revolutionaries are those who are anti-imperialist and therefore whoever is opposed to colonialists, neo-colonialists and their lackeys is a revolutionary. We invite every member of the Faculty of Letters who is an anti-colonialist and a revolutionary to join in playing an active part in this senate. But we stress here that the comrades in this senate sit as the Faculty of Letters family and do not sit as representatives of particular groups. Therefore all problems that arise we will solve in a family atmosphere. Our expectations are also shared by our faculty's leadership, and we are sure that together we can fulfill these expectations.

But although Soe and his circle did what they could to limit the influence of the party-based student bodies, given the conflicts occurring on other campuses between GMNI and its allies on the one hand and HMI students and independents on the other, it was almost inevitable that problems would eventually arrive on their own doorstep. Early in 1965 GMNI and its allies attempted to 'retool' the newly-formed senate of its allegedly 'counter-revolutionary' elements:

The senate leadership was summoned by the dean of the Faculty of Letters because of a resolution from GMNI, Germindo, Perhimi and CGMI demanding that the senate be cleansed of HMI-Manikebu counter-revolutionary elements. The CGMI-GMNI-Germindo representatives were present. I was also present as one of the senate leaders. Before we entered the dean's office I said to the senate chairman, saudara Herman, that it would be better to be destroyed than to comply with the demands of this 'revolutionary' group. During the 'konfrontasi' I explained (it so happened that my senate chairman was not very clever at talking) that in the senate there were no HMI representatives. There was only A or B and 'we chose them not as representatives of organisations but as individuals of ability'. In that confrontation I was victorious because no HMI members or Manikebu sympathisers were removed.

---

116 This excerpt is from a typescript copy of Herman Lantang's speech, 23 December 1964, kindly provided by its author. Soe had a strong hand both in the preparation of Herman's speech and in the selection of the senate and its office-bearers, which they jokingly referred to as 'The Cabinet of a Hundred Ministers'.

117 Soe related the incident several years later in a newspaper article. See 'Mimpi terakhir seorang mahasiswa tua' (Final dreams of an old student), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No 107, 30 June 1968. In his essay he castigates those other student organisations who had failed to defend those under attack.
Further trouble erupted, however, in mid September 1965 during the initiation week activities to mark the start of the new academic year. Mapram presented an ideal opportunity for all clubs and societies to recruit members by adopting a high profile on the campus. Soe and his friends tried to ensure that the party-based student groups did not dominate proceedings but on this occasion an open conflict emerged. When one of Soe's friends tore down an allegedly illegal GMNI poster, he was 'retooled' from the orientation week program committee. Soe tried vigorously to defend him and as a result was dismissed as well.\(^\text{118}\)

These may have been relatively trivial events but in the context of events occurring elsewhere they were a part of a worrying trend. The 1965 Mapram was a tense and often angry affair on the main Salemba campus and in other universities throughout the country. At a ceremony to mark the opening of the Mapram at Salemba on 22 September, the chairman of the MMI executive, police officer Drs Basirun Nugroho, was dragged from the stage by an angry HMI activist when he delivered a speech containing anti-HMI remarks.\(^\text{119}\) In Bandung, where the incumbent student council had been in conflict with the MMI since the Malino congress in April of the previous year, there were almost daily angry protests as leftists burnt effigies of the officebearers during rowdy demonstrations.\(^\text{120}\) On 29 September in Jakarta, PKI leader Aidit spoke at a CGMI mass rally at Senayan where he issued the CGMI students with a challenge: if they could not 'get rid of HMI they might as well put on sarongs'.\(^\text{121}\)

More than most of his fellow students, Soe was well aware of the wider political tensions that underpinned these developments. He knew that the situation was moving quickly towards open conflict between the army and the PKI, though he had no way of knowing when this would occur. Early on 30 September he and a group of friends left

---

\(^{118}\) See 'I remember Merapi', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No 58, Week 4, July 1967. The incident is also recalled in a diary entry written a few months later. SHG Diary, 11 January 1965

\(^{119}\) Interview with Fahmi Idris, 28 February 1985

\(^{120}\) Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 19 March 1982

\(^{121}\) Bachtiar 1968: 190
Jakarta for Central Java on a Mapala hiking trip. It was a chance to escape from the unpleasant experiences of the recently concluded Mapram.

When a series of cataclysmic events erupted on the streets of Jakarta early the next morning, Soe and his friends were already heading for the slopes of Mount Merapi outside Yogyakarta. It was to be several days before they discovered that a leftist group had attempted a coup against the army leadership and that the long-expected showdown between the army and the PKI was underway. When he heard the news Soe may well have thought of the promise he had made to himself eighteen months before:

As far as I’m concerned, politics is something that’s utterly dirty, it’s filthy mud. But at a certain moment where we cannot restrain ourselves any further, then we will leap into it. Sometimes the moment arrives, as it did previously in the revolution. And if by some chance this moment comes I’m going to leap into this mud.122

122 SHG Diary, 16 March 1964
Chapter 4
INTO THE CAULDRON OF POLITICAL ACTIVISM:
THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS OF 1966

Early in the morning of 1 October 1965 six of Indonesia's most senior army generals, including its commander Lieutenant General Yani, were seized from their homes by armed squads of soldiers and taken to the Halim airforce base on the southern outskirts of Jakarta. Three of the generals were killed during the struggle to capture them, while the remainder were murdered shortly after their arrival at Halim.1 All the bodies were then thrown into an abandoned well.

The instigators of this violent assault on the army senior command were a group of mainly middle-ranking officers of the four services led by Lieutenant Colonel Untung, a battalion commander in the Cakrabirawa presidential palace guard. Also involved were air force commander, Air Marshal Omar Dhani, and the commander of the Kolaga Combat Command in Kalimantan, Brigadier General Supardjo. Calling themselves the Thirtieth of September Movement (Gerakan 30 September),2 the group claimed that they were acting to protect the president from a right-wing 'Council of Generals' that was intending to seize power around Armed Forces Day on 5 October. President Sukarno, whom the plotters had hoped would give his blessing to their actions, arrived at Halim during the morning and remained at the air force base throughout the day. Meanwhile, troops supporting the Thirtieth of September Movement had taken up strategic positions in Merdeka Square and had seized control of adjacent key facilities including the government radio station. In several radio broadcasts during the day the movement

1 The only senior officer who managed to elude his pursuers was the Minister of Defence, General Nasution.
2 The movement was soon to be referred to throughout Indonesia by the acronym Gestapu, a term coined deliberately for its sinister connotations. It was also widely referred to as G30S.
announced its existence and proclaimed the formation of a 45-member Revolutionary Council which was to hold power pending national elections.

Despite his seniority within the army hierarchy, the Kostrad commander, Major General Soeharto, had not been among those targeted by the Thirtieth of September Movement. From his headquarters on the eastern perimeter of Merdeka Square, Soeharto immediately assumed de facto command of the army, and moved adroitly to suppress the Thirtieth of September Movement. By late afternoon he had persuaded the troops occupying offensive positions in Merdeka Square to abandon the cause without the need for a violent confrontation. Soeharto was then in a position to issue an ultimatum to those at Halim. President Sukarno, whose own instruction appointing Major General Pranoto as army commander had been issued earlier in the day and deliberately ignored by Soeharto, immediately left Halim for his palace in Bogor, while the movement's ringleaders quickly dispersed. By dawn the next morning the air force base was taken with only slight resistance. The Thirtieth of September Movement had been effectively routed but this was merely the prelude to far greater political upheaval throughout the country.

Pointing to strong circumstantial evidence, such as the presence of PKI leader, D.N. Aidit at Halim, and the participation of communist women and youth in the murder of the generals, the Thirtieth of September Movement was quickly condemned as an attempted coup masterminded by the PKI.3 This led to a full-scale frontal assault on the party, its leadership, its administrative and bureaucratic apparatus and its mass membership. Thus the fragile political framework of the final years of Guided

---

3 The complex web of events surrounding the alleged coup attempt, the exact movements of the key figures in the days before, on and after 1 October, the degree of foreknowledge of the various major actors, the motivations of the disaffected officers who carried out the kidnapping of the six generals, and above all, the extent and degree of involvement of the PKI, are all matters which have been the subject of intense debate. A more detailed account and analysis of this saga is quite outside the scope of the present study. For the most comprehensive and balanced account of the coup, including a lucid analysis of the various alternative theories about its origins, see Crouch 1978: 96-134. For a range of other views see the following: Anderson and McVey 1971; Dake 1973; Hindley 1970; Karmi 1974; van der Kroef 1966; Lev 1966b; McVey 1968; Mortimer 1968 and 1971; Nugroho Notosusanto and Ismael Saleh 1968; Pauker 1969 and 1971; Rey 1966; and Wertheim 1966 and 1970.
Democracy, which had seen President Sukarno balance the opposing forces of left and right - the army and the PKI - was almost immediately in tatters.

The destruction of the PKI was to clear the way for a more protracted struggle that was ultimately to reshape the alignment of political forces in Indonesia. Yet this reshaping did not occur immediately and was not achieved without great difficulty. In October 1965 President Sukarno's prestige was still immense and he could count on the support of a wide cross section of society. Even among his most implacable opponents few would have envisaged more than a restructuring of the existing system with Sukarno remaining as president. In the political upheaval that was to occur throughout the months that followed, however, some new voices were to make themselves heard. For the first time since Indonesia's independence struggle, large numbers of students and youth acting outside the formal political structures were to become a vital element in the political process.

The destruction of the PKI

A distinctive student response to the events of 1 October did not become apparent for some time. The initial reaction to the abortive coup was orchestrated by other forces. While President Sukarno appealed for calm and attempted to play down the involvement of the PKI, the army gave maximum public exposure to the discovery and exhumation of the bodies of the six slain generals at Halim on 3 and 4 October and to a massive funeral the following day, which coincided with Armed Forces Day. Through its own newspapers, Angkatan Bersenjata and Berita Yudha, the army began to attack the PKI and Aidit; by 8 October editorials in the army press were accusing the party directly of involvement in the coup attempt. PKI newspapers were banned and a roundup of prominent communists began throughout Jakarta.

The army's campaign had an almost immediate impact as emotions began to reach boiling point in Jakarta among those sections of society where resentment and hostility towards the PKI had long remained suppressed. Public anger found an outlet with the
appearance of an *ad hoc* body known as the Action Front for the Crushing of the Thirtieth of September Movement (*Kesatuan Aksi Pengganyangan Gestapu, KAP-Gestapu*). For an account of the KAP-Gestapu phase of the anti-PKI movement see Hindley 1970: 40-6; Crouch 1975: 254-6; and Paget 1970: 57-63. By late October, KAP-Gestapu was transformed into a body known as Front Pancasila.

Formed with army backing and drawing support from a variety of anti-communist elements, its leading figures were a young maverick NU politician Subchan and the Catholic activist Harry Tjan. Launched on 3 October, KAP-Gestapu held public rallies on 4 and 8 October. The second of these rallies attracted a huge crowd of thousands of angry demonstrators that filled the small Taman Surapati park in Menteng to overflowing. After the anti-PKI speeches and resolutions, sections of the crowd marched on the PKI headquarters in Jalan Kramat Raya, which they attacked and set on fire. During the following week, and often after similar rallies, further attacks were launched on a number of other buildings occupied by PKI-affiliated bodies. These included the headquarters of the party's youth, women, students and labour union organisations, and the PKI's senior cadre training centre, the Aliarcham Academy in Pasar Minggu. Homes of PKI leaders were also ransacked in this outpouring of anger and emotion.

The KAP-Gestapu rallies were attended by a broad cross-section of anti-communist political parties, student bodies and mass organisations. Among the most militant, however, were young Muslim students, many of whom were members of the Indonesian Islamic Students (*Pelajar Islam Indonesia, PII*). Its membership was mostly composed of young high school students but among the leaders was a small group of slightly older Muslim activists, young men in their early to mid twenties with Masyumi connections, who were determined to use this opportunity to hit back at their principal political enemy.5

By at least the second of these KAP-Gestapu rallies Soe Hok-gie had returned from his Mapala trip to Central Java. He immediately joined forces with groups of PII

---

4 For an account of the KAP-Gestapu phase of the anti-PKI movement see Hindley 1970: 40-6; Crouch 1975: 254-6; and Paget 1970: 57-63. By late October, KAP-Gestapu was transformed into a body known as Front Pancasila.

5 PII students were responsible for the first anti-PKI street banners and posters that appeared in prominent places in central Jakarta around 6 October with messages such as 'Hang Aidit' and 'Ban the PKI'. Interview with Bur Rasuantso, 17 March 1982.
students in their various attacks on PKI buildings, for he too obviously sensed that a critical moment had now arrived compelling him to engage in whatever measures were necessary to intensify the crisis to a point where a far-reaching transformation of the political landscape might be possible.\(^6\)

The ransacking and burning of buildings associated with the PKI appears to have been relatively spontaneous action; it seems doubtful that these young activists bothered to consult older political figures or the army leadership before they began. But whether they were consulted or not, the military certainly did nothing to prevent these incidents from occurring. In fact, the army had already decided to do everything in its power to destroy the PKI throughout the length and breadth of the country.

From mid October until late December, elite RPKAD para commando units swept through both urban centres and rural areas of Central Java, East Java and Bali in an extensive campaign to obliterate the communist party in those areas. Operations were also conducted in the Outer Islands, especially in Aceh and North Sumatra.\(^7\) The exact pattern of events varied from place to place and seems to have been governed by specific local conditions: the nature and intensity of the conflict between supporters and opponents of the PKI in the recent past; the strength of the PKI's following and the extent of the resistance encountered by the army units; the infiltration of certain regional army commands by left-wing elements and the intense loyalty of many senior officers in these commands towards President Sukarno. However, the overall picture was a demonstration of the PKI's abject vulnerability in the face of such a concerted physical assault. By the end of 1965 the party apparatus had been completely destroyed

---

\(^6\) There is no diary record of this period of Soe's life but several close friends knew about his participation in these attacks, including the invasion of the PKI headquarters on 8 October. The PKI's youth organisation, Pemuda Rakyat, was another obvious target of the young Muslim students. Soe joined a small group of PII activists who used a pick-up vehicle for a sudden assault on the Pemuda Rakyat headquarters. Although the raiders were thoroughly outnumbered by the building's occupants, the PKI youth were caught by surprise and soon scattered leaving the invaders to ransack the premises. Interviews with Jopie Lasut, August 1978; and Bur Rasuanto, 17 March, 1982

\(^7\) For an account of the October to December anti-PKI campaign see Crouch 1978: 134-57. See also Feith 1966 and Cribb 1990.
throughout the country, its leaders arrested or summarily executed, hundreds of thousands of its mass membership slaughtered and thousands more held in detention centres.

While this brutal campaign of retribution was exacting its toll on the left, all political leaders, parties and organisations were compelled to come to terms with a rapidly changing and uncertain political landscape where one of the principal elements in the Guided Democracy power structure had been suddenly eliminated.

**The student response: the birth of KAMI**

From early in October, anti-communist student groups were looking for ways to contribute their voice to the wave of public condemnation of the PKI for its alleged role in the failed coup. Some university student activists attended the KAP-Gestapu rallies and signed statements on behalf of their particular student organisations. However PPMI, the peak student body and the forum outside the university campuses which had become the centre of student political debate under Guided Democracy, remained conspicuously silent on the matter. Consequently, during mid October a group of anti-communist Jakarta student leaders - principally Catholic activists and a small number of students who held prominent positions in the local student organisations clustered under the umbrella of SOMAL - joined forces to pressure the PPMI executive (which remained under the control of GMNI and its leftist allies) into declaring its position on the events of 1 October. A series of meetings were held at the PMKRI headquarters in Jalan Sam

---

8 The Joint Secretariat of Local University Student Organisations (*Sekretariat Bersama Organisasi Mahasiswa Lokal*, SOMAL) has been formed on June 1965 as an umbrella body for the following six local student organisations: the Bandung University Student Corps (*Corpus Studiosorum Bandungense*, CSB); the Bandung University Student League (*Ikatan Mahasiswa Bandung*, IMABA); the Bandung University Student Association (*Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Bandung*, PMB); the Bogor University Students' Society (*Masyarakat Mahasiswa Bogor*, MMB); the Jakarta University Student League (*Ikatan Mahasiswa Djakarta*, IMADA); and the Surabaya University Student Movement (*Gerakan Mahasiswa Surabaya*, GMS). These were all very small bodies with no more than a few hundred members that drew their support from particular geographic areas. Members were almost exclusively from privileged and elite backgrounds, and joined these organisations for social reasons. Although some of the students were, broadly speaking, PSI in outlook, most of the members were not really interested in politics at all though quietly cynical about the government and its ideology. The formation of SOMAL had been a defensive measure to preserve the member organisations' independence by complying with the government's insistence that organisations at all levels of society fit into the Nasakom ideological
Ratulangi and the IMADA headquarters in Jalan Palem with HMI student leaders also participating in the discussions. Finally the PPMI executive was presented with an ultimatum: if it refused to issue a statement clarifying PPMI's position on Gestapu, SOMAL would call a special plenary session of all member organisations to discuss the issue.⁹

As a result of this conflict within student ranks, the Minister of Higher Education, Brigadier General Syarif Thayeb, was prevailed upon to intervene. Syarif Thayeb found himself in a very awkward position. As a medical doctor with military rank, he had been outraged by the murder of six of his fellow senior officers and had acted quickly to close the leftist Baperki-sponsored Res Publika University system and to 'freeze' CGMI and Perhimi. However it was rumoured that the minister's actions had displeased the president who continued to refuse to blame or condemn the PKI for the events of 1 October. Since Syarif Thayeb knew that the GMNI student leaders were strong supporters of the president and had good access to the palace, he tried to avoid doing anything that might further antagonise Sukarno.¹⁰

On several occasions in late October the minister held discussions with groups of student leaders, finally suggesting a compromise course of action. He persuaded the anti-communist student activists to postpone their attempts to pressure the PPMI executive into holding a special congress, proposing instead a separate action command that could be used as the vehicle to condemn the PKI and Gestapu. After a final meeting

---

⁹ Although SOMAL and its constituent member organisations had been an insignificant factor in student politics to this period, the anti-communist student activists realised that the SOMAL group's six votes could be used to call a special plenary session and undermine GMNI's dominant position on the PPMI executive. Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 17 February 1982. See also Paget 1970: 224-5; and Ahmadaddani G. Martha 1984: 298-311.

¹⁰ GMNI leaders were arguing that they were waiting for guidance from the president before making any statement on the Gestapu affair.
of student leaders at his home on 25 October, the formation of the Indonesian University Student Action Front (*Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia*, KAMI) was announced.

Syarif Thayeb tried to persuade GMNI to accept a place on the new action front's presidium but after consideration the GMNI leadership declined to participate. Consequently, KAMI's four-member presidium was composed of nominated representatives from the following student organisations: PMKRI, SOMAL, the NU-affiliated Indonesian Islamic University Student Movement (*Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia*, PMII), and the Pancasila University Students (*Mahasiswa Pancasila*, Mapancas).11 Outside the leadership group a number of other student bodies were regarded as 'supporting elements'. Of these the largest and most important were HMI and the Indonesian Christian University Student Movement (*Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia*, GMKI).12

The minister released a statement on KAMI's behalf couched in Guided Democracy-style language, announcing that one of its tasks was to help the armed forces destroy the 'counter-revolutionary Gestapu'. This was, however, preceded by a reference to intensifying the crushing of the Nekolim project, Malaysia. Although the KAMI leaders were quick to attack the PKI in more forthright language, they too were

---

11 PMII claimed a membership of around 20,000. It had a strong following among Javanese students, especially at the state Islamic institutes, the IAIN; but it was not as prominent in the elite universities where HMI had garnered the strongest support among Muslim students. Mapancas had hardly been heard of in university student circles before the formation of KAMI and its membership was almost certainly inconsequential. Its rise into public prominence and its position within KAMI was a result of its powerful military connections: it was affiliated with the army-backed IPKI party and its chairman, David Napitupulu, was close to both Brigadier General Sukendro (who had been a minister of state in the cabinet since 1964) and General Nasution. See Paget 1970: 242-3.

12 In fact GMKI was ambivalent and divided about the KAMI venture for quite some time. As the student affiliate of Parkindo, it had a solid base of support among Protestant Christian students. However, some of its leaders were very close to Second Deputy Prime Minister Leimena who was known to be a loyal subordinate of the president. HMI's position was quite different. Behind the scenes its leaders had been active in the moves against the GMNI-controlled PPMI executive and had been part of the negotiations with Syarif Thayeb, but HMI was still technically under suspension by the PPMI, and this hampered its capacity to adopt a public political profile. As KAMI expanded its organisation and activities during the following year, HMI steadily assumed a key role within the action front that was a reflection of its size and stature within university student politics. For a slightly different interpretation of HMI's position, see Paget 1970: 223-4.
careful to praise Sukarno and his government in their public statements and speeches during the weeks that followed.

Throughout November and December KAMI branches sprang up in major cities and in universities and institutes all over the country, while the central presidium and its secretariat operating out of the PMKRI headquarters came to be known as KAMI Pusat. The branches were supposed to mirror the structure and composition of the central body and were in theory subordinate to it. In practice, however, there was a considerable degree of autonomy. In Jakarta a city-level branch (KAMI Jaya) and a University of Indonesia branch (KAMI UI) became important centres of independent activity with HMI activists assuming a leading role in both of them from the outset, while in Bandung militant anti-communist students were quick to form their own branch and use it to hold public rallies.

Yet apart from this organisational expansion, by early December the KAMI leaders were uncertain about what their next move should be. Some of them continued to believe that it was important to maintain good relations with the president and arrangements were made through Syarif Thayeb for a mass rally of KAMI supporters which Sukarno would address on 21 December. However, during December many of the KAMI leaders - especially those who were privately contemptuous of Sukarno and his government's policies - were angered and alarmed by the growing tone of intransigence in the president's public speeches as he began to defend the PKI in quite explicit language. Fearing that he might also use the occasion to attack KAMI and give encouragement to their opponents, some of the KAMI leaders decided not to attend the rally and advised their followers accordingly.

As a result there were many empty seats in the Senayan sports centre when Sukarno arrived to address the rally. The president, who had probably heard about the

---

13 Crouch 1978: 163-4
14 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 17 February 1982. The Jakarta army command had agreed to provide transport for the rally, but on the day many of the trucks were not required.
dissension KAMI was causing within student circles through its conflict with PPMI, was further angered by the poor attendance. In his speech he attacked the students directly as quarrelsome troublemakers manipulated by their political party masters, and reiterated the central place of Nasakom in Indonesian society; but on this occasion he went further than ever before, claiming the contributions and sacrifices made by the communists during the struggle for independence were greater than those of other groups.15

The 21 December rally had a significant impact on the immediate direction of the KAMI-led student movement. Sukarno's remarks, deeply offensive to many and especially to the armed forces, hardened the resolve of those KAMI activists who privately despised him. In addition, the KAMI leadership now had a point to prove to an angry and embarrassed Syarif Thayeb who accused them of lacking the support of rank and file students.16 Both factors played a part in KAMI's decision to make the government's own handling of the economy the target of a new campaign.

Towards the end of 1965 as the state of the national economy began to deteriorate alarmingly, the government had no alternative but to raise the prices of state-controlled commodities and services in an attempt to check spiralling inflation. On 23 November Chaerul Saleh, as Coordinating Minister for Development, announced that the price of petrol would rise from Rp 4 to Rp 250 per litre. On 13 December the same minister released details of a currency reform (Rp 1000 Old = Rp 1 New), but even this had little effect on the soaring rate of inflation. So on 3 January, Brigadier General Ibnu Sutowo, Minister for State Oil and Gas, announced that the petrol price would rise yet again, this time to Rp 1000 a litre while the price of other essential commodities would also increase. Simultaneously, government charges for postal and telecommunication services rose steeply, while train and bus fares were also increased. The cost of a ticket on the Jakarta

---

15 President Sukarno's speech, 21 December 1965
16 The organisers of presidential rallies were expected to ensure that the venues were filled to capacity. When Syarif Thayeb was berated by Sukarno who held him personally responsible for the poor attendance at the KAMI rally, he turned on the KAMI Jaya organisers, abusing them for their incompetence and accusing them of being incapable of mobilising their supporters. Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 17 February 1982
buses, which large sections of the city's populace depended upon every day, rose from Rp 200 to Rp 1000.

Dramatic price and fare increases were almost certainly unavoidable but bound to be unpopular. Thus in an effort to boost their own movement's flagging momentum, KAMI Pusat decided to make the price rises the focus of a mass student demonstration. The KAMI leaders approached the Jakarta army command for permission to hold a public demonstration, as they were required to do under martial law regulations. However the command's chief of staff, Colonel Witono, who was already known to many of the KAMI leaders and believed to be in sympathy with their movement, at first refused to accede to the students' requests. Witono and his officers argued that the KAMI plan would only divert public attention away from the campaign to destroy the PKI. The students were forced to accept the army's insistence that the banning of the PKI and the restructuring of the cabinet to eradicate those ministers who were believed to be supporters of the PKI had to be given precedence over the issue of prices. Having agreed to these changes the KAMI leaders set about informing prominent activists to spread the word on the campuses, for they intended this demonstration to create as much impact as possible.

The Tritura campaign begins

In early January Soe heard from a friend, Ismid Hadad, who was in charge of KAMI's Information Bureau, about the plans for a new campaign against the recent increases in bus fares and fuel prices.\textsuperscript{17} He also heard of the initial opposition to this from the Jakarta army command. Soe determined to support KAMI's campaign and

\textsuperscript{17} This account of the January phase of the demonstrations draws heavily upon Soe's diary, which provides a detailed description of his own activities during this period, and a stencilled broadsheet he prepared under the auspices of Gema Psychologi and Mapala. See his 'Demonstrasi mahasiswa', Gema Psychologi, January 1966. The following secondary sources are also useful: Paget 1970; Wibisono 1970; and Yozar Anvar 1980. Ismid Hadad was an economics student at the Christian University of Indonesia (Universitas Kristen Indonesia, UKI) and deputy chairman of the Indonesian University Student Press League (Ikatan Pers Mahasiswa Indonesia, IPMI). During KAMI's organisational expansion in December, an Information Bureau (Biro Penerangan) had been established to coordinate publicity and press releases.
immediately began to discuss these problems with friends and fellow student leaders at Rawamangun.18 On 7 January he held a lengthy campus meeting at which he informed those present of the KAMI leaders' proposal. The group enthusiastically agreed to his suggestion to hold a march from the main University of Indonesia campus at Salemba to their own campus at Rawamangun to draw attention to the rise in bus fares. Soe and his friend Herman Lantang, chairman of the student senate, immediately went to the house on the campus of Drs. Nugroho Notosusanto to inform him of the group's decision and to seek his approval.19

When the two returned to the senate office they found that a minor crisis had erupted. The senate had received an urgent letter from the Coordinating Minister for Education and Culture, Professor Prijono, requesting the Faculty of Letters to send a group of twenty female students to attend an all-night wayang performance at the presidential palace. When no positive response was forthcoming, an angry minister had attempted to bully the students into submission on the grounds that this was an official request from the president himself.

Soe, Herman Lantang and the others saw this as a heavy-handed attempt at coercion and responded to it with moral outrage: Prijono's action seemed grotesque coming at a time like this and was interpreted as a clumsy attempt to use the Faculty of Letters as a potential source of high-class prostitutes for the palace. Soe did everything he could to fuel his fellow students' anger for he had himself already experienced the atmosphere of the Sukarno court circle:

Yes, these are the stories we always hear about the obstinacy and indecency of the palace. I've met and talked with Bung Karno on three occasions. And I've been revolted to see the way his assistants licked his boots. (I, a student, didn't attempt to flatter him, but those colonels and ministers were doing just that.) I also noticed his private secretary with her tight kebaya and tempting breasts. Frankly, I couldn't help stealing a glance at her though I usually couldn't care less about such things. She was certainly pretty but I can imagine how grubby the sex life is there. Every time I left the palace I

18 SHG Diary, 7 January 1966
19 Nugroho was immediately supportive. Since in addition to his responsibilities at the Faculty of Letters and as assistant rector in charge of student affairs at the University of Indonesia, he also had such good contacts within the military, it was considered important to gain his approval.
felt sad and disappointed, though others are usually proud of being able to shake hands with Bung Karno.\textsuperscript{20}

Although Sukarno's popularity remained high in early 1966, and few students dared to criticise him publicly, Soe could see that the president's profligate lifestyle was an issue to be exploited by people wanting far-reaching political change.

The KAMI-led campaign against the bus and petrol price rises officially began on the following Monday, 10 January. Soe and his friends from the Faculty of Letters joined a large crowd of students who assembled at 8.00 am in the courtyard of the Faculty of Medicine at the Salemba campus to hear an address by the RPKAD commander, Colonel Sarwo Edhie, recently returned from the campaign in which a huge number of PKI supporters had been massacred throughout Java and Bali. Sarwo and his fellow RPKAD officers were greeted as returning heroes and received an enthusiastic reception.\textsuperscript{21} After speeches by the KAMI leaders, including Cosmas Batubara, one of the four KAMI Pusat chairmen, the student throng adopted a three-point slogan which Ismid Hadad and a Catholic fellow student, Savarinius Suardi, had drafted the previous day: ban the PKI, reform the cabinet and lower prices.\textsuperscript{22}

After listening to the speeches, the students prepared to march out into the streets to the State Secretariat building in Jalan Veteran where they planned to present their demands to Chaerul Saleh, the Third Deputy Prime Minister, one of the key ministers responsible for the recent emergency economic measures. Soe and Herman, however, had a strategy of their own. Despite a protest from the head of KAMI Sastra, they directed the Faculty of Letters students back to Rawamangun to discuss their own plans

\textsuperscript{20} SHG Diary, 7 January 1966
\textsuperscript{21} Sarwo Edhie's presence is not mentioned in Soe's diary, which refers only to 'speeches opposing the PKI and the price rises'. Yet the RPKAD commander's visit to the campus was certainly a most significant event and must have raised expectations that an ABRI-student axis was emerging. Sarwo Edhie responded to the students' shouts of 'Where's Aidit?' with 'You know where he is!' To excited applause and cheering he reminded them of the PKI leader's recent challenge to CGMI to put on sarongs if they could not secure the banning of the HMI. This was first-hand confirmation of the reports that Aidit had been captured and executed. Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982

\textsuperscript{22} Ismid Hadad and Savarinius Suardi had been appointed by KAMI Pusat to draft these demands which quickly became known as the Tritura (Tri tuntutan rakyat, The people's three demands). See Wibisono 1970: 14.
for the coming days.\footnote{This was an early indication of \emph{intra-extra} rivalry: although Soe and Herman were in general agreement with KAMI's aims, they wished to maintain control over the participation of the Faculty of Letters' contingent as an independent group. KAMI had, in theory, established 'branches' in each of the faculties as well as city level and institutional level branches. However, the PMKRI student who had been appointed as the chairman of KAMI Sastra, Tojib, was not an influential figure among the independent-minded 'Alma Mater' group on the Rawamangun campus.} At an extraordinary meeting of the faculty senate, Herman and Soe persuaded the students to declare a 'Week of Mourning' ('\textit{Minggu Berkabung}').\footnote{It is not clear what this actually implied: perhaps the students were supposed to be in mourning for the loss of cheap bus fares.} During this period, students were urged to boycott the Jakarta buses as a protest against the price rises.

Meanwhile the main demonstration had converged on the State Secretariat building where it continued for the rest of the day.\footnote{Soe and many of the Letters students rejoined the main demonstration later in the day and his diary entry briefly describes what occurred (SHG Diary, 10 January 1966). For other detailed accounts, see Wibisono 1970: 15-16; and Yozar Anwar 1980: 6-10.} Several thousand students congregated on the streets around the building and in the vicinity of Harmoni behind the presidential palace in central Jakarta while military personnel nervously watched from the perimeter. Traffic in this crucial thoroughfare linking the north and south of the city ground to a halt throughout the afternoon, as the students sat down on the road, chanted their three demands and waved two fingers in the air signifying that they were only prepared to pay 200 rupiah on the buses. Chaerul Saleh was not in his office and the students refused to be fobbed off onto a subordinate. Instead they sat down on the street to wait, amusing themselves by chanting slogans. The Islamic students maintained their fast (it was the fasting month of Ramadan) and performed their prayers on the street, in that context a gesture against the godless PKI. Finally, late in the afternoon, a student delegation led by Liem Bian Khoen, one of the chairmen of KAMI Jaya, was sent to Chaerul Saleh's house in the nearby suburb of Menteng. Chaerul, a man of strong populist background, agreed to address the waiting crowd. Cosmas Batubara then announced the beginning of a strike. The students would not attend lectures until all their demands were met and they would not pay more than 200 rupiah on the city's buses. At around 4.30 pm they
dispersed, feeling exhilarated that the straight jacket of subservience to authority had been broken.

**Student demonstrations escalate**

These events set the tone for the days that followed. The next day, 11 January, a group of about fifty students from the Faculty of Letters led by Soe and Herman Lantang set off on a four kilometre march from Salemba to Rawamangun, disrupting as much traffic as possible en route. At Rawamangun, an open meeting of all students was held at which Soe announced the senate's plans for a week of demonstrations that had been decided upon the previous day. A larger contingent of about two hundred students then made the return journey to Salemba, arriving around midday to find that other groups of University of Indonesia students had been engaged in similar action elsewhere around the campus. Traffic had been halted in the immediate precincts of the university, and cars and trucks had been daubed with anti-government graffiti and the Tritura slogans.

On his way back to Kebon Jeruk shortly after midday, Soe met a group of Psychology Faculty students who were continuing to disrupt traffic at the Harmoni intersection. Earlier that morning, Soe learnt, a small but boisterous group of these students had invaded Hotel Indonesia, where they had rejected offers of food and demanded paper, glue and writing materials for their placards from the startled staff, before continuing up Jalan Thamrin pasting placards on passing vehicles.

Throughout the rest of the afternoon and until late into the night, Soe spent the time in excited consultation with a number of his closest friends, in particular seeking out his old Gerakan Pembaharuan associates, Boelie Londa and Jopie Lasut, whom he urged to

---

26 SHG Diary, 11 January 1966
27 Hotel Indonesia was a major architectural landmark in the mid 1960s. Its construction had been a favourite project of the president. As a place where ministers and high government officials were often seen at lavish receptions, it was a symbol of 'big shot' luxury.
28 According to Soe's account (SHG Diary, 11 January 1966), some of the messages were implied attacks on Sukarno himself, for example *jual emas Monas buat bayar gaji pegawai* (sell the gold of the National Monument to pay civil servants' salaries); *stop import istr* (stop the importing of wives).
join the student ranks. It was now becoming evident to him that the student protest was
gathering a momentum that could bring about the fundamental political change that they
had long been working towards.29

Early next morning Soe heard about the KAMI plan to lead a demonstration to the
DPR-GR parliament at Senayan. In comparison with the relatively small and
spontaneous street actions that had occurred the day before, this was a large and well-
organised affair indicating that it had the explicit blessing of certain sections of the
military. Around 10,000 students headed out of the University of Indonesia grounds at
Salemba about 8.30 in what they termed a 'long march' to the parliament building about
eight kilometres away. The route taken by the demonstrators took them through the
centre of the elite suburb of Menteng. The Faculty of Letters students, who had
combined forces with those from the Faculty of Psychology, occupied a position
somewhere near the rear.30

As the students marched down Jalan Diponegoro, they passed by the houses of
several cabinet ministers. Soe, remembering Professor Prijono's role in trying to recruit
female students for the palace, led the students in singling out Prijono's house for
specific attention with chants of 'Crush the wishy-washy ministers!'31 However, at
Roeslan Abdulgani's house further along Diponegoro the jeers turned to cheers,
indicating that Roeslan was still a popular figure in student circles.32

---

29 SHG Diary, 11 January 1966
30 Joint action between these two faculties continued throughout the rest of the demonstrations. Both
were small faculties where the external student organisations did not have a strong following, and there
were many personal ties of friendship linking both student bodies.
31 'Ganyang menteri plintat-plintut!' During the demonstrations, the students became adept at turning
Guided Democracy language and rhetoric on the government itself. Ganyang had been a popular term of
abuse in mass rallies and was usually directed at the enemies of the regime such as Malaysia or the agents
of Nekolim. Plintat-plintut is one of those delightful Indonesian expressions, for which there is no
completely accurate succinct English equivalent. It literally means 'one who sways with the wind'!
On the return journey that day, as the students passed the minister's house, the taunts were even sharper:
'Prijono - palace pimp!'
32 Perhaps this was because Roeslan was closely associated with Nasution and known to be an enemy of
Foreign Minister Subandrio. Soe, however, had already formed a quite different opinion based on what he
knew of Roeslan's earlier political career and his own first-hand observations of his role in the LPKB:
'But I know all about the opportunism of people like Roeslan...'; but for the time being he kept this
opinion to himself.
As the march proceeded, Soe noticed with some concern that the students were becoming noisier and more excited. It was as if the habits of years of harshly imposed constraints were being suddenly cast off. In addition to several variants on the Tritura slogans ('Ban the PKI', 'Crush the PKI', 'Lower petrol prices', 'Crush the stupid ministers'), there were chants which hinted at President Sukarno himself: 'Stop importing wives', 'One minister, one wife'. Vehicles were stopped and covered with posters or daubed with painted graffiti. In Jalan Imam Bonjol, the car of a government official attempted to drive through the procession and was quickly surrounded by students threatening the driver and kicking the vehicle. More extensive damage was prevented by swift action on the part of members of the University Regiment who were accompanying the demonstrators.

At this point Soe and his friends became concerned that pro-Sukarno students hostile to their cause might attempt to infiltrate their ranks and provoke action which would discredit their cause. Soe feared an anti-Chinese riot or serious damage to the parliament building. As the demonstration approached Senayan, he intervened to prevent a student from lighting a fire in the street:

If the demonstration is transformed into chaos, then the entire student struggle will fail.
Everything will be like 10 May 1963.\(^{33}\)

However, despite these concerns and the obvious signs of defiance, the demonstration was handled skilfully by the officials of the parliament led by its chairman and cabinet minister, Arudji Kartawinata, who received a delegation and defused the tension. After listening to an aggressive speech by Cosmas Batubara, who spelled out their demands, the minister told the demonstration he would forward the students' three demands to the president. To rousing cheers, he declared: 'If there is no result in three days then there is no point in having a parliament. The building might as well be burnt down!'\(^{34}\)

\(^{33}\) SHG Diary, 12 January 1966. Soe knew several of the Bandung Gemsos activists who had been involved in the 10 May affair. It had made him very conscious of the way politically-inspired demonstrations could easily degenerate into racial anarchy.

\(^{34}\) For a similar but slightly different account of these events, see Yozar Anwar 1980: 14-19.
Several hundred demonstrators then entered the parliament chamber, scribbling graffiti on the walls. In addition to the three principal demands, they scrawled other messages deliberately insulting to the government: 'The people are destitute, the ministers are squandering money at Hotel Indonesia' and 'Ministers - don't just fuck around: ban the PKI!' They then streamed out of the complex, flagging down buses and trucks and commandeering their startled drivers to take them back to the campus at Salemba.

Early the next morning, 13 January, Soe Hok-gie prepared two articles on the demonstrations for the Catholic daily Kompas. Some of the senior staff there, including its publisher Auwjong Peng Koen, wanted to publish them but the editor, Jakob Oetama, decided it would be too dangerous to print such blatantly anti-government material.

After the excitement of the huge mass rally of the previous day, many students elected to stay on campus to greet General Nasution who was scheduled to address a week-long seminar on the Indonesian economy that was being sponsored jointly by KAMI and the Faculty of Economics. The economics seminar, which ran from 10-20 January, was part of KAMI's strategy to appear prestigious and well-protected. A written address by Major General Soeharto was read to the gathering. There were a large number of participants and papers were delivered by academics and senior government officials. The most important feature of the seminar, however, was the opportunity it gave for a number of senior economists to speak openly about the serious problems facing the Indonesian economy. The address by Dr. Emil Salim was particularly hard-hitting. Nasution made a late appearance on the third day of the seminar, apparently after being warned earlier that morning by Sukarno not to give further encouragement to the students. Consequently, the speech he delivered was something of a disappointment and not the one that appeared in the published volume.  

35 'Rakyat melarat. Mentri-mentri foya-foya di H.I.; 'Menteri jangan nyabo melulu - buburkan PKI'.  
36 See KAMI 1984; also Paget 1970: 305-12.
While this was occurring, Soe and a small group of Letters and Psychology students went on a self-styled aksi bersepeda, riding their bicycles through the streets of central Jakarta chanting and singing, deliberately interfering with the traffic flow and plastering notices on passing vehicles. This time the principal target was the Attorney General's office near the central bus station at Lapangan Banteng. A statement by the Jakarta Chief Public Prosecutor, Dan Sulaiman, had appeared in the previous day's press declaring that the student demonstrations were illegal.37 The students were met by one of his subordinates who agreed to forward their protest to the Attorney General.38 After a speech from the chairman of the University of Indonesia's Student Council, Suwarto, the bicycle contingent headed off on their mobile demonstration. After passing through the shopping area of Pasar Baru, then conspicuously quiet, the students stopped for a short rest at Wisma Nusantara, a well-known night spot near the Harmoni intersection that had been occupied by students on the first day of the demonstrations. Again Soe imposed restraint on the demonstrators:

I told the students quite firmly that they were only allowed to drink tap water. Nothing more. From the kitchen I only took the dregs of some coffee. Everything was designed to prevent the impression that we, the students, were thieving drinks. And I wanted to show the Wisma Nusantara staff that in addition to the dancing 'crocodiles' that are always throwing their money around in bars, there was also a layer of student society that was idealistic and honest. I think they were impressed. The lemonade that was offered I rejected. We are only drinking tap water, I announced firmly.39

On their way back to the University of Indonesia Salemba campus the students continued to disrupt traffic and scrawl their demands on vehicles. The Jakarta populace appeared to greet their activities with good-natured tolerance.40 Later in the afternoon, Soe prepared an account of the student protest to the Chief Public Prosecutor. This time he was successful in persuading Kompas to accept it for publication as a news item, though not until he had accepted some deletions.41

37 Berita Yudha, 12 January 1966
38 On this demonstration, see also Wibisono 1970: 24-5.
39 SHG Diary, 13 January 1966
40 Here and there, however, a driver impatient with the delays and inconvenience tried to argue with the demonstrators. Soe, himself, was involved in such an altercation, threatening to shatter the windscreen with a rock if the driver persisted in attempting to force his way through the demonstration. SHG Diary, 13 January 1966
41 Kompas, 14 January 1966
The same afternoon, KAMI Pusat leaders held discussions with officials representing bus companies and the Jakarta Transport Enterprise (PPD) and persuaded them to bring the bus fares back to 200 rupiah. In return the students agreed to do what they could to reduce petrol prices so that these fares could be maintained. This apparent success encouraged KAMI Pusat activists to step up their campaign of opposition to the price rises.

The following morning, Friday 14 January, Soe arrived at Salemba to find that some of the KAMI leaders were intending to lead a student demonstration to the office of Drs. Surjadi, the Minister for State Budget Affairs. However, Surjadi's office was in Jalan Pintu Besar Utara at Kota, in the northern part of Jakarta. The planned route would take the students through Glodok, one of the largest concentrations of Chinese shops and businesses in the city. Soe's friends Jopie Lasut and Boelie Londa told him of rumours that Chaerul Saleh had arranged for hired thugs to turn the demonstration into an anti-Chinese riot for which the students would be blamed.

Soe attempted to warn Abdul Gafur, a medical student and HMI activist who was one of the KAMI leaders at the University of Indonesia, about the dangers, but Gafur seemed unconcerned and insisted on going ahead as planned. Soe immediately telephoned Sindhunatha, the LPKB chairman and a naval legal officer with good military connections. At Soe's request Sindhunatha contacted the Jakarta army command's chief of staff, Colonel Witono, requesting extra security lest the demonstration be disrupted.

The small Letters-Psychology contingent readily agreed to Soe's suggestion that they again separate themselves from the main KAMI-led demonstration and embark on their own action to the offices of the Ministries of Oil and Gas and Central Bank Affairs, both situated in buildings near the edge of the Merdeka Square in central Jakarta.

---

42 Wibisono 1970: 25
43 SHG Diary, 14 January 1966
44 SHG Diary, 14 January 1966. Wibisono 1970: 25-26 also mentions the demonstrations but gives the wrong date.
The Letters-Psychology contingent again set off on bicycles. Though relatively small in number in comparison with the larger student demonstration that day, the group was able to surprise both of the ministries with a noisy and belligerent demonstration, plastering buildings and the parked cars of officials with their Tritura posters. Outside the Oil and Gas office Soe spoke to the assembled students through a megaphone, and then persuaded anxious officials to allow him inside the building to negotiate a meeting with the minister, Brigadier General Ibnu Sutowo, who had been responsible for announcing the rise in petrol prices on 3 January. When the minister agreed to see them, Soe spoke on behalf of the student delegation:

Briefly and politely I explained the purpose of our visit and asked the minister to revoke the petrol price regulations that were burdening the people and requested that tough action be taken within his department against the PKI. The minister promised to forward the matter on and said that, because he was not the only one to make such decisions, he would have to consult first. From outside Nining's shrill voice could be heard singing above the rest 'Stupid minister, stupid minister...'. The minister's face was clearly angry, and I could understand because as a minister and a senior army officer he was being publically abused. But I also approved of the students' actions. Ibnu Sutowo is not a clever minister and apparently he's also corrupt. As a graduation present, he bought his daughter a ticket to Hongkong. That's excessive. I asked the minister if he would come outside and address the students' demands but he refused. In a smooth fashion he said that this was a problem of prestige. I didn't want to force him. Outside the minister's office I conferred briefly with the other members of the delegation. I suggested that the minister's refusal not be publicised because it could create an explosive situation. Everyone agreed.46

The demonstration quickly moved on to the nearby Bank Indonesia headquarters to attempt to confront the Minister for Central Bank Affairs, Jusuf Muda Dalam, who had acquired a reputation for corruption and high living and one of the ministers directly involved with the recent emergency measures. Allegations were rife that Jusuf Muda Dalam had been involved with the instigators of the failed coup and had been a supplier of funds to the PKI.46 The students clearly regarded him as one of the prime targets for their insults and slogans. Once again a small delegation was received in the minister's office. According to Soe's account, his companions became slightly hysterical when

---

45 SHG Diary, 14 January 1966. Nining was one of the female students from the Faculty of Letters who played an active role in the demonstrations.
46 Soe noted these rumours in his diary. The source of his information was 'a friend in Koti', almost certainly Suripto. Although Jusuf Muda Dalam was subsequently convicted on a number of charges including subversion, these particular allegations were never proven. SHG Diary, 14 January 1966
confronted by the minister but Soe was able to repeat the students' demands adding

...the existence of government regulations that are not based on any social reality proves that while many ministers shout out 'go down to the people' in fact they themselves have never faced the facts about society.47

Soe invited Jusuf Muda Dalam to address the demonstration waiting on the street outside, and unlike Ibnu Sutowo, the minister agreed. However, when he attempted to speak the students howled him down with chants of 'Crush the Gestapu Minister!'48

The demonstration then headed up the west side of Merdeka Square accompanied by soldiers from the Jakarta army command whom the students attempted to engage in good-humoured banter. At Harmoni, they were directed right by their leaders down Jalan Nusantara and away from the dangers of the Chinese business area near Kota. Later Soe learned that his friend Boelie Londa had prevailed upon Cosmas Batubara, the KAMI Pusat chairman, who was leading the main demonstration, to change their plans. Instead of targeting Surjadi's offices in Kota, the KAMI leadership decided instead to direct the demonstration to the State Oil Corporation (Pertamina) oil and natural gas installation facility and storage depot at the port area of Tanjung Priok to the north-west of the city.49 A large noisy and emotional crowd of demonstrators led by Cosmas Batubara confronted the head of Pertamina's regional sales division, and the startled official was intimidated into signing a piece of paper agreeing to the students' demands for a return to the old price of 250 rupiah per litre.50 The students immediately used this as a signal to enforce this price at the point of sale by occupying petrol pumps in various parts of the city.

47 SHG Diary, 14 January 1966. The acronym turba (turun ke bawah, 'go down to the people') was a typical leftist political slogan of the early 1960s.
48 'Ganyang Menteri Gestapu!'
50 A version of the wording of this statement is given in Wibisono 1980: 26.
President Sukarno hits back

President Sukarno was well aware that these student demonstrations presented a serious challenge to his authority. During five days of noisy and widely reported activity in the heart of the nation’s capital, some of his senior ministers and high-ranking government officials had been insulted and various policies of the government denounced in highly disrespectful language. The students’ campaign for lower prices was obviously popular with much of Jakarta’s population and the student protests were winning cautious approval in important sections of the press. Above all Sukarno was alarmed by the evidence that powerful elements within the army were supporting the student demonstrations.

Apparently determined to counter the student challenge directly, Sukarno requested the attendance of KAMI representatives at a cabinet meeting at the Bogor palace on 15 January. Ten students, chosen to represent KAMI Pusat, KAMI Jaya and KAMI UI, took part in the cabinet meeting. However, if the president thought he would be able to isolate these leaders from their rank and file supporters by this tactic, he had not counted on the resourcefulness of the students.

Realising that Sukarno would go on the attack, the KAMI leaders arranged for as many students as possible to accompany them to Bogor. Messages were also sent to campuses at Bandung and at Bogor informing students of the planned rally. With the assistance of sympathetic senior military officers, a huge cavalcade of trucks and buses was organised to ferry thousands of Jakarta students to Bogor early on the Saturday morning. The students from the Faculties of Letters and Psychology again travelled

---

52 The following students attended: Cosmas Batubara, David Napitupulu, Zamroni, Elyas, Djoni Sunarja, Liem Bian Khoen, Firdaus Wadjdi, Suwarto, Abdul Gafur and Tommy Wangke.
53 According to Paget (1970: 340), around 130 army trucks were supplied to bring the students to Bogor.
together as a single contingent, singing and chanting the anti-government slogans they had invented in the preceding week.\textsuperscript{54} At Bogor, Soe and his friends regrouped and then set off on the bicycles they had brought with them, shouting their Tritura slogans and making short speeches with megaphones to the startled Bogor populace.

Inside the palace, the president set about attempting to humiliate the KAMI leaders by making them feel as uncomfortable as possible.\textsuperscript{55} They were brought face to face not only with the cabinet ministers for whom they had expressed contempt, but also with six student leaders from organisations who had refused to join forces with KAMI and were attempting to resist the dissolution of PPMI.\textsuperscript{56}

With over a hundred members, cabinet was not an effective executive decision-making body. Its meetings had become occasions for rambling, self-indulgent addresses in which the president poured scorn on his enemies, real and imagined. This occasion was no exception. There was no discussion or dialogue with the KAMI leaders who were forced to sit silently while he spoke. Sukarno was obviously very angry and refused to give serious consideration to the students' resolutions. He ignored their proposal to ban the PKI. On the question of prices, he invited anyone who thought he could do better than his cabinet to step forward. He would appoint him minister, but if after three months prices were still rising, he would be shot. Sukarno rebuked the students for their bad manners and their un-Indonesian behaviour, exemplified by the rude insults they had levelled at his ministers and his government.\textsuperscript{57} Furthermore, he

\textsuperscript{54} SHG Diary, 15 January 1966. For other accounts of the events at Bogor, see Wibisono 1970: 27-30; and Yozar Anwar 1980: 29-37.

\textsuperscript{55} Sukarno's tactics would have made many Indonesians - especially Javanese - feel very awkward. Most of the KAMI group, however, were Outer Islanders. Ethnic Javanese were poorly represented in the KAMI leadership circle.

\textsuperscript{56} At a special PPMI plenary session in Jakarta on 29 December, the student organisations present had voted overwhelmingly to dissolve the federation. GMNI, GMKI and Germindo student leaders who had opposed PPMI's dissolution were present at Bogor. This was an obvious attempt to exacerbate the existing divisions within the student ranks. During his address Sukarno spoke about his intention to establish a national union of students that would incorporate all existing student organisations, including KAMI.

\textsuperscript{57} During the afternoon further abusive graffiti appeared, this time on the walls surrounding the Bogor home of the president's wife, Hartini: 'Syphilis Nest', 'The Great Whore', 'The Whore's Palace', 'G erwani Leader'.
suggested that the hand of Nekolim - his acronym for neo-colonialism, colonialism and imperialism - was behind these recent events. It was apparent that his ministers were not the only targets of these demonstrations but that ultimately his enemies were out to topple Sukarno himself. Consequently, he ended his speech with an impassioned call for his supporters to rally to his side:

Gather your forces, form your ranks, defend Sukarno... Wait for my command. Stand behind Sukarno.  

Outside the palace gates the waiting students soon received reports of what was taking place inside. The president's verbal assault on the students and their motives and his refusal to consider their demands exacerbated the already defiant mood of the crowd. Some of the throng began to press forward threatening to push down the iron fence surrounding the palace grounds. The palace guard, who had been subjected to taunts and insults, fired warning shots into the air. It was only after Major General Soeharto, accompanied by the navy commander, Vice Admiral Martadinata, and the police commander, Major General Sutjipto, left the meeting and appealed for calm that the students finally agreed to disperse and return to Jakarta. As the cabinet ministers drove out through the palace gates and the streets of Bogor, the students cheered some and jeered others as they passed. Late in the afternoon the students - tired, frustrated but determined - returned in their trucks and buses to Jakarta.

---

58 President Sukarno's speech, 15 January 1966
59 At one point during the early afternoon, Cosmas Batubara and Zamroni left the meeting to report that the president had dismissed their demands. This provoked anger and dismay among the waiting crowd, and the KAMI leaders were forced to return inside. See Wibisono 1970: 29-30. Other students, including Soe Hok-gie and his friends, had listened in anger to Sukarno's address as it was being broadcast on the radio. SHG Diary, 15 January 1966
60 From the beginning of the Tritura demonstrations, the students and the palace guard regarded one another with mutual suspicion and hostility. The involvement of Lieutenant Colonel Untung and some of his fellow officers in the failed coup attempt was an obvious factor in the stance adopted by the students towards the Cakradirawa regiment. Their suspicion of the palace guard grew as the demonstrations continued.
61 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. According to another eye-witness, Soeharto made two separate appearances to address the students during the course of the afternoon. See Yozar Anwar 1980: 32-34.
The president's supporters respond

For the political forces threatened by the student demonstrations, Sukarno's defiant response at Bogor was the spark for a period of reassertion. In a radio address to the nation on Sunday evening, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Subandrio made a bitter attack on those involved in the week-long demonstrations, accusing them of being exploited by foreign agents of subversion. Taking his cue from Sukarno's remarks the day before, Subandrio called for the immediate formation of a Sukarno Front (Barisan Sukarno) to defend the president from those who were attempting to undermine him. On the same day, the Jakarta army commander, Major General Amir Machmud, used his martial law powers to ban all demonstrations in the city.62 This action was an indication that the military were far from united in their response to the students' activities.

The student organisations supporting the president, especially GMNI, responded by trying to reclaim the leading roles they had played before 1 October. Late on the evening of 17 January and early the following morning, groups of pro-Sukarno students began to put up posters in various parts of the city, including some in the Menteng area and near the KAMI secretariat in Jalan Sam Ratulangi. This resulted in clashes with KAMI supporters who alleged that the pro-Sukarno students were tearing down or defacing their Tritura posters.63

On the day after the Bogor cabinet meeting, Soe was sought out by Suripto, his friend from Gemsos and Gerakan Pembaharuan circles. Late in 1965 Suripto had begun to work in the domestic intelligence section of Koti under the command of Brigadier

---

62 In September 1964, regional army commanders had been given sweeping martial law powers as Pepelrada (Regional Authority to Implement Dwikora) under the direction of the Supreme Operations Command (Koti). Although this was ostensibly part of the confrontation campaign against Malaysia, these powers were often used for domestic political purposes. See Crouch 1978: 76. Notices of the ban on further demonstrations were announced in the Jakarta press on 17 January, 1966. As far as the students were concerned, Amir Machmud remained a feared and hostile figure throughout the following months.

General Yoga Sugama. Suripto was six years Soe Hok-gie's senior, but there was much mutual respect between them, each seeing the other as shrewd, tough and seriously committed to political action against Sukarno's regime. Since Suripto was also an operative in the shadowy realm of military intelligence, there was the added attraction for Soe of access to that conspiratorial world. During this period Suripto was an important source of much of Soe's information about the conflicts and manoeuvres within the regime and the military. Suripto had established connections with a number of senior and middle-level officers, especially of the Siliwangi Division of West Java, who were both strongly anti-communist and hostile to Sukarno. Apart from some of the KAMI Pusat leaders, few other students had access to such information or connections in early 1966.

At Suripto's invitation, Soe spent that evening at his house in Senayan, where until late into the night they discussed the latest political developments, in particular Subandrio's moves to establish the Barisan Sukarno. Suripto's Senayan house was strategically located close to the headquarters of the Kostrad mobile brigade. In the following weeks and months, Senayan became an important centre for the most militant section of the student movement, and Suripto himself played a key role as a broker between the students and the military.

When Soe arrived at the University of Indonesia on Monday, 17 January, he found it relatively quiet in sharp contrast to the excitement of the previous week. Only a small number of students were on campus and no plans had been made for further demonstrations. However, around midday, Soe and his friends discovered several students whom they did not recognise in the act of putting up anti-KAMI posters on the Salemba campus. These four were taken upstairs to an empty room where they were stripped, searched and questioned by a larger group including Soe and Herman Lantang. They admitted they were from the Bung Karno University and working under the

---

64 SHG Diary, 16 January 1966; interview with Suripto, 2 and 19 March 1982
direction of its assistant rector, and were handed over to the Jakarta military command.\textsuperscript{65} It was apparent that pro-Sukarno students were beginning to respond to the president's call for support to combat the KAMI challenge.

In fact, the KAMI leaders, along with many of their supporters within the student community, had been thrown onto the defensive by the president's Bogor speech and subsequent developments. While the students were discussing what their next move should be, Sukarno elected to increase the political pressure by summoning the KAMI leaders to the Jakarta palace on the following Tuesday morning.

However, militant voices among the students urged that the Tritura campaign be continued whatever the consequences.\textsuperscript{66} As the KAMI leaders prepared to meet Sukarno for the second time in less than a week, a spontaneous meeting of student activists, including Soe, Boelie Londa, Ismid Hadad and Hakim Sorimuda, was held at the Faculty of Medicine at which it was decided to organise a demonstration to confront Subandrio over the allegations he had levelled at the students in his Sunday evening radio broadcast. With Hakim Sorimuda taking a leading role, this group quickly prepared a statement and announced their plans to the assembled students.\textsuperscript{67} Soe immediately sensed that they had taken an important step and the campaign against Sukarno and his supporters was escalating:

\begin{quote}
Strangely, there was an extraordinary response to this 'illegal' demonstration. About five thousand students took part and in a flash passing trucks in Salemba were stopped to take students to Pejambon (the Department of Foreign Affairs). At that moment, I grew tense because I knew that this demonstration was illegal and in a situation like that anything might happen.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{65} The Bung Karno University's rector was Major General Achmadi, Minister for Information in the Dwikora Cabinet and a staunch supporter of the president. Its student body was dominated by a pro-Sukarno organisation, Gema Bung Karno (Gerakan Mahasiswa Bung Karno, Bung Karno University Student Movement).

\textsuperscript{66} SHG Diary, 18 January 1966

\textsuperscript{67} Hakim Sorimuda was a medical student at the University of Indonesia and a HMI member; he was a prominent activist in KAMI'S UI branch, and throughout the demonstrations gained a reputation as an independently-minded militant student leader. In several sources, his name also appears as Hakim Sarimuda.

\textsuperscript{68} SHG Diary, 18 January 1966
At the Foreign Affairs building in Jalan Pejambon, Soe joined a delegation of ten students led by Hakim Sorimuda who read out their demands to the Assistant Minister, Suwito Kusumowidagdo. Hearing that Subandrio himself was not there but in his nearby Jalan Merdeka Selatan office, the demonstrators marched to that location chanting 'Subandrio - Running Dog of Peking!'

A delegation from this group eventually succeeded in seeing Subandrio and an angry confrontation occurred. The students challenged the First Minister's allegations that they were being exploited by Nekolim. Subandrio threatened to confront them with his own supporters, then curtly ordered them to leave when he received a message from Amir Machmud informing him that the demonstration was taking place without army authority and was therefore illegal. But the delegation insisted that the minister address the body of students gathered outside. Though aware of the hostile reception waiting, Subandrio finally accepted the challenge, attempting to placate the students with an assurance that he had not intended to imply that their actions were at the behest of Nekolim and its agents but only that there was a danger of such a situation occurring. As the students dispersed, an officer from the Jakarta military garrison instructed those responsible for organising the demonstration to present themselves for questioning.

While the rank-and-file students were conducting this protest demonstration, ten KAMI student leaders visited the palace for an audience with President Sukarno. This had been arranged by ministers who hoped to reconcile the two parties but the attempt seems to have failed. The Minister of Education, Syarif Thayeb, and the Co-ordinating

---

69 In addition to challenging Subandrio to retract the allegations he had made about the student demonstrations, the students demanded that he recall an official Indonesian delegation then visiting Cuba and arrange for its leader, Ibrahim Isa - a prominent left wing figure - to be executed.

70 On this occasion, Soe was not present and his account of the discussion was obtained from Boelie Londa. SHG Diary, 18 January 1966.

71 'Kalian punya massa, sayapun punya massa.'

72 Subsequently, Hakim Sorimuda and Boelie Londa were both detained for 36 hours. SHG Diary, 18 and 20 January 1966.

73 The ten students present again represented the leadership of KAMI Pusat, KAMI Jaya and KAMI UI. Soe probably received an account of the meeting from Suwarto. SHG Diary, 18 January 1966. See also Wibisono 1970: 33-4; and Yozar Anwar 1980: 44-6.
Minister for Public Relations, Roeslan Abdulgani, were both present as Sukarno angrily repeated his criticism of the student's activities, referring in particular to the messages that had been scrawled on his wife Hartini's house in Bogor.74

Late on the evening of the same day, Soe was visited by one of the Bandung circle of militant anti-Sukarno activists, Rachman Tolleng, with news of important developments there.75 Extensive demonstrations had also been taking place in Bandung since 12 January and were still continuing. From Rachman, Soe learned that activists from the Bandung Institute of Technology had attempted to organise a 'long march' from Bandung to Jakarta but the Siliwangi divisional commander, Major General Ibrahim Adjie, who was unsympathetic to the students, had stopped them just outside Bandung at Padalarang. However, Adjie was also opposed to the Barisan Sukarno and had announced earlier that day that this organisation was banned throughout West Java.76 Radically oppositionist student leaders from Bandung were now arriving in Jakarta to monitor developments and take an active part in the struggle. At the UI campus the following day, 19 January, Soe met with a group of Letters and Psychology students and read them a copy of the open petition to Sukarno that a group of Bandung students had prepared a week earlier.77 The petition was hard-hitting in its criticisms of the government and was written in a style of exaggerated deference that was deliberately intended to be offensive. The mood in Bandung student circles was clearly in advance of that in Jakarta, and Soe tried to communicate the Bandung spirit to those present.

74 The students lamely attempted to blame this on agitators from the PKI youth organisation, Pemuda Rakyat. Paget (1970: 342-3) describes the meeting as 'relatively amicable'. Given the president's fury about the students' behaviour, this seems highly improbable.
75 Rachman Tolleng was a student at Padjadjaran University and a prominent Gemsos activist. He had been one of Suripto's circle in Bandung and in 1965 he had worked closely with him cultivating ties with sympathetic members of the armed forces under the guise of confrontation with Malaysia. He had known Soe Hok-gie since early 1964. Interviews with Rachman Tolleng, August 1978.
76 For a succinct account of the attempt by supporters of the president to establish a Barisan Sukarno and the army's efforts to block these moves, see Crouch 1978: 167-73. On Adjie's role in particular, see Crouch 1978: 168-70; also Sundhaussen 1982: 231-2.
77 The petition, prepared by Alex Rumondor, was reprinted in its entirety in the February edition of the Psychology students' stencilled broadsheet. See Gema Psycolog, February 1966: 4-10.
Antipathy towards President Sukarno was widespread among militant students such as Soe, but none of them was yet prepared to voice those feelings directly in public situations. The president was still the object of powerful reverence - as the man who had proclaimed independence, who had put his country on the map of world affairs, the formally designated Great Leader of the Revolution - and he retained intensely loyal support among large sections of the student and youth movement. Outright public opposition to Sukarno would have been political suicide in January 1966.

The KAMI leaders who had yet again been confronted by an angry Sukarno and had been forced onto the defensive decided that they had to make some effort to show that they were still loyal to his wishes. The day after the palace meeting, the KAMI leaders met with the Minister of the Interior and Governor of Jakarta, Major General Sumarno Sosroatmodjo. As a result of their discussions KAMI Pusat chairman, Cosmas Batubara, announced that on the following day, 20 January, the students would whitewash the offending graffiti that had been plastered all over the city during the previous week.78 Before the students set about their work, KAMI leaders encouraged them to attend a 'Loyalty Rollcall' that was to take place outside the Jakarta palace and where the entire Dwikora Cabinet would swear an oath of allegiance to the president, as part of the preparations for the formation of the proposed Barisan Sukarno.

Soe was reluctant to participate in this, but felt a sense of obligation to his friend Herman Lantang, who had to be there as senate leader to coordinate the Letters students.79 Soe arrived late just as the speeches were ending. In fact, there was only a relatively small turn-out of several hundred KAMI supporters. They were outnumbered by a much larger crowd of students and workers who had come to demonstrate their loyalty to Sukarno. Many of the KAMI students were wearing the yellow jackets of the University of Indonesia, which had been prominent throughout the previous ten days'.

---

78 Wibisono 1970: 41
demonstrations. As the students began to leave, taunts and abuse erupted from both sides and suddenly the KAMI students found themselves surrounded by hostile supporters of the president:

Suddenly the group of students and labourers in the lead circled around behind and led by one big tall fellow, attacked the KAMI line with sticks and stones. The students, unprepared for this, were startled. Several small groups of students outside the line were surrounded and beaten. Furthermore they didn't hesitate to hit the women. From Letters, Ibu Hendarmin (Archaeology IV) was surrounded and ordered to remove her yellow jacket. She refused and was kicked until her legs turned blue. Elvira Manopo (Elok) was stoned by Kosasih, a Letters student from GMNI-ASU. Judi was also stoned. His head was slightly wounded. From Psychology, Pudji, an ASU member, punched Kartini, a fellow first-year student. I could imagine what would have occurred if at that moment I had met one of the GMNI-ASU from Letters; I would have been beaten for sure, because they really hate me. The ASU supporters shouted out 'Crush KAMI', 'Crush the yellow jackets', 'KAMI - Kesatuan Aksi Maling Indonesia', KAMI - rightists' and so on.80

When Soe and his fellow students arrived back at Salemba, the leaders had an urgent meeting to discuss what had occurred and compile a report. Soe complained about the behaviour of one of the Letters GMNI-ASU activists he had identified in the melee. Other students claimed to have seen CGMI activists from the medical faculty.81

The incident was a sharp reminder to the KAMI activists at Salemba of the strength of the opposition they were facing within wider student circles. That evening Soe, Herman Lantang and others attended a meeting at Roeslan Abdulgani's residence where the KAMI leaders had gathered to discuss Sukarno's proposal to form a national union of students. The students took the opportunity to complain about the provocation from the Bung Karno University students and gave their account of the incident that had occurred earlier in the day outside the palace. That evening Soe joined his friends from the Letters-Psychology group at the Faculty of Psychology building. Rumours were rife that pro-

80 SHG Diary, 20 January 1966. GMNI, like its parent body the PNI, was split into rival left and right factions. The label ASU is an acronym derived from the names of the PNI's general chairman (Ali Sastroamidjojo) and general secretary (Surachman), and hence was used to signify the left wing of both the party and its student affiliate. Since 'asu' is also Javanese for 'dog', the label increasingly began to be used in a pejorative sense by GMNI's opponents. 'Kesatuan Aksi Maling Indonesia' (literally Indonesian Thieves Action Front) was a play on the initials of the acronym.

81 The KAMI Information Bureau immediately compiled a press release about the incident that was sent to the Jakarta press. A report subsequently appeared in Angkatan Bersendjata, 21 January 1966. GMNI activists from the Jakarta Raya branch immediately released their own account of the incident, denying the presence of CGMI members and alleging provocation from the KAMI supporters. Their statement was in the form of a press release, 'Penjelasan Dewan Pimpinan Cabang GMNI Jakarta Raya tentang peristiwa pada rapat umum didepan Istana Merdeka pada 20 January 1966', dated 21 January 1966.
Sukarno students were planning to launch an attack on the UI campus and so they spent a nervous night fearing that this might occur:

> From Roeslan's house we all returned to the Faculty of Psychology because in such a tense and critical situation, a physical clash was expected at any moment with UBK-ASU-Germindo and their hired lackeys. Late into the night I saw trucks loaded with the student masses coming from the direction of Cijantung.82

The following day, Amir Machmud as the Jakarta Martial Law Commander, organised a mass meeting at Lapangan Banteng to express loyalty to the president.83 In the light of the previous day's events, Soe and his friends were prepared for trouble. A late-night visitor had already warned him of the possibility of another clash occurring at this rally, but had also brought the good news that RPKAD troops in civilian clothes, would be there to protect them.84 In the event, since the KAMI students and their supporters arrived in numbers and well-prepared, another outbreak of violence failed to materialise:

> During the public meeting, no attention was paid to the discussion but to the security situation. Up to the end of the meeting nothing happened. When the meeting ended, the KAMI group began to ridicule the ASU front to provoke them but received no response. Apparently they were scared because the large KAMI contingent was armed with iron bars and wearing military boots. In short, ready for combat. The ASU supporters were surrounded by Ansor, Pemuda Islam, Catholics and others who were also ready for a fight. Finally the meeting broke up.85

Soe and the Letters and Psychology students marched as a group back to Salemba chanting the Tritura slogans and singing the humorously offensive songs that they had perfected throughout the previous ten days. A strong bond was emerging among those who were taking part in the demonstrations. Now that the president's supporters were rallying behind him and a war of nerves between the two groups intensified, students started to sense that they were taking part in a major power struggle with potentially grave consequences.

---

82 SHG Diary, 20 January 1966
83 The meeting resulted in a statement of support that was signed by more than a hundred separate organisations representing the widest possible cross-section of Indonesian society. For the statement and a list of signatories, see Paget 1970: 366-9. For other accounts of the students' participation at this rally, see Wibisono 1970: 43; and Yozar Anwar 1980: 52-4.
84 Soe did not identify his visitor by name in his diary entry, merely describing him as 'an old fighter from the Japanese era'. SHG Diary, 20 January 1966
85 SHG Diary, 21 January 1966
Back in the relative safety of the Salemba campus, Soe and the other students were obviously relieved that a major clash had not occurred.\textsuperscript{86} This rally and the KAMI show of force that accompanied it, marked the end of the first phase of the students' campaign. Lebaran, the end of the fasting period, arrived on 23 January and ushered in the traditional period of Islamic celebration widely observed throughout Indonesia. Consequently, for the next week or two the campus and the streets were quiet.

\textbf{Strategies and structures}

For the students who had taken part in the launching of the Tritura campaign, including those at the Faculty of Letters, the previous ten days had been an exciting and eventful period. The demonstrations had been noisy and boisterous, with a lot of exuberance and good humour, little violence and no destruction of property, private or public. For many of these students, this was their first experience of political activism. At Rawamangun where student political organisations did not have a strong following, most students had remained steadfastly non-political but silently cynical about the goals and direction of Guided Democracy. Suddenly they found themselves marching through the streets, chanting anti-government slogans, confronting senior ministers in their offices and shouting them down.

The broad direction of the campaign so far had been set by the KAMI Pusat leaders. Cosmas Batubara, Zamroni and the other members of the KAMI Presidium had decided upon the agenda, made many of the keynote speeches at the public rallies and assumed a high profile. However, Soe and his friends at the Faculty of Letters had held their own meetings before deciding to take part and had participated in the demonstrations as a group. Furthermore, they had been prepared to conduct their own small demonstrations even when this meant departing from KAMI's announced program. There were other faculty groups of activists on the main campus of the University of

\textsuperscript{86} However, Kosasih, the GMNI student who had thrown a stone at a female student from his own faculty the day before, was cornered later that day by Boelie Londa and given a beating. Soe, who knew Kosasih well and regarded him as an opportunist, thoroughly approved. SHG Diary, 21 January 1966
Indonesia. With a lecture strike in place and classes abandoned, the most militant students established separate headquarters in the Faculties of Medicine and Psychology, some of them sleeping on the campus. Very few of the KAMI leadership were University of Indonesia students and the KAMI Pusat headquarters was at the Catholic students' office in Jalan Sam Ratulangi in Menteng.

Soe and his closest allies saw the struggle to overthrow Sukarno and his government as one which had only just begun. GMNI, despite its own internal conflicts, remained the largest student political organisation in the country. Most of its membership remained loyal to the so-called ASU group led by its general chairman, Bambang Kusnohadi, and the Jakarta branch was still firmly under the control of Bambang's ally, Kartjono. These student leaders were staunch allies of Sukarno and were responding to his call for more active support. In addition, other centres of committed supporters of the president were evident at the Bung Karno University.

The most serious question for the militant students opposed to Sukarno was how the military would react if the KAMI campaign continued or if a showdown with the president eventually occurred. Soe had agonised over this issue earlier:

> Of course with discipline we are ready to suffer, but ... 'to the last point' will ABRI side with the people who are suffering and be prepared to point their bayonets at the corruptors and if necessary this corrupt government?^{87}

Nothing he had seen or heard since provided satisfactory answers to this problem. It was clear that the RPKAD under Sarwo Edhie supported the students and Soe knew from his contacts at Senayan that there were many Siliwangi officers who were opposed to the president, his policies and his style of government. But would they dare to move alone?

On the other hand, Sukarno had strong support from sections of the armed forces. The Cakrabirawa regiment, his palace guard, were intensely loyal and had already

---

87 SHG Diary, 7 January 1966
clashed with students. In addition, the well-equipped police mobile brigade (Brimob), and in particular its Pioneers regiment (Pelopor) led by Anton Soedjarwo, were prominent in the capital whenever demonstrations and large public gatherings were held, and widely believed to be largely Sukarno supporters. In the Jakarta regional military command, senior officers like its chief of staff Colonel Witono and Lieutenant Colonel Urip Widodo were sympathetic to the new student movement, but several of the students had already been roughed up by their subordinates. The commander of the Jakarta region, Amir Machmud, had given no indication of supporting the KAMI students' cause: on the contrary, he had publicly criticised them early in the Tritura campaign and announced a ban on all demonstrations when he learned of the president's anger. At that point, Soe and the other student militants knew little about the likely reaction of Major General Soeharto, appointed army commander on 16 October, except that various people had different evaluations of where his sympathies lay as between the president and KAMI. Would he support the militant students in a political struggle against Sukarno? It was clear to Soe that in late January the struggle had reached a critical stage.

The pressure to return to class

It was almost two weeks before any further activity took place on the streets of Jakarta. That was partly because of the ban on demonstrations proclaimed by Amir Machmud and enforced by his Jakarta garrison command, and partly because the majority of the students had returned to their homes and their families for the Lebaran holiday.

Soe Hok-gie remained at Kebon Jeruk and spent time resting and writing. He included a vivid account of the previous three weeks extraordinary events in his diary.

---

88 Until this was written Soe had made no entries in his diary for almost a year. However, he was clearly aware of the profound importance of the events in which he had just participated and took the opportunity afforded by Lebaran to make a permanent record while everything was fresh in his memory. Entitled 'The days of the approaching typhoon in the student world', the manuscript consists of sixteen closely-typed foolscap pages (it was the only section of his diary that was ever typewritten) and covers the period from just before 7 January until 21 January. It was dated 25 January 1966, almost certainly the day it was completed. Although written as a single continuous entry, the chronology of individual days and events is readily apparent.
and drew on this for a special 'demonstration edition' of the Psychology students' faculty broadsheet, *Gema Psychologi* (sic), which was distributed throughout the campus and elsewhere in late January and early February.\(^8^9\) This was a hastily written, stencilled account of the demonstrations, that set out to explain the aims and purpose of the students' actions. Intended principally to maintain the commitment of his own circle, it was also used to spread the message beyond the university.

When he returned to the campus, Soe discovered several worrying developments.\(^9^0\) Although the University of Indonesia remained quiet, there was a high degree of activity behind the scenes in certain student circles during the last ten days of January as President Sukarno began to increase the pressure on his student adversaries. Having tongue-lashed the KAMI student leaders himself on two occasions, he now issued instructions to his ministers, and especially to Syarif Thayeb whom he held responsible for KAMI's emergence, to see that the striking students returned to classes.\(^9^1\) In addition, in an attempt to out-manoeuvre those who were behind the recent demonstrations he pushed for steps to establish a new body to represent all Indonesian students.

Over the Lebaran period, the KAMI Pusat leaders held meetings with several cabinet ministers, including Roeslan Abdulgani, Achmadi and Syarif Thayeb.\(^9^2\) In the face of this sustained pressure, the KAMI Pusat leadership issued an instruction to all branches to return to classes on 1 February. This sparked an intense debate within student circles that raged for the next fortnight, especially on the campus of the

\(^{8^9}\) See his 'Demonstrasi mahasiswa', *Gema Psychologi*, January 1966.

\(^{9^0}\) From the end of January 1966, Soe became so thoroughly immersed in the political events occurring on and off the campus that there was little time for quiet reflection. Consequently, he recorded nothing further of these events in his diary. The following account of his role in the events of February and March is drawn largely from interviews with a number of other participants.

\(^{9^1}\) Throughout most of the first phase of the Tritura campaign, Syarif Thayeb had been overseas in Japan accompanying Sukarno's Japanese wife, Ratna Sari Dewi, in conjunction with a proposal to establish a new hospital in Jakarta. He returned on the day of the Bogor cabinet meeting and was shocked to discover what had been occurring in his absence. The following day, 16 January, the furious minister summoned the KAMI leaders for an official rebuke. Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982.

University of Indonesia which had been the centre of the students' activities so far. KAMI Jaya leaders immediately opposed the move, and the militant student activists who had formed the KAMI Bandung branch sent representatives to Jakarta to urge that the lecture strike continue.93

At a student rally at Salemba on 1 February, to announce the end of the lecture strike, Zamroni presented the KAMI Pusat case. The issue, however, was hotly debated with several other speakers, including representatives from KAMI Jaya and KAMI UI. Militant student leaders, and in particular the small number of politically conscious individuals like Soe who hoped for a total transformation of the political system were totally opposed to abandoning the lecture strike, and determined to find ways to continue the confrontation with the government. The general reaction was disappointment with the KAMI Pusat recommendations. The majority of the students who had taken part in the January demonstrations considered this to be an unnecessary and unacceptable compromise. The students saw themselves as standing on a point of principle. Until there was some positive response from President Sukarno to their three basic demands, they saw no reason for the tactical retreat that KAMI Pusat was suggesting.

The position of the KAMI Pusat leaders was in one sense entirely understandable since they had been subjected to intense political pressure by some of the most experienced and senior political operators in the country. But they were also guilty of completely misreading the prevailing mood within the campus where many students, under the influence of the hard-liners, were determined to continue the struggle they had embarked upon in early January.94 This issue ultimately discredited the KAMI Pusat leaders in the eyes of many students, who regarded them as having 'sold out' to the

---

93 Wibisono 1970: 49; Yozar Anwar 1980: 83
94 These differences reflected the fact that the KAMI Pusat activists lacked close ties with the University of Indonesia campus. None of the four chairmen of the Presidium was a student there: Cosmas Batubara was a Catholic school teacher, currently studying at a Jakarta college of mass communications (Sekolah Tinggi Publisistik); David Napitupulu was a student of public administration (Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Administrasi Negara); Zamroni was studying education at the Jakarta IAIN; and Elyas was a student from IPB, Bogor.
politicians. The lecture strike debate continued throughout the next three weeks as the KAMI Pusat leaders and Syarif Thayeb, supported in turn by the university rector, some sections of the Jakarta press, the pro-Sukarno student organisations and Amir Machmud, unsuccessfully attempted to cajole, threaten and force the students back to class.

As this debate continued in student circles throughout the first weeks of February, a struggle was also taking place in civilian and military circles over the notion of the Barisan Sukarno and what this might mean, with many groups looking for ways to carry out the president's commands in a way which did not mean letting down the KAMI cause. Sukarno, meanwhile, did what he could to stiffen the resolve of his most ardent supporters, particularly those in student and youth circles, as a counterweight to KAMI. A group of student leaders representing GMNI, the Indonesian Nationalist Secondary School Movement (Gerakan Siswa Nasional Indonesia, GSNI) and the PNI's youth affiliate Marhaen Youth (Pemuda Marhaenis), had visited the palace on 26 January and assured the president of their loyal support and their opposition to the KAMI-led demonstrations. Several days later, on 30 January, Achmadi, Sukarno's Minister for Information and the rector of the Bung Karno University, hosted a meeting of student leaders from that campus (Gema Bung Karno) and the leadership of GMNI. The two groups produced a joint statement supporting the president and calling for the immediate establishment of a new national union of students.95

On 2 February, when a ceremony was held at the Salemba campus to mark the sixteenth anniversary of the university, fighting broke out between GMNI students, who were attempting to pursue a 'business as usual' approach, and their opponents.96 A number of GMNI students, including Bambang Harianto, a recent chairman of the Student Council, were badly beaten. The university student regiment, Mahajaya, who seemed to be on the side of the KAMI students, vainly attempted to intervene. Finally,

96 See Wibisono 1970: 51 and Yozar Anwar 1980: 83. The GMNI Jakarta Raya chairman, Kartjono, compiled a detailed report on these incidents, alleging deliberate harassment of his members. Interview with Kartjono, 22 February 1985
police and troops - including members of the Cakrabirawa regiment - were called onto the campus to break up the brawling.

On 3 February KAMI Jaya, whose three chairmen were all University of Indonesia students, prepared a statement opposing the return to classes. To publicise this continuation of the lecture strike, a convoy of army trucks was again organised to ferry students to the Heroes' Ceremony at Kalibata. In a brief ceremony at the grave of the six generals murdered on 1 October, the students affirmed their determination to continue the Tritura struggle. On their way home they ventured into the field of foreign affairs, calling at the US Embassy to protest about the bombing of Vietnam, and the Chinese Embassy to complain about what they called Chinese interference in Indonesia's domestic affairs. At the US Embassy, Ambassador Marshall Green received a polite deputation, but at the Chinese Embassy the gates stayed firmly shut. The students then scrawled abusive messages on the surrounding high walls and levered the embassy's name plaque from the front gates before departing.

Further fighting broke out that evening in and around the GMNI students' headquarters in Jalan Tegalan, where a member of the University of Indonesia's student regiment was caught throwing stones into the GMNI compound. On 7 February, the chairman of the Faculty of Medicine student senate, Abdul Razak, was stabbed by a GMNI student on the Salemba campus.

On 8 February, the campus-based student activists released a strongly worded statement, expressing their determination to continue the lecture strike. On the same
day Syarif Thayeb received a hostile reception from a group of militant students as he addressed a meeting on the campus of the Christian University of Indonesia (UKI) on Jalan Diponegoro. By chance, a group of Bandung activists had just arrived in Jakarta. One of their number, Robby Sutrisno, publicly attacked the minister for his attempt to persuade the students to return to their classes and, to the delight of those present, urged students to continue their support for the campaign. On 8 and 9 February, KAMI Jaya organised further activities on the streets outside the campus - a single file 'picket line' on 8 February and a march arm-in-arm winding through the streets of central Jakarta on the following day with many students wearing placards publicising the Tritura demands. Although the offices of ministers or officials were not invaded on these occasions, the students involved were technically breaking the ban on demonstrations, and troops from the Jakarta army command were already breaking up meetings of student leaders and forcing them to disperse. Also on 9 February, a huge demonstration was held in Bandung (where no ban on student gatherings was in force) in the form of an 'allegorical procession'. The Bandung students displayed considerable ingenuity at creating fanciful models and caricatures insulting to key personalities of the cabinet.

Faced with this continued student protest, Sukarno and his supporters decided that a tougher response was required. On 9 February, troops acting on orders from Amir Machmud arrested some of the KAMI leaders and held them in detention for several days. Meanwhile Higher Education Minister Syarif Thayeb, his credibility with KAMI students now shaky, renewed his order for students to return to class, threatening to resign if they continued to disobey. The minister's order was repeated in the

---

103 The procession included a donkey with the message 'I'm a stupid minister' and students paraded dressed as cabinet ministers and accompanied by a retinue of female students bearing signs identifying them as 'imported concubines'. Some of them were wearing Japanese kimonos.
104 Those arrested included Cosmas Batubara, David Napitupulu and Zamroni of KAMI Pusat, and Firdaus Wadjdi and Liem Bian Khoen of KAMI Jaya. Several other KAMI activists managed to evade the team sent to detain them. See Wibisono 1970: 78-9 and Yozar Anwar 1980: 100.
newspapers and on the radio over several successive days from 10 February, and was strongly supported by GMNI students.\textsuperscript{105}

On 13 February, the National Front organised a mass rally at Senayan stadium to promote the planned Conference of the New Emerging Forces (\textit{Conefo}) and the continuing \textit{konfrontasi} campaign against Malaysia.\textsuperscript{106} Sukarno seized the chance to attack the student demonstrations, to renew his call for his supporters to form the Barisan Sukarno, and expressed his defiance of the KAMI students by praising the PKI's contributions to Indonesia's national development. Sukarno's speech enraged his enemies and even those within the military who still retained great affection for the president were deeply disturbed by his pro-PKI remarks.

On 15 February, Sukarno summoned a group of student leaders from GMNI, Germindo, Gema Bung Karno, PPMI and MMI to discuss the conflicts occurring within student circles. Subandrio joined in the discussions and the students present again expressed their eagerness to join the Barisan Sukarno and their willingness to confront the counter-revolutionary elements within student circles.\textsuperscript{107}

By the middle of February students like Soe who were supporting the militant line found themselves under considerable pressure. The president and his supporters appeared to be gaining the upper hand in the war of nerves that was being played out on the campus, and it seemed to the students that most of the key commanders were supporting him. The KAMI leaders who had been in detention were obviously shaken by the experience and resumed their attempts to persuade students to abandon the lecture strike. In planning their next moves, they consulted the older generation action front leaders from Front Pancasila, Subchan and Harry Tjan, who were close to several members of the KAMI Presidium.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{105} 'Memorandum presidium GMNI untuk menyelesaikan berbagai masalah kemahasiswaan Indonesia', 10 February 1966.
\textsuperscript{107} Wibisono 1970: 58; Yozar Anwar 1980: 115
\textsuperscript{108} Wibisono 1970: 58-9; Yozar Anwar 1980: 111-112
The rector of the University of Indonesia, Professor Sumantri Brodjonegoro, also issued an instruction for students to return to classes on 17 February, while at a further meeting at the Salemba campus on 16 February, the KAMI leaders again announced that the lecture strike was to end.109 To placate the militant Bandung students who had made it clear that they would accept no compromise, the KAMI announcement was worded so as to allow branches in other cities and institutions to make their own decisions. Those students who were committed to continuing the lecture strike gathered at the Faculty of Psychology building nearby in Jalan Diponegoro and Soe took a lead in opposing any retreat from their declared position:

Soe Hok-gie declared that he would not accept any form of political compromise. 'As for me', said Hok-gie angrily, 'I'm going to continue the lecture strike. Every person who thinks plainly will surely agree with my view. We must continue to fight, the struggle is still long, the road is still far, sacrifice is still required of us. We cannot retreat because of political reasons, because of political calculations. I'm going to continue the lecture strike with all its risks and consequences'.110

Yet as the pressures mounted against them throughout February, Soe could see that the students on their own were incapable of enforcing the changes that were required to bring about the demise of Guided Democracy. To continue their campaign, the students would need the backing of those elements of the armed forces who were opposed to Sukarno's style of government and who also believed in fundamental reform. Consequently, Soe conferred more and more frequently during this time with his friend Suripto at Senayan.111 Suripto had good contacts with senior officers such as Kostrad chief of staff, Brigadier General Kemal Idris and Koti intelligence officer, Brigadier General Yoga Sugama, and also with sympathetic middle-ranking officers. Foremost

---

109 Yozar Anwar 1980: 117-118
110 Wibisono 1970: 63. Although the University of Indonesia rector had called on the students to return to classes, not all his staff agreed with him. Over a year later Soe recalled an occasion during that February period when he was approached unexpectedly on the campus by the dean of the Faculty of Psychology, Professor Slamet Imam Santoso, a senior and widely respected figure. Professor Slamet related to Soe some of his experiences as a young doctor during the worst excesses of the Japanese occupation and how these had led him to wrestle with his own conscience:

Pak Slamet then said we must always have the courage to be honest and faithful to the truth. Even though we are going to be abused, this abuse will only confirm us in our heart of hearts.'

See Soe Hok-gie, 'I remember Merapi', Mahasiswa Indonesia, No 58, Week 4, July 1967.
111 Interview with Suripto, 2 March 1982
among this group was Lieutenant Colonel Muljono, the chief of staff of the Kostrad Cavalry Brigade, located strategically close by, and Lieutenant Colonel Andi Norman, a RPKAD officer who had been attached to the West Kalimantan Battle Command. These officers and their subordinates assured Suripito and his student circle of material and physical support for their activities. Senayan became a focal point, not only for Soe and others in the Gerakan Pembaharuan - Jopie Lasut, Boelie Londa and Henk Tombokan - but also for a small group of militant Bandung student activists who made regular visits to Jakarta. Many of this group of student activists at Senayan were given military passes and access to military vehicles, enabling them to avoid curfews. A few were also provided with weapons.

With tension escalating and battle lines being drawn between the pro-Sukarno students and their militant opponents, the Jakarta army commander, Amir Machmud, announced another 'Loyalty Rally' for the president, to be held at Lapangan Banteng on 23 February. However, two days before this, Sukarno dropped a political bombshell with the radio announcement of a cabinet reshuffle on the evening of 21 February.

Reform of the cabinet had been one of the three demands of the students since the beginning of January but there was little about this re-casting of the cabinet to suggest that Sukarno was responding to the Tritura. On the contrary, the changes he announced on 21 February seemed deliberately designed to antagonise his opponents and reassert his own authority. Major General Soeharto, as the recently appointed army commander, now retained cabinet rank; but none of those ministers who had been singled out for special criticism by the students were dropped, not those who had been attacked for their economic incompetence, nor those attacked as corruptors, nor the alleged sympathisers

---

112 See also Suripito's own article written on the anniversary of the student movement, 'Pelaku-pelaku di balik aksi Tritura' (The actors behind the Tritura campaign), Kompas, 11 January 1984, where these and other military supporters of the students are mentioned in some detail.

113 Interviews with Henk Tombokan and Jopie Lasut, August 1978. Around this time, the Gerakan Pembaharuan group had taken over an empty house in Jalan Setiabudi, allegedly belonging to Jusuf Muda Dalam, and had established it as their headquarters, using it for meetings and preparing pamphlets to distribute during demonstrations.

114 For a full account of the cabinet reshuffle and its political implications, see Crouch 1978: 174-7.
with the PKI. The most dramatic change was the dropping of General Nasution as Minister for Defence. Nasution was the only one of the seven generals targeted by the coup plotters of 1 October who had managed to escape, and was regarded as a leading counterweight to Sukarno. Not only were the positions of known supporters of the president strengthened, especially in the reshuffling of several significant military posts, but a number of new faces in his cabinet were widely regarded as close to the PKI, including the newly appointed Minister for Basic Education and Culture, Sumardjo. Syarif Thayeb, who had been involved in the establishment of KAMI in late October, but had proved unable to control the activities of students rallying under its banner, was demoted to a minor cabinet post.

**Demonstrations resume: the violent phase**

The announced cabinet changes galvanised the militant students into immediate action, ushering in what turned out to be the final phase in the mass movement to overthrow Sukarno, although this was not initially apparent. Before the cabinet reshuffle was announced, Sukarno and his supporters seemed gradually to be gaining the ascendancy over their opponents, but the anger and disappointment engendered by the announcement created a climate in which militant student leaders such as Soe Hok-gie were able to plan further demonstrations with ease.

In fact, shortly after the cabinet reshuffle was announced, Soe received some alarming news - almost certainly from his friends at Senayan - to the effect that Lieutenant Colonel Imam Sjafe'i, Sukarno's newly appointed Minister for Security Affairs, was intending to eliminate the KAMI student leaders. Although such a rumour seemed overly dramatic, Sjafe'i was best known not for his rather tenuous military connections but for his reputation as a Jakarta crime boss, and it was widely believed that he was appointed to cabinet solely to deal with the problem of the students. Consequently, Soe decided to approach those student leaders from within the KAMI circle whom he judged to be more independent-minded and militant and with whom effective political collaboration seemed possible. He immediately contacted Marsillam Simanjuntak of KAMI Jaya and Elyas of
KAMI Pusat - both members of SOMAL - to warn them about Sjafe'i, persuading them both to accompany him to a safe house. Both students had spoken out against the proposal to abandon the lecture strike and were believed to share the same uncompromising outlook as the other militant students. Soe took both of them to Senayan where they were introduced to the Suripto circle and their military supporters.

Plans were immediately drawn up to resume demonstrations on a large scale. The Loyalty Rally for Sukarno called by Amir Machmud for 23 February presented an ideal opportunity. Through Suripto, the students' intentions were communicated to Yoga Sugama and Kemal Idris who gave their approval. The students were led to believe that if they were to cause a serious riot, this would give the armed forces under Soeharto sufficient reason to step in and take over. Consequently, Soe and the other militant students gathered at Senayan set out for Lapangan Banteng intending to cause as much trouble as possible. They knew that pro-Sukarno students would also be attending the rally in force and hoped to provoke a confrontation with those students when the speeches concluded. Soe and Marsillam Simanjuntak had a plan to direct the demonstrators to the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Jalan Pejambon - a route which would bring them into direct conflict with the pro-Sukarno students whom they expected would be gathered on the southern side of Lapangan Banteng. They told their army allies to expect the clash to occur at Pejambon.

However, it seems that other student leaders had different plans. When the rally concluded, whether by accident or design, large numbers of students headed north out of Lapangan Banteng along Jalan Kathedral and towards the State Secretariat building

115 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. Simanjuntak recalled the sense of urgency and the seriousness of purpose Soe conveyed when he arrived unexpectedly at his house. This occurred shortly after he had himself returned from Subandrio's residence where he had delivered a joint KAMI Pusat/KAMI Jaya statement rejecting the reshuffled cabinet.
116 Interviews with Suripto, 2 March 1982; and Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. Suripto recalls informing Yoga Sugama about the students' plans on the morning of 23 February. Yoga suggested that the demonstration should be as big as possible so that he could report to Soeharto who would then have an excuse for taking control.
behind the presidential palace.\textsuperscript{117} When the students reached the railway crossing at the entrance to Jalan Nusantara (now Jalan Ir H. Juanda), they found their way blocked by troops. When the student throng persisted, one soldier opened fire, seriously wounding at least one, possibly more.\textsuperscript{118} The frightened but angry demonstrators ran along Jalan Nusantara and Jalan Veteran to the State Secretariat building where secondary school students mobilised by the Indonesian Student and Youth Action Front (\textit{Kesatuan Aksi Pelajar Pemuda Indonesia}, KAPPI), had already gathered in force.\textsuperscript{119} Eventually large numbers of students forced their way into the building to present their demands, occupying it for several hours and causing considerable damage to the contents. Outside the building, the milling students continued to hurl abuse at the Cakrabirawa palace guard who were gathered in some force protecting the adjacent presidential palace. The demonstrators were finally persuaded to leave the State Secretariat building later in the afternoon. As they attempted to retrace their steps along Jalan Nusantara and Jalan Veteran, they were fired on by the palace guard, and several more were wounded. This created further pandemonium as many students found themselves trapped.\textsuperscript{120} Sporadic shooting continued as the students made their way back to the Salemba campus just as dusk fell.

It had been a day full of emotion and confusion. No one knew how many students had been wounded, but rumours quickly spread that at least one had been shot dead. It

\textsuperscript{117} Interviews with Firdaus Wadjdi, 25 February 1985; and Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. It appears likely that other student leaders had their own plan about where the demonstration should be directed. Just as possible, the student mass may have taken that direction as a spur of the moment and spontaneous decision. For brief published accounts of the demonstration, see Wibisono 1970: 65-6; and Yozar Anwar 1980: 129-34.

\textsuperscript{118} The identity of these troops or those who were commanding them is unknown, although it appears that they were not from the palace guard, the Cakrabirawa. Yozar Anwar (1980: 129) describes them as military police (Pomad); other students who were present suggest that the soldiers were without identifying insignia. Did the soldier shoot out of panic or ill-discipline, or was he acting under orders? Several former students, reflecting on the incident, suggested that the troops may have been ordered to shoot to ensure some bloodshed occurred, thus enraging the students and pushing the conflict to a new level of intensity.

\textsuperscript{119} KAPPI had been formed on 9 January by a group of Islamic activists. The chairman of its central presidium was Moh. Husnie Thamrin, a HMI activist from Yogyakarta who had become the general secretary of the Indonesian Islamic Students (\textit{Pelajar Islam Indonesia}, PII) in Jakarta in 1962.

\textsuperscript{120} Some students remained inside the State Secretariat building throughout the night, too terrified to leave.
was clear to the students that a new and dangerous stage of their campaign had been reached.\footnote{121 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak and Rachman Tolleng, 19 February 1982. One KAMI activist appears to have deliberately fuelled the rumours by rushing off to buy a wreath which was placed at the State Secretariat building during the afternoon. Bandung activists heard these rumours on the same day and immediately organised a demonstration. According to Crouch (1978: 182), Radio Australia, widely listened to in Indonesia, reported four students dead. Although these reports were incorrect, the total number of students shot or wounded appears to have been around nine, and several of the wounds were quite serious.} What was especially alarming to them was the absence of any backing from their military supporters. As soon as the shooting had begun that morning, Soe and others had prevailed upon Suripto to report this to Yoga Sugama and Kemal Idris. The two Kostrad officers did confer with Soeharto, but returned with the news that it was too soon for the army to move against the president. The students would have to face the palace guard on their own.\footnote{122 Interview with Suripto, 2 March 1982. The militant students made their displeasure known to the Kostrad officers. Suripto recalls thumping the table and cursing. Tensions between the military and the students who were appealing for their support increased from this point.}

The following day the newly appointed cabinet was to be installed at the presidential palace and with the events of the previous day in mind, the militant students were determined to do all in their power to prevent the ceremony occurring.\footnote{123 Interviews with several participants. For published accounts of the day's events, see Wibisono 1970: 67-9; and Yozar Anwar 1980: 135-41.} From well before dawn, small bands of students set out from the university, stopping vehicles at strategic points all over central Jakarta, letting down their tyres and creating a huge traffic jam that brought large parts of the city to a standstill.\footnote{124 Hakim Sorimuda played a central role in these events.} The installation of the new cabinet went ahead but only with great difficulty; many ministers were collected by helicopter, and some even arrived on foot or by bicycle.

While this was occurring, a large body of students approached the palace under close military escort. These students had gathered at Salemba during the morning, and had set off through the streets of Menteng, their passions stirred by militants brandishing the blood-soaked yellow jackets of victims of the previous day's encounter.\footnote{125 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. For greater effect some red paint had been smeared on one of the jackets and it was waved aloft on a bamboo pole like a battle ensign for the students to follow.}
students reached the south-eastern corner of Merdeka Square, they found large numbers of heavily armed troops from the Jakarta command barring their way. These were under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Urip Widodo who was broadly in sympathy with the anti-Sukarno students' cause. The students pressed forward, pleading with the soldiers to let them pass. Female students, many of them Soe's Letters-Psychology contingent, occupied the front line, taking advantage of the soldiers' evident reluctance to manhandle them. Slowly but surely the excited and noisy mass of students edged its way north along Jalan Merdeka Timur, here and there pushing back armoured vehicles blocking their path.

Shortly after midday as the student throng reached the northern end of Merdeka Timur, large numbers of them managed to break through the protective cordon and ran wildly in various directions towards the presidential palace several hundred metres away along Jalan Merdeka Utara on the northern side of the square. As they approached, the palace guard opened fire, and two students were fatally wounded: Arief Rachman Hakim, a fourth-year medical student at the University of Indonesia, and Zubaedah, a young high school girl. In addition, a number of other students were also seriously wounded. On the following day, 25 February, Arief Rachman Hakim's funeral was the occasion for a massive procession from the University of Indonesia to Kebayoran with thousands lining the route as the motorcade passed by. Tributes were received from many senior military and civilian figures, including Soeharto and Nasution. The student movement had produced the first martyr for its cause.

126 It is impossible to know precisely what instructions, if any, these troops had been given and from which senior military commander. Although their immediate commander, Amir Machmud, had shown no sign of supporting the students, some at least of the senior officers had clearly indicated that they were in broad sympathy with their aims. It is possible that these troops were genuinely attempting to prevent a clash by restraining the students from approaching the palace. It is equally possible that they were under instructions to make it appear that this was the case, but to do nothing when this occurred. 127 Crouch (1978: 182) captures the situation aptly: 'The students had eventually pierced, or been permitted to pierce, the army buffer between the demonstrators and the Cakrabirawa'.
Militant students take charge

The events of these three days, especially the deaths of the students, had an immediate impact upon the nature of the student movement. There had been a carnival-like atmosphere about the January demonstrations, but now everyone - not just the small number of politically-conscious militants - realised that they were taking part in a deadly serious struggle involving confrontation with the president himself. The intransigence of Sukarno had created a situation where it was no longer his 'stupid ministers' who were the target of the students' anger (a fiction it had suited the militants to play along with) but Sukarno himself. As the rank-and-file students were rapidly politicised, the task of the militant students such as Soe and his circle became much easier and the claims of the moderate leaders - such as those in KAMI Pusat who had been preaching caution and tactical compromises - seemed increasingly untenable.

The gravity of the situation the students now faced was underlined on 25 February when, after a long meeting between Sukarno and his senior military commanders, it was announced that KAMI had been proscribed as an illegal organisation and demonstrations or public gatherings of more than five people were once more prohibited. The following day, Jakarta army commander, Amir Machmud, announced that an evening curfew would immediately be applied in the Jakarta area.

Shortly after these events, Brigadier General Kemal Idris, the Kostrad chief of staff, contacted the KAMI leaders and urged them to move to the headquarters of Kostrad's 2nd Combat Command in Jalan Kebon Sirih, just south of Merdeka Square, where Lieutenant Colonel Ali Murtopo, another intelligence officer and a close associate of Soeharto, had established a Special Operations unit. This was partly to secure the

---

128 The announcement was made in a radio broadcast by Air Force Marshal Sri Muljono Herlambang, as Kogam deputy chief of staff, on the evening of 25 February. (Koti had been transformed into Kogam following the cabinet reshuffle. See Crouch 1978: 175.)
129 At first this was from midnight until 3.00 am but it was soon extended from 9.00 pm till 6.00 am. See Wibisono 1970: 81.
KAMI leaders' protection but probably also to give this group of army officers more control over the student movement. Although the moderate KAMI Pusat leaders who took refuge at Jalan Kebon Sirih tried to keep in touch with what was going on outside, their tenuous links with the campus were further strained by their isolation.

After their release from several days in detention in early February, many of the KAMI leaders had disappeared from public view, taking no further active part in the demonstrations, although they were to reappear and claim the spotlight after 11 March. Many of these leaders had been prominent in January, but their reputations among the rank-and-file students had been tarnished by their stand on the lecture strike issue. Among the campus-based student activists there was now a widespread feeling of resentment that when the shooting began and the demonstrations turned violent they were nowhere to be seen. It may be that these students had been advised to withdraw from the frontline by their older-generation political advisors, but this did little for their reputations among those who were facing the bullets of the palace guard. This was certainly Soe Hok-gie's own perception of this phase of the students' struggle:

Throughout those difficult weeks student leaders rose from the ranks who were more capable of representing the moral force aspirations of the rank and file. These leaders did not speak as politicians but as ordinary students. During those days we saw the emergence of Fahmi Idris and Hakim Sorimuda who quickly rose to prominence. The killing of Arief Rachman Hakim was a point of no return for the students' struggle. The formal presidium (ie KAMI Pusat) rarely appeared anymore in the field, possibly out of calculations of political opportunism - and leadership was in the hands of non-political students. This was the situation until 12 March 1966.

130 Crouch 1978: 183
131 On his own admission Cosmas Batubara, for example, spent some time in the St Carolus Catholic Hospital in late February where he was said to be recovering from an accident. See Ahmaddani G Martha 1984: 331
132 These views were repeated by a remarkable number of those interviewed. As one Bandung student activist explained about the period from late February:

They (ie. the KAMI leaders) never had any control over the students... They were never, never involved in any of the demonstrations. You never saw them. They were always having dealings, meetings with the military... At that time, you know, if you really wanted to control the mob you had to be in the middle and they were certainly never in control.

133 'Moga-moga KAMI tidak mendjadi neo-PPMI - menjambut dua tahun KAMI' (Let's hope KAMI doesn't become a neo-PPMI - celebrating two years of KAMI), Kompas, 25 October 1967. Fahmi Idris (Economics) and Hakim Sorimuda (Medicine) were prominent University of Indonesia activists. Both were HMI members. Soe's use of the label 'non-political students' is misleading: a more accurate term would be 'campus-based activists'.

131 The killing of Arief Rachman Hakim was a point of no return for the students' struggle. The formal presidium (ie KAMI Pusat) rarely appeared anymore in the field, possibly out of calculations of political opportunism - and leadership was in the hands of non-political students. This was the situation until 12 March 1966.
From this point on, effective decision-making about the course of the student movement was securely in the hands of several groups of militant campus-based student activists who were able to command the loyalty, support and commitment of their fellow students by their presence among them during the course of dangerous activities.

Despite the increasing control by the more militant students over the shape and direction of the student movement, a mood of growing gloom and pessimism prevailed on the campus at the University of Indonesia following the events of 21-25 February. For many of the students it was one thing to take part in noisy street demonstrations but it was quite another to find themselves in a situation where they had become shooting targets for hostile and heavily armed troops. There were rumours that their campus might be invaded at any moment by the pro-Sukarno GMNI students with whom they had already had numerous nasty clashes. The GMNI students were able to call on the support of large numbers of pro-Sukarno youth and workers from Marhaen Youth (Pemuda Marhaenis) and Marhaen Workers (Buruh Marhaenis). In addition, thousands of high school students, many from Central and East Java, were arriving in Jakarta for a rally organised by the PNI-affiliated GSNI. Such rumours were given substance on 24 February when GMNI students and their supporters launched a surprise attack on the Salemba campus at a time when a large number of students from that campus were confronting the Cakrabirawa outside the palace.134

On 28 February, the planned GSNI rally was held at Senayan, attended by thousands of loyal Sukarno supporters. There were fiery speeches from several cabinet members with Subandrio, in particular, attacking KAMI for its treachery and calling for

---

134 Yozar Anwar (1980: 145) mentions this incident. A day earlier, on 23 February, eleven members of the GMNI central presidium, led by its general chairman Bambang Kusnohadi, had been summoned to another meeting at the palace. The president, accompanied by his three deputy prime ministers, Subandrio, Leimena and Chaerul Saleh, told the students that the time had come to meet 'force with force' and urged them to confront his enemies who were attempting to derail the revolution. See Paget 1970: 373-4; GMNI press release 23 February 1966. Later the same day, GMNI students demonstrated at the US Embassy. See Crouch 1978: 181.
'meeting terror with counter-terror'. After the rally concluded, pro-Sukarno students headed towards the University of Indonesia and a clash occurred outside the headquarters of the university regiment in Jalan Matraman Raya when they attempted to raise a flag that had been hanging at half-mast in honour of the students who had been killed several days before.

In those weeks it was widely believed that pro-Sukarno military forces might be ordered to clear the campus. As most of the moderate KAMI leaders withdrew to the safety of Ali Murtopo's headquarters at Kebon Sirih, the militant student leaders and their supporters, who were congregated in and around the Faculty of Medicine building situated near the corner of Jalan Salemba and Jalan Diponegoro, began to feel dangerously exposed. There was talk of abandoning the campus in compliance with the instructions they had received from Kemal Idris, and some students began to discuss the possibility of going underground.

The arrival of Bandung radicals

Just as the position of the radical students was at its most critical, a new element appeared with the arrival of a contingent of about two hundred students from Bandung who established their headquarters on the University of Indonesia campus on or about 25 February. Throughout the previous three weeks, couriers from Bandung had been making brief visits to Jakarta to keep the students on the Bandung campuses informed about what was occurring in the capital. By mid February the Bandung activists realised

---

135 See Crouch 1978: 184. Sukarno also spoke at the rally, repeating his belief in Marxism: '...Marhaenism is Marxism applied to Indonesia'.
136 See Wibisono 1970: 81 and Yozar Anwar 1980: 150-1. On this occasion, according to Suripto, Andi Norman and some of his men arrived in full RPKAD battledress to protect the university students. Interview, 2 March 1982
137 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982
138 Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982. In 1966 Hehuwat had recently concluded his studies in geology at ITB and was deputy chairman of the student council and a leading member of one of the local student organisations resisting moved by leftists to dominate student forums, the Bandung University Student Association (Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Bandung, PMB). He had been one of the organisers of the attempted 'long march' from Bandung to Jakarta that had been prevented by Major General Adjie a month earlier. Hehuwat was the 'field commander' of the Bandung contingent in Jakarta and was responsible for organising the students' selection and departure.
that the situation in Jakarta was deteriorating rapidly and the student movement there was in urgent need of additional support. Consequently, the decision was taken to recruit a special task force of militant students who arrived thoroughly prepared for confrontation with the pro-Sukarno forces. Around 25 February the Bandung students slipped into Jakarta by bus, train and truck, and eventually linked up at the Salemba campus.\footnote{A somewhat larger number set out from Bandung but some students were turned back en route by the military who were attempting to prevent students from outside Jakarta entering the city. Some of the early arrivals took part in the funeral of Arief Rachman Hakim on 25 February. At first the Bandung students tried to occupy the unfinished Hotel Asoka building in Jalan Thamrin, immediately opposite Hotel Indonesia, but after threats of attacks from pro-Sukarno elements it was eventually decided to establish their headquarters at the University of Indonesia campus at Salemba.}

The Bandung contingent consisted mostly of ITB students with a small number from Padjadjaran and Parahiyangan Universities. In general terms these students fell into two categories. A small group of them were Gemsos activists and PSI sympathisers who had been working closely together in Bandung for some years. Many of this group were old associates of Suripto and several of them had been part of the 10 May affair in Bandung in 1963.\footnote{Among the most prominent were Dedi Krisna and Muslimin Nasution, the chairman of the ITB student council.} The great majority, however, were members of intra-university oriented bodies such as the Bandung University Student Association (\textit{Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Bandung}, PMB). Such organisations had for years been resisting attempts by the government and party-linked student organisations of the left to politicise their campuses.

The Bandung contingent arrived at the University of Indonesia just in time. It seemed to them that the remaining students had begun to lose heart, especially when it became known that Cakrabirawa troops had set up a post in one corner of the Salemba campus.\footnote{Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982. A small Cakrabirawa force was occupying the old Faculty of Letters building immediately across from the Faculty of Medicine where the militants had established their headquarters.} Within a short space of time the Bandung students and the remaining University of Indonesia students turned the Faculty of Medicine building into a fortress by barricading themselves inside and stacking furniture soaked in kerosene into the
entrances. Though Kostrad chief of staff, Kemal Idris, tried to persuade them to leave, the Bandung students made it clear they would resist any attempt to remove them and would set fire to the building if they were invaded.142

The arrival of the Bandung contingent revived the flagging spirits of the Jakarta students and many of those that had left returned and joined them in establishing their headquarters on the campus. Soe Hok-gie and his intra-university oriented group from the Letters and Psychology Faculties quickly found common ground with the Bandung students and the two groups became comfortable allies.143 In many of the demonstrations that occurred over the next two weeks, they worked together as a team.

One of the projects in which Soe and several Bandung activists participated almost as soon as the Bandung contingent arrived in Jakarta was the setting up of an illegal radio transmitter to publicise the students' views and broadcast their version of events.144 Soe had had difficulty finding outlets for his news about the student campaign even in those Jakarta newspapers where he had friends, and the Indonesian government radio station (RRI) was firmly under the control of Sukarno supporters in the Ministry of Information. Consequently, several Bandung students with the appropriate technical know-how, set up a small transmitter that they had brought with them to Jakarta while other students prepared the material for its broadcasts, timed to compete with the official RRI news bulletins.145 The equipment was initially hastily installed in one of the towers of the Faculty of Medicine building but was later moved to several other safer locations around Jakarta.

---

142 The Bandung students arrived on the campus about the same time that the KAMI leaders received their instructions to vacate the university and move to Kebon Sirih. There were arguments with some of the KAMI leaders, especially from HMI, who appeared annoyed to discover that the Bandung students were taking over their campus. Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982
143 Soe was already well known to some of the more politically active Bandung leaders who gravitated to Suripto's headquarters at Senayan.
144 Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982. See also 'Radio Ampera - suka duka perjuangan mahasiswa' (Radio Ampera - the ups and downs of the students' struggle), Kompas, 14 and 15 April 1966.
145 The first broadcast was made on 28 February 1966. However, the transmitter was not very powerful and the signal reached only a relatively small area of Jakarta. Unfortunately I have not managed to find any transcripts of these early transmissions. See Soe's article 'Salemba enam, gedung keramat bangsa Indonesia' (Salemba six, sacred building of the Indonesian people), Alma Mater, 3, 1966.
For Soe Hok-gie himself these were exhausting days with little opportunity for proper sleep or rest; yet he seemed able to draw upon hidden reserves of energy driven by the knowledge that no retreat was now possible. He rarely returned home to Kebon Jeruk spending his time rushing between the students' headquarters on the campus, his contacts at Senayan and the Gerakan Pembaharuan group at Jalan Setiabudi. He would frequently appear on the campus late at night and brief the students on the latest developments, impressing everyone with his knowledge of the wider political scene. His fellow students noted his seriousness of purpose and his intensity and many were inspired by his single-minded commitment to the struggle in which all were now engaged. Soe was clearly considered a leader by his fellow students at this time - not in the sense of conveying an impression of physical power like his friend Herman and others of their group - but as one who was respected for his knowledge, his ideas and his opinions.146

For the militant students crowded into the medical faculty building, by the end of February the days were filled with tension and danger, and there was a high degree of confusion about what was occurring in the world outside and where events were heading. Despite these doubts, the students were determined to maintain their role on the political stage by further provoking the president and his supporters and encouraging the military to seize power. Further direct confrontation with the Cakrabirawa at the palace was seen as too dangerous, especially since their erstwhile military allies had not supported them on 23 and 24 February. Instead, the students turned their attention again to Sukarno's subordinates, in particular, Subandrio, already their declared enemy, and several other ministers associated in the public mind with the PKI.

Further demonstrations: the role of KAPPI and a student militia

From the beginning of March student demonstrators were on the streets of Jakarta again almost every day. This time hundreds and sometimes thousands of high school

146 Interviews with several of his contemporaries who observed him closely during this period
students, under the banner of KAPPI took part in many of the demonstrations that began from the University of Indonesia campus, or initiated many of their own protest marches.

One of the figures singled out for particular attention by the KAPPI students was the recently appointed Minister for Basic Education and Culture, Sumardjo, a supporter of the PKI-affiliated teachers' union (PGRI). On 1 March KAPPI students arrived in large numbers at the offices of the Department of Education and Culture in Jalan Cilacap where they demanded Sumardjo's sacking. The following day a large group of university students held a rally at Salemba, and then headed out into the nearby streets with a grotesque effigy of Subandrio hanging from a bamboo pole. They paraded this in a truck past Subandrio's house in Jalan Diponegoro with cries of 'Hang Subandrio' and 'Subandrio - Running Dog of Peking'. When they arrived back at the campus, the effigy was ceremoniously set alight in one of the university courtyards. During the course of the day, another group of students organised a demonstration to the Kebayoran headquarters of the State Electricity Enterprise (PLN) where the minister, Ir. Setiadi Reksoprodjo, was also alleged to be close to the PKI.

On 3 March, students again targeted Subandrio - this time massing outside the Department of Foreign Affairs building at Jalan Pejambon until Brimob troops arrived and dispersed the demonstration by firing into the air. The KAPPI students then headed to Jalan Merdeka Timur where they occupied another building of the Department of Education and Culture.

These were flagrant breaches of the ban on demonstrations, so Sukarno instructed his Deputy Prime Minister and acting Minister of Higher Education and Science, Leimena, to close the University of Indonesia. The ministerial instruction was issued on 3 March, but it was immediately evident that it could not be enforced. Since the arrival of

---

148 Wibisono 1970: 82; Yozar Anwar 1980: 173-4
149 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. See also Yozar Anwar 1980: 176-7.
150 Yozar Anwar 1980: 176
151 Yozar Anwar 1980: 178; Wibisono 1970: 82
the militant and grimly determined Bandung students, the university campus had become a fortress. Furthermore, the arrival of Kostrad troops very early on the morning of 4 March, to occupy defensive positions at the entrance to the campus, thwarted any action pro-Sukarno military units may have been considering to clear the campus.152

Meanwhile other student leaders at the University of Indonesia had begun to initiate further offensive measures. On 4 March, students crowded into one of the university courtyards to witness the establishment of a student militia, named the Laskar Arief Rachman Hakim in memory of the student shot on 24 February. Its formation had been approved by Kostrad senior officers and uniforms and equipment were supplied by sympathetic businessmen. On paper at least, the Laskar had an elaborate organisational structure.153 In keeping with KAMI's own origins, several leaders were appointed to represent the various constituent student organisations that had come together under the action front banner, and the militia was divided into seven 'battalions' (yon) with responsibility for patrolling particular parts of the city. These were named after each of the seven officers murdered on 1 October. One of the most prominent figures in this venture was Fahmi Idris, a HMI activist with a reputation as a campus tough guy.154 Many, but not all, of the students who took part in the Laskar were from HMI backgrounds, and Hakim Sorimuda - a friend of Soe Hok-gie's and one of the most militant and uncompromising of the campus activists - had taken a leading role in its formation.155 Though apparently integrated into the KAMI structure, the militia was in reality a separate entity. It took an active part in several of the demonstrations over the

152 The students occupying the medical faculty building at Salemba were visited by RPKAD commander, Sarwo Edhie, late on the evening of 3 March. When it was apparent that, come what may, the students were determined to remain despite Leimena's announcement and the presence of Cakrabirawa troops in an adjacent building, Kemal Idris despatched three tanks and some troops from the Siliwangi elite Kujang brigade to protect the campus. By the following morning, the Cakrabirawa had departed. Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982

153 Interviews with Marsillam Simanjuntak 19 February 1982; and Firdaus Wadjdi 25 February 1985

154 Interview with Fahmi Idris, 28 February 1985. An economics student at the University of Indonesia, Fahmi Idris had been involved in the orientation incident with Drs. Basirun Nugroho the previous September. During February 1966 he had taken a leading role in the harassment of GMNI students whenever they appeared on the campus.

155 Later, a militant Catholic student, Louis Wangge, also rose to prominence as a Laskar leader. One other important element within the Laskar was Yon Yani, led by Albert Hasibuan, a prominent UKI law student. Many UKI students participated in Yon Yani which operated in the Menteng-Gambir area.
next few days, its most important immediate role being to confront the organised bands of pro-Sukarno students, youth and labourers who had been a constant threat to the demonstrating students over recent weeks. The danger from this quarter was now effectively negated.

On 5 March another demonstration headed for Subandrio's office, on this occasion his headquarters in Jalan Merdeka Selatan, where the students, despite a large Brimob presence and repeated warning shots, invaded the ministerial compound. Another effigy of the minister, this time with the body of a dog but with Subandrio's bespectacled face - the 'Running Dog of Peking' - was burnt in one of the courtyards.

By this time a significant proportion of Jakarta's senior high school students were also on strike. The Minister of Education, Sumardjo, instructed teachers to stop their pupils from leaving classes to participate in demonstrations, but his instructions and theirs were widely defied. KAPPI students took over the Department of Education and Culture auditorium in Jalan Merdeka Timur and were using it as their headquarters. President Sukarno demanded that the ban on KAMI be properly implemented and vainly called for Amir Machmud to take tough action on the students but Amir was in fact no longer in operational control.

The militants' dilemma and escalating chaos

From the vantage point of the campus-based militants and their Senayan counterparts the armed forces seemed extraordinarily slow to move against Sukarno. As they saw it, they were the ones risking their lives in confrontations with pro-Sukarno civilian and military forces. Had they been misled by the army officers who had

156 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. See also Yozar Anwar 1980: 182-3.
157 According to Crouch (1978: 181), ‘...an informal agreement had been reached with the Jakarta commander, Amir Machmud, whereby operational command of all army troops in Jakarta was transferred to Kemal [Idris], while Amir Machmud remained responsible for administration and territorial matters.’ However, the students knew nothing of such an arrangement and Amir Machmud remained a feared figure.
encouraged them to hope for decisive support from Soeharto? Were they being deliberately exploited by an army leadership which had its own agenda? This led to bitter arguments between the student leaders and those people in the military hierarchy like Kemal Idris, who tried to convince them to be patient: what was needed, they said, was a slow steady building up of the political pressure on Sukarno that would force him to concede to the demands for significant political change and avoid an outright use of military force. A military putsch would only lead to a backlash in the regions, and especially in East and Central Java, where large reserves of popular support for the president could lead to a civil war.

That attitude by the KAMI sympathisers in the military heightened the tension between the militant students and the KAMI leaders who counselled moderation. The hardliners began to look for further ways to force a showdown - possibly encouraged by some of their army allies - by planning wilder and more outrageous demonstrations that would further enrage Sukarno and his supporters, provoking them into a response. At the same time, the students did what they could to involve the military directly in the conflict. At a time when Soeharto continued to play the role of loyal servant of the president, student activists angered senior military officers by arriving for a supposedly secret meeting at Kostrad headquarters in Jalan Merdeka Selatan wearing their distinctive yellow jackets identifying them as University of Indonesia students. The wilder elements took to provoking the military more directly: on at least one occasion, students riding in a friendly military vehicle 'borrowed' an automatic rifle and fired off a few rounds at a passing Cakrabirawa jeep.

---

158 Kemal Idris visited the militant students at Salemba on more than one occasion to discuss the situation. The Bandung students had good relations with Kemal. In addition to his obvious sympathy for their anti-Sukarno views, Kemal's son had just enrolled as a student at ITB and lived in the same student dormitory as several of the Bandung contingent. Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982

159 KAMI leaders, probably under pressure from their military advisors to exert some influence over events, from time to time left the safety of the Kebon Sirih barracks and appeared at the campus headquarters, but were jeered and booed by the militants when they suggested adopting a softer approach. Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982

160 Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982
The frustrations and impatience of the students boiled over on 8 March when the most anarchic and destructive of student demonstrations took place, directed primarily against Foreign Minister Subandrio. In a surprise early morning raid, students invaded and occupied the Department of Foreign Affairs building in Jalan Pejambon. Soe Hok-gie, his Senayan accomplices and the Bandung militants were the principal initiators of this demonstration and thousands of students, including large numbers of KAPPI high school students, took part in it. Demonstrators occupied the building from 6.30 am until early in the afternoon. While bewildered bureaucrats tried to salvage papers and files, the students resisted all attempts by security to force them to leave and set about destroying the contents of the building. They defaced the office walls with their slogans, smashed furniture and fittings, emptied out the contents of filing cabinets and drawers, and shredded and destroyed papers. The police mobile brigade did what it could to force the students out by lobbing tear gas cannisters in through the windows, but its troops were totally outnumbered by the wild horde of angry students. The tear gas terrified the students trapped inside the building, but this evidently led them into committing wilder acts of vandalism. As the battle to eject the demonstrators continued throughout the course of the morning the students reduced the contents of the building to rubble.

While this anarchic demonstration was proceeding, President Sukarno was addressing a women's rally at Senayan where he complained about his authority being 'jacked up' and called on the armed forces to be loyal to him as their supreme commander. After further defiant speeches by Subandrio and his wife, Chaerul Saleh and J.S. Tumakaka, the newly appointed head of the National Front, several truck-loads of GMNI students and Pemuda Marhaenis headed for the US Embassy in Jalan Merdeka Selatan where they demonstrated against alleged US interference in Indonesia's domestic affairs. In the course of a wild demonstration two US diplomatic vehicles were torched. The pro-Sukarno demonstrators then moved across the square to Jalan Merdeka Timur to

---

161 Interviews with several participants, including Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982; and Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982. See also the account in Yozar Anwar 1980: 185-7.
162 Crouch 1978: 186
attack the KAPPI-occupied Department of Education and Culture building. Students returning from the Department of Foreign Affairs, led by the Laskar Arief Rachman Hakim, rushed to the scene and a nasty pitched battle involving fist fights and rock-throwing erupted with injuries sustained on both sides.\textsuperscript{163}

The following morning, 9 March, a furious Sukarno inspected the damage to the Foreign Affairs building before beginning a marathon meeting with party leaders at the palace, intended to brow-beat them into signing a public statement of support for him.\textsuperscript{164} Further demonstrations occurred that day, and in fact, demonstrations by different groups of students were now taking place almost simultaneously in various parts of the city. KAPPI and the Laskar Arief Rachman Hakim protested at the parliament building at Senayan.\textsuperscript{165} Others returned to the Department of Education and Culture building in Jalan Cilacap which was seized and locked by KAPPI students.\textsuperscript{166}

The most dramatic incidents to occur on 9 and 10 March followed initiatives by the Bandung activists and some of the Letters-Psychology students, including Soe Hok-gie.\textsuperscript{167} These militant students felt frustrated by the efforts of the military to supervise and control their activities. Consequently, their operations became more clandestine and more daring, concentrating on difficult and dangerous targets to achieve the maximum impact.\textsuperscript{168} Small groups of students took part in sudden and unexpected pseudo-military raids; the leaders became obsessed with the details of the planning and used scouts,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[164] See Crouch 1978: 187. The statement was finally extracted from the party leaders the following day.
\item[165] Yozar Anwar 1980: 190
\item[166] Yozar Anwar 1980: 190
\item[167] Interviews with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982; and Herman Lantang, 10 February 1982. Many of the Jakarta students involved in these activities were members of Mapala, the mountaineering club led by Herman Lantang and Soe Hok-gie.
\item[168] The ITB students had sent messages back to Bandung inquiring about how to make explosives. At one point it was rumoured that Sukarno was to make a televised address to appeal for support and the militants began to consider blowing up the Jakarta television transmitter tower. In some of their raids they brought Molotov cocktails but they were poorly made and were ineffective.
\end{footnotes}
diversionary manoeuvres and attempts to conceal their intentions from military officers, both friends as well as those they took to be their enemies. Among major targets of the militants at this stage were those buildings operated by agencies of the Peoples' Republic of China. The embassy building itself in Jalan Gajah Mada was too well-protected and too far from their base at Salemba, but several other locations were more exposed. The students wanted to highlight Sukarno and Subandrio's close ties with Peking, hoping to force angry reactions from those two and the Chinese government to add to the sense of crisis. On 9 March they attempted to burn down the Chinese press agency, Hsin Hua, which they claimed was spreading lies and propaganda about the student movement and continuing to support the PKI. However, the building was located in the Tanah Abang area not far from a large Marine Corps headquarters, so the invaders were only able to inflict minor damage on the building before they were beaten off by security forces. Determined to improve on this, that evening Soe and two Bandung students surveyed the Chinese consulate building in Jalan Kramat Raya and the Chinese trade consulate in Jalan Cilosari. As these buildings were close to the Salemba campus and there were no army barracks or police posts nearby, they were considered suitable targets.

Just before dawn on 10 March about forty students set out and launched a commando-style assault on both buildings. At the consulate in Kramat Raya, the gates were smashed through using a truck and the students set about wrecking the contents of the building. Then at Jalan Cilosari, the students scaled the high wall surrounding the trade building. Some of them fought with the Chinese staff inside while others destroyed

---

169 After the attack on the Foreign Affairs building, most of the Bandung students had left their crowded and cramped quarters in the medical faculty building and small groups of them were being billeted in various parts of the city. Although they continued to return to the campus each day, the irregular comings and goings made it easier to conceal their activities from outsiders. To avoid detection, groups of students began to use a side exit from the campus that required them to pass through a room where the Faculty of Medicine stored its cadavers for anatomy classes. Interview with Herman Lantang, 10 February 1982
motor vehicles and looted the offices, seizing bundles of documents at random. The students also seized a powerful radio transmitter which they hoped to use to improve the quality of the Radio Ampera broadcasts.

The denouement came on the following day, 11 March. On that day KAPPI and Laskar students again clashed with GMNI students and their supporters in Jalan Salemba. Other students wrecked the office of the PNI-leaning newspaper *Warta Peladjar*. Others again disrupted traffic by deflating tyres of vehicles in the vicinity of the presidential palace where a cabinet meeting was planned. The militant Bandung group and their Jakarta allies, buoyed by the success of the previous day’s raids, decided to increase the pressure by launching an attack on a cabinet minister's house. There had already been many occasions where delegations had invaded ministers' offices and several noisy demonstrations had assembled outside Subandrio's house in Jalan Diponegoro, but there had been no previous attempt to force entry into a cabinet minister's private residence.

The chosen house was that of Oei Tjoe Tat, a member of the small leftist Indonesia Party (Partindo) and since December 1963 a minister without portfolio in the cabinet. Oei Tjoe Tat, along with other Partindo politicians, had been strong supporters of President Sukarno and was alleged to be close to the PKI. A lawyer, he was a prominent member of Indonesia's Chinese community and had been deputy chairman of Baperki, the largest of all Sino-Indonesian organisations, led by the communist-aligned former cabinet minister, Siauw Giok Tjhan. Since Oei represented much that Soe Hok-gie thoroughly opposed about Guided Democracy politics, he had many grounds for supporting the choice of his house for an attack. The assault on Oei's house in the centre of Menteng took place late in the afternoon. Windows were shattered by rocks and a few of the

---

170 According to Fred Hehuwat, the students were obsessed with the idea that they might discover documents that would implicate key government personnel in politically compromising activities. Soe had been asked to find some students from the Faculty of Letters who could read Chinese so these documents could be checked.

171 Yozar Anwar 1980: 196
students managed to break in, but most of the demonstrators were soon driven off when the minister's security guards opened fire with automatic weapons.\textsuperscript{172}

**Soeharto finally moves**

Meanwhile major developments had taken place at the presidential palace. After many days of persistent chaos on the streets of Jakarta, Soeharto had finally ordered a complex operation against the president. At around 11 am Sukarno was informed that unidentified troops had taken up offensive positions outside the palace. He immediately decided to flee Jakarta. Accompanied by Chaerul Saleh and Subandrio, he hurriedly left the cabinet meeting that was in progress and flew by helicopter to his Bogor palace.\textsuperscript{173}

There, later in the day, Sukarno received three emissaries from Soeharto: Jakarta army commander Amir Machmud, and Major Generals Mohamad Jusuf and Basuki Rachmat, who both held cabinet portfolios.\textsuperscript{174} This was a shrewd move by Soeharto designed to minimise any affront to Sukarno. As army officers who had good personal relations with the president, they were able to conduct themselves as intermediaries who had come to persuade him of the seriousness of the situation in Jakarta and the need to give his support for emergency measures to restore order. Thus they were able to negotiate the drafting of a letter signed by the president by which Soeharto was instructed '... to take all measures considered necessary to guarantee security, calm and stability of the government and the revolution'.\textsuperscript{175}

Soe and his friends heard of this only late in the evening. They were then informed by their military contacts that the army wanted the students to participate in a massive

\textsuperscript{172} Interviews with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982; and Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982. Two of those who broke in were apprehended by the guards, one managed to escape when darkness fell, while another spent the night trapped on the roof. The incident is referred to in Jopie Lasut's article, 'Sekali lagi Soe Hok Gie', \textit{Sinar Harapan}, 7 January 1970.

\textsuperscript{173} For a full account of these events and the background to them, see Crouch 1978: 185-92.

\textsuperscript{174} Mohamad Jusuf was Minister for Basic Industry and Basuki Rachmat was Minister for Veteran Affairs.

\textsuperscript{175} The letter became known as Super Semar.
victory parade the following day.\textsuperscript{176} Soeharto and the armed forces had finally taken the initiative. The students who had rallied behind the Tritura, inspired by a handful of radical and politically skilled leaders who were prepared to stand among them in periods of great physical danger, had played an important part in that process. The student movement had not forced Sukarno to concede, but their determination to stand firm in the face of serious threats had finally pushed the Indonesian polity to a point of crisis, where it was possible for Soeharto to intervene as the responsible army commander and the only person capable of resolving the political impasse.

Soe and his friends were by no means convinced that the concessions Sukarno made to the military in his 11 March Letter of Authority were the beginning of the end for the president. They expected him to continue to resist the pressures for reform of the kind they wanted. And they were not sure that Major General Soeharto would implement their demands over prices, cabinet reforms and the banning of the PKI. They were relieved at what had happened, but expected to be involved in many more battles in the days that lay ahead.

\textsuperscript{176} Interview with Marsillam Simanjuntak, 19 February 1982
The extraordinary events of 11 March marked a critical turning point in Indonesian politics. Faced with an increasingly chaotic situation in Jakarta and threatened by the hardline anti-communists within the army, President Sukarno had fled to Bogor where, by the end of the day, he had been forced to grant Major General Soeharto special emergency powers. The political initiative now lay firmly with Soeharto and his supporters within the army, and the army commander quickly seized the opportunity to demonstrate his new power.

On the following day, 12 March, Soeharto used the Letter of Authority given to him by Sukarno to issue an order in the name of the president banning the PKI and its affiliated organisations. In fact, by March 1966, the communist party was already in total disarray throughout the country: its national headquarters had been ransacked and destroyed in October 1965, most of its top leadership had already been hunted down or were in hiding, and thousands of party cadres and hundreds of thousands of PKI members and supporters had been massacred during the course of the army-initiated anti-PKI crackdown that had taken place several months earlier.

Yet Soeharto's first action was an important political step, for the banning of the PKI had been one of the central demands of the Tritura student campaign and a demand that Sukarno had repeatedly refused to countenance. Such action was also important symbolically because it meant that the government itself was now putting an end to the idea of Nasakom, the central ideological theme of Guided Democracy under which communism had had a high level of legitimacy. In fact, the announcement of the banning order marked the beginning of the formal dismantling of the Guided Democracy edifice which had already been dubbed the Old Order (Orde Lama) by those clamouring for fundamental political change. Such action was to bring an immediate and predictable
response from President Sukarno who was not prepared to stand by idly while the political system he had presided over since mid 1959 was steadily destroyed.

Yet in moving against the president, Soeharto and his inner circle within the army continued to act with extreme caution. Although the destruction of the PKI had removed Sukarno's most powerful political ally, the president remained a potentially formidable opponent still in a position to impede political reforms. In March 1966 Sukarno still had many loyal supporters within the government and the bureaucracy, in the political parties, and even inside certain sections of the armed forces, particularly the police, navy, airforce, and in both the Central Java and East Java regional army commands. While many military officers supported the ban on the PKI, they still remained personally loyal to Sukarno. Furthermore, the president remained a revered and popular figure with ordinary Indonesians in many parts of the country.

Consequently, the banning of the PKI on 12 March was merely the beginning of a gradual and cautious series of moves designed to transform the political system and to whittle away the president's own personal authority by curbing his powers and undermining the strength of his supporters throughout the country.¹

The students who had participated in the demonstrations on the streets of Jakarta during the previous two months were eager to continue to play an active part in this process of political reform. After the deadening restrictions and political conformity of the Guided Democracy years, the exhilaration experienced by large numbers of students, in particular the thousands of young high school students who had joined the demonstrations during late February and early March, had helped to create a mood of high expectation and a movement with a sense of a momentum that was difficult to contain. The most militant and politically conscious students were convinced that they had played a pivotal role throughout the January to March period. Many of them had risked their lives to stand up to Sukarno, thereby creating the conditions where seemingly

¹ For a full account of this process, see Crouch 1978: 197-220.
hesitant and reluctant senior military officers were finally able to force Sukarno to make
significant concessions. Many students believed that their actions entitled them to claim a
continuing role in national affairs and some began to speak of a student-ABRI partnership.

As far as Soe Hok-gie himself was concerned, the events of 11 and 12 March were
grounds for cautious optimism. As one who had long been committed to the overthrow
of Sukarno and the system of government he had created, Soe believed that not only was
the demise of Guided Democracy imminent but that there was some chance that Indonesia
might return to a free, open and more democratic system of government. Yet he knew
that Sukarno and his supporters would not relinquish power without a fight. To that end,
he was determined to do whatever he could to help undermine further the position of the
president and his allies, and to encourage the Soeharto-led military to adopt tough,
uncompromising measures against Sukarno and his key supporters, and to implement
immediate structural reforms.

Radio Ampera on the offensive

When news of Sukarno's flight to Bogor and his surrender of the Letter of
Authority to Soeharto became known in Jakarta late on the evening of 11 March, a
combined student-army 'show of force' was quickly organised for the following day.
Trucks, tanks and military vehicles carried thousands of excited students through the
streets of the capital in an impressive 'victory parade'. In the days that followed, the
leadership of KAMI, KAPPI and the Laskar Arief Rachman Hakim organised further
rallies and demonstrations in support of Soeharto, endorsing the PKI ban and urging
further immediate action against particular cabinet ministers.

It is not clear what role, if any, Soe Hok-gie played in these events. As a campus-
based student leader, Soe had never been very close to the KAMI activists. Although he
had collaborated with a few individuals from this group, he had preferred to work
independently with his own small student circle at Rawamangun and with the militant group of students who had gathered at Senayan throughout the previous two months.

According to one account, Soe heard rumours several days after 11 March that the pro-Sukarno Siliwangi divisional commander, Major General Ibrahim Adjie, would attempt to undermine Soeharto's newly-won authority. Soe and his friend Jopie Lasut made an urgent trip to Bandung, where they consulted the Army Staff and Command College (Seskoad) deputy commander, Brigadier General Suwarto, who was already well known to them through their Senayan circle, and the staunchly anti-Sukarnoist Major General Hartono Rekso Dharsono, who had only recently returned to the Siliwangi division as its chief of staff. Both officers assured them that Adjie would not interfere with the course of political events underway in Jakarta.

Although Soe has left no diary account of his activities during this period of his life, it is almost certain that he was soon back in Jakarta. From early in March until about the middle of May, much of his time and energy was directed towards working with the small group of student activists who were operating the illegal radio transmitter that had been broadcasting since late February as Radio Ampera.

Fearing an assault on the Salemba campus after the closure of the university had been announced on 3 March, the students had decided to move their equipment away from the Medical Faculty building. By mid March it had been relocated to the relative safety of a private house in nearby Menteng. The house, in Jalan Haji Agus Salim, was owned by a prominent lawyer, Mashuri, who happened to be both a next-door neighbour and a close civilian advisor to Major General Soeharto.

---

2 See Jopie Lasut's article 'Sekali lagi Soe Hok Gie' (Once again Soe Hok Gie), Sinar Harapan, 8 January 1970. Two months later, as part of a series of moves designed to undermine President Sukarno's support within senior military circles, Soeharto instructed Adjie to undergo a special upgrading course at Seskoad, and appointed Dharsono to replace him as Siliwangi commander.

3 Soe's habit of making occasional diary entries, abandoned during the turmoil of February 1966, was not resumed until the beginning of 1968.

4 During the anxious and uncertain days before 11 March, Soe had been one of a small group of students, eager for news and information, who had sought out Mashuri. Soe had made an immediate impression and the relocation of the radio transmitter had resulted. Like Soeharto, Mashuri and his friend
With the scaling down of demonstrations after 11 March, the students involved with Radio Ampera were able to give more attention to its operation. In the beginning, they had made do with makeshift equipment and a small transmitter that was incapable of spreading their irregular broadcasts over any great distance. By mid March, however, a more powerful transmitter had been located and their regular evening broadcasts were able to reach a much wider audience throughout Jakarta.5

The Radio Ampera project involved only a small number of students. The technical equipment was installed and maintained by students from ITB, while the preparation and writing of the scripts for its broadcasts were mostly the work of Soe Hok-gie and his brother Hok-djin. In this respect, the work on Radio Ampera had an important private dimension for both brothers for, after years of avoiding each other's presence and refusing to speak to each other, Hok-gie and Hok-djin suddenly began to communicate with one another, working together harmoniously and effectively.6 It was as if the political upheaval that had overwhelmed Indonesia throughout the previous twelve months had also been the means of transforming their own personal relationship, pushing aside the bitterness and antagonisms of their immature teenage years. Although those years of simmering sibling rivalry and studied silence still cast something of a shadow and a certain reserve was maintained in their personal dealings with each other, a new maturity prevailed as both young men, now well into their twenties and fortified by their

5 Throughout March and April, news of Radio Ampera spread rapidly by word of mouth. See also the articles publicising the station in *Kompas* on 7, 14 and 15 April 1966. These were almost certainly the work of Soe Hok-gie.

6 Interview with Arief Budiman, 8 March 1982. Towards the end of 1965, Soe Hok-djin had fallen seriously ill with tuberculosis and was unable to take an active part in the street marches and demonstrations. Behind the scenes, he had worked with a group of writers and artists preparing placards and posters that were used by the demonstrators.
shared moral and political outlook, set about working for the downfall of Sukarno and his supporters.

The student activists involved with Radio Ampera believed that it was imperative to counteract the stranglehold Sukarno and his supporters continued to hold over the mass media in Indonesia. In mid March the government radio station, Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), was still firmly under the control of the president's appointees, while none of the nation's newspaper editors - whatever their private opinions may have been - yet dared to challenge or criticise directly the president's words or actions. In these circumstances, Soe and his group contrived during the post 11 March period to provide the kind of forthright, hard-hitting commentary on the issues of the day of which the citizens of Jakarta had been starved:

Radio Ampera believes that during the era of the hundred ministers' regime, the Indonesian people have been systematically indoctrinated to the point where their critical capacity (with few exceptions) is absolutely minimal. They react like robots, like Pavlov's dog. If the leadership clique shouts BPS, then publicly everyone is convinced that the CIA is behind it. If anyone dares to hold a different opinion from what has been outlined, publicly that person is accused of being against the revolution. If anyone dares to suggest that what is important is Jatiluhur, not Conefo, then that person is branded a textbook thinker. It is precisely the duty of the mass media to expose that way of thinking. There is only one way, and that is to open the eyes of the people to the lies about what they had previously accepted as truth. From this starting point, Radio Ampera will always broadcast anything capable of demolishing the false myths that have been planted by the hundred ministers' regime.7

In the days immediately following 11 March and the announcement of the banning of the PKI throughout Indonesia, a tense struggle erupted as President Sukarno attempted to fend off Soeharto's demands for the reform of the Dwikora Cabinet.8 On 16 March Sukarno prepared a written statement claiming that under the 1945 Constitution he was responsible only to the MPRS which had appointed him president-for-life, and that he alone had the authority to decide who would hold cabinet posts. That evening Sukarno's

---

7 _Radio Ampera Menggugat_ (Radio Ampera Accuses), Vol.I, 1966a: 3. In April and again in May 1966 the Radio Ampera group gathered together a collection of their scripts in pamphlet form for general distribution. The pamphlet's title is a play on the title of Sukarno's famous defence speech 'Indonesia Menggugat', delivered in 1930 when on trial by the colonial government. This quotation is from the introduction to the first volume of Radio Ampera's scripts. On the BPS (The Body to Support Sukarnoism) affair, see Chapter 2 p.73. Jatiluhur was a major hydro-electricity construction project situated between Jakarta and Bandung. Conefo was the Indonesian acronym for the planned conference of the New Emerging Forces.

statement was read on state radio and television by Deputy Prime Minister Chaerul Saleh, followed by a detailed explanation delivered by Roeslan Abdulgani, Coordinating Minister for Public Relations.

In several broadcasts later that evening and the next, Radio Ampera launched a bitter assault on both Sukarno and his ministerial messengers. Radio Ampera pointed out to its listeners that while it was correct that according to the 1945 Constitution the president was answerable only to the MPR, that body was intended to be chosen by the Indonesian people in free and fair elections:

The present MPRS was created and formed by Bung Karno himself. Its members have been selected according to whim. So obviously it is only natural that those chosen are individuals favoured by Bung Karno. In this case the Indonesian people are totally excluded. Those who call themselves the representatives of the people are the faithful slaves of their master. What their master says they follow. So we should not be surprised if the MPRS issues decrees that make no sense. For example appointing President Sukarno as president-for-life. Only the insane and little children want to continue to be led by the elderly, the infirm or the feebleminded. In a democratic society a chairman, a leader or an administrator is chosen according to ability. If there is clearly someone who is more able than they are then obviously they will be replaced. Appointing someone just according to whim as leader for life is a crazy act. If President Sukarno because of his age becomes senile will we still want to be ruled by such a person? So it is apparent that the MPRS decisions are invalid because the MPRS does not represent the Indonesian people. They are all paid appointees who do not represent the people...

In his announcement the president declared that he has the right to be free to select his own assistants. If this principle is applied, it is apparent that the people are absolutely excluded from participating. The president of the Republic of Indonesia is not its owner. He must listen to the voice of the people because he has received his authority from them. So he is responsible to the people, not to appointed clowns who sit in what is called the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly. The announcement also declares that in addition to the MPRS he is also accountable to Almighty God. That statement is correct. As an individual he is of course accountable to God but as an official he is accountable to his superiors. And the superiors of the president are the Indonesian people. Is a robber able to say just as he pleases that he is only accountable to God and not to society?

As for the two cabinet ministers who had appeared as the public defenders of the president, Radio Ampera was remorseless in its attack. Chaerul Saleh was depicted as a minister who had misused his position to amass a huge personal fortune. Reading from what was purported to be a statement from a Swiss bank account, details of a vast sum of

---

9 'Maklumat Presiden, MPRS dan tuntutan rakjat' (The presidential announcement, the MPRS and the people's demands), broadcast 15 March 1966, Radio Ampera 1966a: 9-10
US dollars were divulged to Radio Ampera's listeners. The attack on Roeslan Abdulgani was even more devastating:

Hey, how hilarious is this Plampitan clown!

Listen, in his own party - either in the Osa-Usep or the ASU faction - this clown is no longer used. Because neither has any use for the opportunist attitude that he has practised for years to secure his own position.

And do you know what nickname Bung Karno has given to him? Heer Bommel! Do you know who this Heer Bommel is? Heer Bommel is a character created by Marten Toonden, a well-known Dutch cartoonist. This Heer Bommel is a pot-bellied bear who loves to put on airs pretending to know everything, pretending to be serious, but in reality he never knows anything and is never able to do anything, so that he ends up as the object of everyone's ridicule. How apt is Bung Karno's name for this cak Roeslan! Pot-bellied, pseudo serious, pseudo important, pseudo knowledgeable, pseudo scholarly, pseudo philosophical, pseudo 'clean', in short, listeners, pseudo everything!

Listen, student friends!

If we are talking about the matter of Roeslan Abdulgani's 'cleanliness' and integrity, we should first recall the Lie Hok Thay scandal. During that era, when corruption was still carried out in secret and with a bit of decorum, and thus not yet out in the open and frenetic as it became in the Dwikora cabinet period, Roeslan Abdulgani, in his position as Foreign Minister, was dragged before a judge because of corruption and a foreign exchange conspiracy. His defence - declaring that he was 'already wealthy' - was so laughable that it still sends people into stitches. So listeners, if we are to sum up Roeslan Abdulgani as a leader it's roughly like this: a person who blows with the wind, an unprincipled and corrupt opportunist, and one who wishes to conceal all these unfortunate ingredients with a scholarly, philosophical, majestic and exalted demeanour.

But cak Roes, do you really think you can continue to deceive the people with your talk and your country-bumpkin political indoctrination? No way, cak! The people have been starving for too long! No more leaders talking nonsense and - it's crazy! Our revolutionary patience has been tested in recent days. Come on, let's remove the masks of these bogus leaders and get rid of them!11

Despite President Sukarno's desperate attempts to prevent a cabinet restructuring, the pressure for action was too great to withstand for long. Soeharto and his army advisors had drawn up a list of those ministers they wished to arrest and on 18 March

---

10 'Dengarlah kekajaan pemimpinan kita' (Listen to our leaders' wealth), Radio Ampera 1966a: 14. When Chaerul died while in custody in February of the following year, Soe wrote a detailed obituary outlining his achievements, but passing harsh judgement on his political opportunism. See 'Kebangkitan & kedjatuhannja, In memorium Chaerul Saleh' (Rise and fall, In memorium Chaerul Saleh), Sinar Harapan, 9 February 1967.

11 'Badut Plampitan' (The Plampitan clown), Radio Ampera 1966a: 11. Plampitan was Roeslan Abdulgani's birthplace in Surabaya. Osa-Usep and ASU were rival right and left wing factions struggling for control of the PNI in early 1966, the party of which he was a member. Cak is a Javanese form of address for an older male, but it is also a common Surabaya term for low-class people such as trishaw drivers, roughly equivalent to 'mate' or 'buddy'. The Lie Hok Thay affair first erupted in August 1956 and received extensive coverage in the Jakarta press, especially in Indonesia Raya. Roeslan Abdulgani was finally convicted on relatively minor charges in April 1957. See Feith 1962: 503-4 and 509-10. Some of the heavy sarcasm of the Radio Ampera piece is lost in translation, especially the repetition of the evocative Indonesian term sok (putting on airs, pretending), rendered here as 'pseudo'.

12 KAPPI and Laskar AR Hakim activists 'arrested' several ministers on 16 March.
thirteen were taken into custody by RPKAD troops in Jakarta and Bogor, including Deputy Prime Ministers, Subandrio and Chaerul Saleh, and Minister for Central Bank Affairs, Jusuf Muda Dalam. A new six-person interim cabinet presidium was announced consisting of Soeharto, Idham Chalid of the NU, Adam Malik, the Sultan of Yogyakarta, Leimena and Roeslan Abdulgani, although the real decision-making authority lay with Soeharto, Malik and the Sultan.

During the weeks that followed, Soeharto moved cautiously. Above all he was concerned to give the impression of legitimacy and of not acting with undue haste against the president and his supporters. Consequently, when a restructuring of the cabinet was announced by Sukarno on 27 March, there were relatively few changes apart from those ministers who had been arrested or had fled. Nevertheless, quietly and behind the scenes, steps were soon under way to begin the difficult task of rehabilitating the ailing Indonesian economy and reversing Sukarno's adventurist foreign policy by ending the konfrontasi campaign. At the same time, Soeharto quickly moved to shore up his support politically both inside and outside the military. Purges were instigated in those sections of the armed forces where support for the president was strongest - in particular, the air force, the navy and the police. A similar process was set in train within all levels of the government bureaucracy under the supervision of the political affairs section of the army.

Since many of these reforms and policy reversals were to take some time to have an effect, it was the announcement of the new cabinet that made the most immediate impression. For the militant anti-Sukarno students, the retention of so many individuals who were regarded either as opportunists or as sychophantic supporters of the president was a profound disappointment. Several ministers in particular had been personally responsible for political decisions for which they were held in complete contempt. Radio

---

13 For a full list of those arrested, see Crouch 1978: 195.
Ampera forcefully expressed many of these concerns in several bluntly-worded broadcasts as soon as the new cabinet was announced.14

Why, Radio Ampera asked, had so many who had proved themselves to the Indonesian people as unworthy been reappointed? Some ministers, like Dr Soeharto (National Development Planning Affairs) and Pandelaki (Budgets) were well-known for their personal corruption; Sumarno (Finance) and J.B. Massie (Assistant to the Sultan) had both been the principal architects of the massive price rises that had aroused so much bitterness in late 1965; David Cheng (Housing, Planning and Urban Development), was described as a 'Kuomintang capitalist from Hong Kong' who, it was alleged, could not even speak Indonesian! Yet Radio Ampera's harshest criticisms were directed at Leimena and Roeslan Abdulgani, the former retained as a Deputy Prime Minister and the latter - to the consternation of Soe and his fellow students - elevated to that position. Leimena was denounced as the minister who had been responsible for closing the University of Indonesia at the height of the Tritura campaign in early March and for his role in brow-beating party leaders into signing a statement on 10 March condemning the student demonstrations as the work of Nekolim and the CIA. The various personal and public failings of Roeslan Abdulgani were once more detailed, with the minister branded with the derogatory label, Jubir Usman.15

Just taking this pair, it's difficult for us to have any confidence in the present cabinet. Can honest leaders of the people such as Sri Sultan, Adam Malik and Pak Harto work with people like this? Can such a cabinet become united? Without trust in the leadership, the people could lose their enthusiasm for reform.16

Soe Hok-gie and his circle believed that these ministers should be replaced with people who had a genuine commitment to the pursuit of a complete overhaul of government policy. Such a point of view not only required fresh faces in the cabinet, it also struck at the very heart of Guided Democracy and its chief architect, the president

14 'Menilai kabinet jang baru' (Assessing the new cabinet), broadcast 29 and 30 March 1966, Radio Ampera 1966a: 13-14
15 Jubir Usman, a plausible Indonesian name, was in fact an acronym for juru bicara USDEK Manipol (spokesperson for Manipol USDEK)
16 'Menilai kabinet jang baru' (Assessing the new cabinet), broadcast 30 March 1966, Radio Ampera 1966a: 14
himself. Hence Radio Ampera, while continuing to call for further cabinet reform, began
directly to attack Sukarno’s ideological formulations and his political slogans:

That’s our type of Great Leader of the Revolution. So clever at juggling words, while the
people grow hungrier and a great monument tipped with gold soars high. When
this was criticised he declared ‘Monuments are trousers’. The contents of a poster
scrawled on the wall of a building in Bandung was thoroughly apt: ‘Basically already
senile, a monument is said to be trousers’. Yes, listeners, do we still want to be led by
someone already senile, who [refuses] to ban the PKI and praises them after their murder
of the generals who were trying to defend Pancasila? Do we still want to retain a leader
who refuses to answer to the people, but only to the MPRS (who, nota bene, are
people he himself appointed) and to God, while he himself continues to flirt with the
communists? And one more question: do we still want to support him without
qualification?

Listeners, we are sick of empty slogans. We are heartily sick of them. We don’t want
lofty speeches thoroughly devoid of content. We want modest leaders, who look at the
real facts and who then work hard to correct existing shortcomings.

Listeners, our struggle now is a struggle to uphold the critical capacity of the
Indonesian people, because only with a critical capacity can we see problems as they
really are, and so be able precisely to overcome our difficulties. This is the road that
leads to prosperity for the Indonesian people. We will no longer say that Indonesia is a
wealthy nation because a few ordinary people can be seen buying gladioli for Lebaran at
the Roxy market. We will no longer say that the Indonesian nation is prosperous
because people don’t roast stones. But we will look at the actual situation and work to
overcome actual difficulties.

Listeners, our real enemies are the lies within the slogans. Subandrio, Ali
[Sastroamidjojo] and Chaerul Saleh were only the instruments, they became the
trumpets of these lies, and because of that we must eliminate them. But our prime
enemies are all those people who spread these slogans, and who want to eliminate our
critical capacity. Our enemies are people who proclaim themselves infallible in word
and deed; our enemies are people who do not want to be criticised.17

From the end of March until well into May, Radio Ampera continued to unleash a
steady barrage of invective against Sukarno, his political allies and his policies during its
regular evening broadcasts. The president himself was repeatedly condemned for his
dictatorial tendencies: his penchant for collecting grandiose titles, his flouting of the
provisions of the 1945 Constitution with his acquisition of the president-for-life status,
his stacking of the MPRS with his own sycophantic supporters, and his suppression of
any domestic political opposition by the use of arbitrary arrests and detention without
trial.18

---

17 ‘Bangkitlah daja kritik melawan slogan-slogan’ (Raising the critical capacity to oppose slogans),
Monument in central Jakarta had been a project which President Sukarno had personally initiated and
18 One broadcast aired on 23 April drew a comparison between Sukarno and Ghana’s former president,
Nkrumah, who had been overthrown by a military coup in February 1966: ‘Setiap diktator akan
diganjarg rakjat’ (Every dictator will be crushed by the people), Radio Ampera 1966b: 10.
In early April reports of the grave condition and then the death of the PSI leader, Sutan Sjahrir, in Switzerland prompted several bitter attacks on the tactics Sukarno had employed to silence his critics, and a call for the release of others who had been imprisoned without trial. Also under attack was the profligate personal lifestyle of the president, his excessive number of wives and the steady stream of mistresses, and the instances of high-level corruption associated with the palace circle, allegedly involving deferred payment schemes and smuggling rackets coordinated by the wives of senior palace officials and their followers.

In addition, Radio Ampera called for decisive action to be taken both against those senior government officials who had misused their positions to enrich themselves, and against those entrepreneurs and businessmen who had advanced their business empires by ingratiating themselves with Sukarno and his circle through a deliberate policy of bribes and flattery. Ibnu Sutowo, the minister who controlled Indonesia's oil and natural gas operations, was singled out on several occasions as a prime example of the corrupt official. Among the most prominent of the Old Order business figures condemned for their cultivation of palace patronage was Tengku Markam, the director of P.T. Markam, one of the largest trading corporations in Indonesia.

While it continued to attack the president, Radio Ampera also called on both the Indonesian press and the nation's political parties to cast off the blinkered outlook imposed by the Guided Democracy era that had required them to display total loyalty to

---

20 'Revolusi Perantjis dan Tanah Air Kita sekarang' (The French Revolution and our fatherland at the present), broadcast 2 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966a: 6
21 See 'Operasi Budhi' (The Budhi Operation), broadcast 7 and 8 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966a: 10; and 'Kaum vested interest harus di singkirkan' (Vested interests must be eliminated), broadcast 25 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966b: 17. Radio Ampera called for the reintroduction of 'Operasi Budhi', a plan originally proposed some years earlier by General Nasution to examine the wealth and business interests of all senior government officials including cabinet ministers.
22 See, for example, *Radio Ampera* 1966b: 16. Shortly after Ibnu Sutowo was attacked in several broadcasts, the Radio Ampera students were raided by troops from the Jakarta garrison. Subsequently the radio transmitter was relocated to the RPKAD headquarters at Cijantung where it was well protected. Interview with Fred Hehuwat, 2 February 1982
those in authority and the president in particular. The Old Order political slogan 
*mendukung tanpa reserve* was repeatedly condemned as totally inappropriate for the 
changing political and social conditions. Journalists were challenged to show courage 
by returning to their roles as 'instruments of control', and exposing corruption wherever 
it occurred. Political party members, especially those who sat in the MPRS which 
would soon be meeting in special session to hear the president report on the events of the 
previous October, were called upon to become once more 'guardians of democracy'.

It is not clear how long Radio Ampera broadcasts continued after the middle of 
May. By June 1966 the group's original criticism of the Indonesian mass media for its 
cowardice and timidity and its domination by the supporters of the president no longer 
carried as much force as it had in the early months of the year. By mid 1966, a new 
critical spirit was steadily beginning to emerge within the Jakarta press as independent-
minded editors and journalists sensed that Sukarno's grip on power was rapidly eroding 
and that other sources of protection were now available if they found themselves in 
trouble.

As far as the most militant anti-Sukarno activists were concerned, the appearance in 
June of two newspapers controlled and operated by students, the Jakarta daily *Harian 
KAMI* and the Bandung weekly *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, was a positive development. 
During the month that followed, both newspapers quickly established a reputation for 
their hard-hitting attack upon all aspects of the Old Order and its leadership. In contrast 
to the oblique and cautious style most other newspapers continued to adopt in dealing

---

23 *Mendukung tanpa reserve* may be literally translated as 'support without qualification' but in practice meant something like 'unquestioning obedience'. See 'Djaman mendukung tanpa reserve telah selesai' (The era of unqualified support has ended), broadcast 8 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966a: 17-18.


25 'Parpol2 bangkitlah!' (Political parties wake up!), broadcast 8 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966a: 20-

26 For an overview of the Jakarta press during this period, see Paget 1967a and 1967b.

27 The first weekly edition of *Mahasiswa Indonesia* appeared on 19 June. *Harian KAMI* published an introductory edition at the end of the month and began as a daily on 2 July.
with the president, the editorials and feature articles of both these papers were marked by a bluntness and directness that quickly attracted readers from Indonesia's political and educated elite.

_Harian KAMI_ was established under the editorship of Nono Anwar Makarim, an ambitious and enterprising University of Indonesia law student who had operated on the fringes of student and intellectual activist circles in the early 1960s. During that period Makarim had been one of the founders of a hitherto inconsequential body, the Indonesian Student Press League (Ikatan Pers Mahasiswa Indonesia, IPMI). Although he seems to have played no direct part in the student demonstrations in early 1966, by June he had used his IPMI position to establish _Harian KAMI._\(^{28}\) Despite the names of several KAMI Pusat activists appearing on its masthead as members of its editorial board, the newspaper had no formal connection with that body. Yet the appropriation of the KAMI label was a clever device, for _Harian KAMI_ was soon accepted as the Jakarta daily representing the interests and opinions of the student movement that had challenged the government in the first three months of the year. Makarim quickly gathered around him a group of committed student activists as writers, reporters and journalists, including Soe Hok-gie's old friend from Gemsos and the Faculty of Letters, Zainal Zakse. Makarim applied his own literary talent to the newspaper's sharply worded editorials which made effective use of biting sarcasm. In addition to frequent articles by various student activists from the KAMI Pusat circle, the paper published occasional feature articles and columns by a number of prominent intellectuals known for their implacable opposition to the PKI and Sukarno, including Rosihan Anwar, Mochtar Lubis and Emil Salim. Although Soe Hok-gie himself wrote an occasional piece for _Harian KAMI_, he was a much more frequent contributor to _Mahasiwa Indonesia._

---

\(^{28}\) _Harian KAMI_’s general manager (pemimpin umum) was Anis Ibrahim, a close associate of Makarim and a co-founder of IPMI. Anis Ibrahim was also well known to Soe Hok-gie as one of the most active pribumi supporters of the assimilationist movement. In addition to editing the LBKB’s monthly journal, _Bara Eka_, for a short period, Ibrahim had played a prominent role in negotiating the deferred payment facility which had led Soe Hok-gie to withdraw from the LPKB in early 1966.
Bandung student activists had been among the most militant and determined opponents of the Sukarno regime during the January to March period and had played a critical role in the demonstrations after their arrival in Jakarta. The weekly *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, established by a group of student activists under the leadership of Rachman Tolleng, quickly achieved a national reputation for its uncompromising critique of all aspects of the politics of the Old Order. The newspaper made an immediate and striking impression through the high quality of its layout, printing and artwork, which put it well in advance of all other Indonesian newspapers at that time. It was, however, the aggressive posture of its lead articles, the tough-minded and penetrating quality of its editorials and the biting humour of its cartoons that placed the Bandung weekly at the forefront of the burgeoning critique of the president and the political system he had established. Soe Hok-gie, who for some time had known Rachman Tolleng as a committed opponent of Sukarno and Guided Democracy politics, immediately lent his name to the newspaper's masthead as an editorial assistant.

**A defiant president**

Despite the dramatically changed political circumstances prevailing in Indonesia after 11 March, President Sukarno showed no sign that he was prepared to make any further concessions to his opponents or to accept any significant diminution of his presidential power and authority. On the contrary, in his speeches and public appearances throughout the months that followed, Sukarno gave every indication that he was intent on resuming his position at the apex of government and reasserting those ideological symbols and political slogans that had been the hallmark of the Guided Democracy era.

---

29 For a detailed study of the *Mahasiswa Indonesia* circle and an examination of its foundation, its ideas and its development throughout the course of the New Order, see Raillon 1984 and 1985. There were also Jakarta (*edisi Pusat*) and Yogyakarta (*edisi Jateng*) 'editions' of *Mahasiswa Indonesia*. Though all three publications shared the same masthead and operated under the same publication permit, they were in reality quite separate operations. In Bandung, *Mahasiswa Indonesia* had the backing of the Siliwangi division's commander, Major General Dharsono. The Jakarta publication, edited by Louis Taolin, appeared infrequently and never achieved the quality or reputation of the Bandung paper.
Such a prospect posed a serious threat to the political ambitions of Soeharto and his circle within the army. In the short term it also put at risk the delicate and largely secret negotiations with Malaysia that had begun in April under Adam Malik's direction. Healing the rift between the two countries by putting an end to \textit{konfrontasi} was considered to be essential if Indonesia was to secure the large sums of Western aid money required to restore the fortunes of the ailing Indonesian economy and rebuild the country’s basic infrastructure.

Fearing that Sukarno might revoke the emergency powers that had been used to legitimize the political reforms and restructuring that were already well underway, Soeharto and his supporters made arrangements for the MPRS to be called into special session to gain constitutional sanction for their actions. The two student newspapers, \textit{Harian KAMI} and the Bandung edition of \textit{Mahasiswa Indonesia}, both made their initial appearance on the newstands around the time of the MPRS session. Both papers quickly became the vehicles for opinions and points of view hostile to the president.

When the MPRS finally assembled in Jakarta on 20 June, its membership had been changed in a number of important respects. Not only was it now purged of its PKI members, but there were some significant changes both within the armed forces faction and in the composition of those members who represented the PNI. Consequently, with many of the staunchest supporters of the president no longer present, there was a new critical element in the assembly, now under the chairmanship of General Nasution who had not been returned to the cabinet when it was reshuffled during March. The 11 March Letter of Authority was immediately reinforced by its adoption as a decree of the MPRS. President Sukarno, invited to address the session in his capacity as mandatory of the MPRS, was listened to politely during his speech entitled 'Nawaksara', which he

---

31 For details of these changes, see Crouch 1975: 387-8. At a special PNI party congress, held in Bandung in late April under the tight supervision of the Siliwangi chief of staff, Dharsono, the right wing Osa-Usep faction had swept to power at the expense of the ASU faction. See McIntyre 1972.
delivered on 22 June. During the subsequent debates, however, the perceived shortcomings of his report were subjected to mounting criticism. In particular, Sukarno was openly attacked for his failure to address adequately the disastrous economic situation into which the country had degenerated, and his complete omission of any reference to the events of the attempted coup of the previous October.

Consequently, the MPRS passed a number of decrees aimed at reasserting its constitutional authority and curtailing many of the specific powers and much of the arbitrary authority that the president had managed to accumulate throughout the Guided Democracy era. Sukarno's president-for-life status was revoked, his responsibility under the constitution to give a thorough account of his term of office was reiterated, and he was called on to address the shortcomings that had been identified in his recent report. In addition, the MPRS called for the formation of a new cabinet, identified as the 'Ampera' cabinet, in which Soeharto was accorded a key decision-making role as to its ultimate composition.33

Yet in spite of these evident setbacks and the accompanying blow to his prestige, Sukarno maintained a defiant attitude, refusing to countenance the possibility of holding on to the presidency with reduced powers. To the chagrin of those who hoped for such an outcome as a compromise solution, Sukarno continued to do what he could to obstruct the reform process that the MPRS had sanctioned. During July he made plain his opposition to Soeharto's proposed new cabinet by delaying his approval for as long as possible.34 At the subsequent installation ceremony on 28 July, Sukarno delivered an especially aggressive speech, including remarks intended to disrupt the peace negotiations with Malaysia that had already reached a decisive stage. Despite the president's opposition, a settlement of the long-running dispute with Malaysia was finalised early in

---

33 For a fuller account of the MPRS session and its outcome, see Crouch 1975: 387-94.
34 The new 'Ampera' cabinet did not include either Leimena or Roeslan Abdulgani. See Crouch 1975: 407-8.
August. Soon after, on 11 August, Malaysia's Foreign Minister Tun Razak paid an official visit to Jakarta.

As far as the wider Indonesian public was concerned, the president's position became abundantly clear on 17 August during his Independence Day speech, entitled 'Never Leave History'. The speech was a direct challenge to his enemies and an implicit appeal to his supporters to rally behind him. Not only was the president's reference to the attempted coup once again cursory and ambiguous, but he managed to lay the blame for the country's serious economic difficulties on the very high level of expenditure by the armed forces. All the familiar ideological constructs were reasserted, including those political slogans like Nasakom, Manipol-USDEK, the New Emerging Forces and Berdikari that to all practical purpose had already been rendered inoperable by the destruction of the PKI and recent political reforms. Yet Sukarno, believing implicitly that as Great Leader of the Revolution he still commanded the loyal support of the majority of the Indonesian people, challenged his opponents to hold an election to test their own political support.

The Independence Day speech, broadcast on radio throughout the country, was a critical turning point in the process of transition that had begun on 11 March. Sukarno's blatant defiance was undoubtedly deeply disturbing to those who believed that he would recognise the changed political circumstances and accept a figurehead role, for it was now clear that Soeharto would have to find a way to remove him in order to pursue those political and economic reforms that the incumbent president continued to regard with disdain. As for those who were implacably opposed to the president and his policies, especially those in student circles, the speech was considered to be an outright provocation, hardening their resolve to campaign for his removal from office as swiftly as possible. It immediately precipitated a new outburst of student activity, with the

35 Exploiting the Indonesian-language title ('Jangan sekali-kali meninggalkan sejarah'), the student press quickly coined the clever acronym Jas Merah ('The Red Jacket') for the president's address. See the editorial in Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.10, 21 August 1966.
KAMI action front in both Jakarta and Bandung releasing statements rejecting the contents of the speech, and students once more taking to the streets. However, in sharp contrast to the demonstrations of January to March, this time Sukarno himself was the specific target of their protests.

Militant anti-Sukarno students were especially active in Bandung. Two days after the Independence Day speech, on 19 August, anti-Sukarno activists clashed with supporters of the president on the campus of the Catholic Parahyangan University, resulting in the death of one KAMI activist and the wounding of several others. However the Bandung KAMI activists had the strong support of both the Siliwangi commander Dharsono and Kostrad chief of staff Kemal Idris.36 Mahasiswa Indonesia immediately embarked upon a virulent campaign against the president with a stream of hard-hitting editorials, hostile feature articles and bitingly sarcastic cartoons.

Throughout September, outspoken opposition to Sukarno gathered momentum, fuelled both by further defiant speeches from the president,37 and also by the sensational accounts of high level corruption and yet more immorality involving the palace circle revealed during the trial of the former Minister for Central Bank Affairs, Jusuf Muda Dalam.38 As the first anniversary of the attempted coup approached, the anti-Sukarno campaign became more and more intense. On 28 September students held an all-night vigil at the graves of the murdered generals followed by a march through Jakarta carrying anti-Sukarno placards. October 1 was a day of high political drama in the Indonesian capital. The military authorities, aiming for the maximum political impact, had chosen that day to open the Mahmillub trial proceedings against the former First Deputy Prime

36 Following the clash at Parahyangan University, Dharsono moved swiftly to purge pro-Sukarnoists within the Bandung military command who were implicated in the incident. Kemal Idris visited Bandung shortly after, to give his support to the militant anti-Sukarnoists and their demands for reforms.

37 On 6 September Sukarno proclaimed his life-long allegiance to Marxism. For a discussion of the political reverberations caused by this speech and several others made during early September, see Crouch 1975: 423-5.

38 The Jusuf Muda Dalam trial, the first in a series of carefully timed 'show trials' in the Special Military Court (Mahkamah Militer Luar Biasa, Mahmillub) designed to apply the maximum political pressure on the president and his wavering supporters, began in Jakarta on 30 August. A guilty verdict on all charges was announced on 7 September.
Minister and Foreign Minister Subandrio. On the same day, thousands of students gathered outside the gates of the presidential palace in Jakarta. Some of them brought large photographs of the victims of the attempted coup which they placed in full view of the palace; others carried placards demanding that the president be immediately removed from office and brought before the special military tribunal to answer for his own alleged crimes, in particular his role in the failed coup. Some of the student demonstrators remained outside the palace in an all-night vigil, but by early the following afternoon, a Sunday, all had agreed to disperse after the intervention of Kemal Idris. Later that afternoon, student leaders met with Kemal Idris at his Kostrad headquarters and were warned that further demonstrations of this nature would not be tolerated by the army leadership.

This renewed outburst of student activity had caught the army leadership by surprise. Since it remained committed to the pursuit of a cautious and constitutional approach towards the president, it was not prepared to move directly against him nor attempt to remove him from office by force. The warning given by Kemal Idris was reinforced later that evening when the Jakarta regional military commander, Amir Machmud, announced a ban on all further demonstrations.

Some student leaders - principally those who were KAMI Pusat activists - were prepared to accept the army leadership's direction; but other sections of the student movement - especially the militant Laskar Arief Rachman Hakim, the leaders of the KAPPI high school student and some of the more independent-minded KAMI activists - were unwilling to abandon what they had begun to call 'the parliament of the streets' (MPR jalanan) and were determined to maintain the pressure on Sukarno.

---

39 Subandrio was on trial for participating in the attempted coup. Like Jusuf Muda Dalam he has found guilty and sentenced to death. Both trials were front page stories in the Jakarta press throughout their duration.
40 See the editorial in Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.16, Week 1, October 1966: 'Minggir, Bung Karno. Silahkan minggir! (Stand aside, Bung Karno. Please stand aside!).
41 Confidential interviews. The students regarded the army as their 'partners'. Some student leaders had learned that the soldiers guarding the palace would not be issued with live ammunition. They calculated
When students again assembled in the vicinity of the palace on the following morning, 3 October, the troops guarding the palace were under strict orders to clear them from the area. Although these troops were under Kostrad command, they had mostly been drawn from the Brawijaya East Java division where support for the president remained high among senior and middle ranking officers. When these troops moved to disperse the demonstration, soldiers reacted angrily to taunts and abuse from some of the students. An ugly melee followed in the vicinity of the National Monument when soldiers charged the demonstrators and used their rifle butts and bayonets. More than sixty students were injured, some of them seriously. One of those in the latter category was Soe Hok-gie's friend from the Faculty of Letters and Gemsos, Zainal Zakse, who was present at the demonstration in his capacity as a reporter with the student daily Harian KAMI.

The incident was a blunt but effective reminder to the students of where real power and authority now lay. In the aftermath, senior military officers like Kemal Idris and Sarwo Edhie did their best to placate the angry and confused students with assurances that the so-called New Order 'partnership' between the students and the military remained intact. However, they also made it clear that the army leadership would not tolerate the students' attempts to dictate the course of events by taking the law into their own hands.

---

42 On the strong pro-Sukarno stance adopted by the Brawijaya division throughout 1966, see Crouch 1978: 208-10.
43 For an account of the incident from the perspective of the students, see Harian KAMI, 4 October 1966.
44 Zainal Zakse received serious bayonet wounds during the 3 October incident. He lingered in a critical condition in a Jakarta hospital for several months, before his friends finally arranged for belated emergency treatment in the Netherlands. He died there on 8 May 1967. A number of obituaries and notices appeared in the Jakarta press, including a bitter article by Soe Hok-djin (written under his newly-acquired name, Arief Budiman), attacking the hypocrisy of those in the action fronts and the mass media who had quickly abandoned Zakse six months earlier. See 'Pesan Zakse, Apakah pahlawan mati jang dihargai?' (Zakse's message, must it be dead heroes who are appreciated?), Sinar Harapan, 16 and 17 May 1967. Soe Hok-gie prepared his own reflective tribute to his friend Zakse, which appeared soon after: 'Kenang2an untuk seorang kawan: Zainal Abidin' (Reminiscences for a friend: Zainal Abidin), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.49, Week 4, May 1967.
45 For the student movement's reaction, see the editorial in the subsequent edition of Mahasiswa Indonesia, 'Hadiah ulang tahun kepada partner' (Birthday present to a partner), No.17, Week 2, October
The end of Sukarno

After Radio Ampera disappeared from the Jakarta air waves around the time of the MPRS special session in June, knowledge of Soe Hok-gie's exact movements remains somewhat limited. Yet as far as family and friends can recall, Soe was not an active participant in the renewed outburst of student demonstrations that occurred in late September, culminating in the mortal wounding of his friend Zakse in Merdeka Square on 3 October.

The University of Indonesia campus had been officially reopened in early April, and although it was to be many months before academic life returned to normal, it is certain that Soe was one of those eager to resume interrupted studies as soon as it was possible to do so and determined to participate in the process of institutional rebuilding that had then to occur. Although the exact timing of his withdrawal from the activist phase of the student movement remains uncertain, one point is beyond doubt. Soe regarded his own and his fellow students' direct intervention in national politics on the streets of Jakarta as a temporary phenomenon, an emergency measure arising out of the extraordinary events set in train by the attempted coup of the previous year. Unlike some who had assumed leadership positions within the student movement since late 1965 - especially those at the head of the student action front KAMI - Soe did not consider students per se as a permanent political force at the highest levels of politics in Indonesia.46 Nor did he regard the student movement as a vehicle for securing for himself a position on the national political stage.

1966. Privately, Kemal Idris was extremely disturbed by the 3 October clash between students and the troops under his command. The Kostrad chief of staff, who had established very good relations with the anti-Sukarno student movement, knew Zainal Zakse personally and had a high regard for the young Gemsos activist. Confidential interviews, March 1982.

46 Soe's trenchant criticisms of KAMI and its leadership and his own views about the place of students in political life are taken up in the following chapter.
Throughout the second half of 1966, however, many of his fellow students remained swept up by the emotion-charged atmosphere that had developed over previous months. Some had begun to believe their own rhetoric about an armed forces-student 'partnership' and to claim special rights and privileges based upon the heroic role they believed they had played. Soe, however, was one of the first to attack student excesses, arguing that it was time to abandon the streets and return as quickly as possible to schools and university campuses.47

It seems probable that by the middle of 1966 - especially after the MPRS special session had given legal backing to the 11 March Letter of Authority - Soe considered that the major crisis had passed. Despite the many serious problems that remained to be solved, not the least of which was the question of the position of the president himself, he believed that it was essentially the task of the adult world political actors - those who sat in the DPR-GR and MPRS, party leaders and senior military officers - to give shape and meaning to the new order of Indonesian politics that was beginning to emerge from the wreck of the old.

Despite this, Soe remained a keen and close observer of the latest political developments. Furthermore, the transformation of the Indonesian press provided him with an outlet for his views. This became increasingly evident after the MPRS session as editors and journalists cast off the stultifying conformity of the Guided Democracy years and began to display a renewed vigour and boldness. Eager to contribute to the public debate about the pace and direction of political reform, Soe began to contribute occasional articles to several newspapers throughout the second half of 1966, thus laying the foundation for his emergence over the next three years as one of Indonesia's most outspoken and independent-minded intellectuals. His part-time career in journalism

47 Radio Ampera devoted a number of broadcasts to these issues on several occasions during April. See 'Awas penjakit pahlawan gadungan' (Watch out for the bogus heroes' disease), broadcast 5 and 6 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966a: 16-17; 'Pesan pada KAPPI-KAMIKASI dan kesatuan aksi lainnya' (Message to KAPPI-KAMIKASI and other action fronts), broadcast end of April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966b: 3; 'Terbitkan sekarang djuga tindakan liar dari siapapun djuga' (Control immediately any unauthorised actions), broadcast 26 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966b: 19-20.
began with a portrait of the journalist Mochtar Lubis whom he had admired for his principled opposition to Sukarno, written shortly after Lubis' release from detention. It was followed a few weeks later by an article (probably the first to appear on the issue) calling for the release of other opponents of the Old Order still being held in prison, including those who had participated in the PRRI-Pemesta regional rebellions from the late 1950s.

In addition, in August Soe wrote a two-part article on the tensions inside the Peoples' Republic of China between intellectuals and the Chinese Communist Party, based in part on discussions with Indonesian students at the Faculty of Letters who had recently returned from China. At around the same time, he also wrote a piece for the Jakarta weekly *Djaja* on the 1956-57 student movement at Beijing University, which had arisen out of the 'Hundred Flowers' reform movement in China, describing the crackdown on dissident students and intellectuals that had resulted and suggesting that a similar fate would have befallen Indonesian students if their movement had not been successful.

As the first anniversary of the failed 1965 coup approached, Soe wrote a brief account of the earlier incident of alleged communist treachery that had occurred at Madiun during the independence struggle. The title of his article mocked the title of Sukarno's

---

48 See 'Mengapa saja memilih pendjara - Mochtar Lubis dan politik' (Why I chose gaol - Mochtar Lubis and politics), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.7, 31 July 1966. Towards the end of March 1966, Soe Hok-gie and his brother Hok-djin had managed to gain access to the detention centre at Jalan Keagungan in Glodok where Mochtar Lubis and a group of other high profile Guided Democracy political detainees had recently been relocated. Since the gaol was only a short distance from their home in Kebon Jeruk, they paid a number of visits during the following month exchanging views and passing on information about the students' activities. Interview with Arief Budiman, 9 March 1982; and Mochtar Lubis, 17 March 1982. See also Mochtar Lubis, 1980: 477.

49 See 'Sebuah penilaian baru terhadap kaum anti Kamunis [sic]' (A re-evaluation of the anti-communists), *Harian KAMi*, 20 August 1966. Several months later, when nothing had been done, Soe prepared a more detailed appeal on their behalf: see 'Bagaimana dengan nasib-nasib tawanan politik resim j.l.' (What about the fate of the political prisoners of the previous regime?), *Sinar Harapan*, 25 and 26 November 1966.

50 See 'Antara kemerdekaan intelektual dan instruksi partai' (Between intellectual freedom and party directives), *Kompas*, 20 and 22 August 1966.

51 The exact publication details of this article are unknown since copies of *Djaja* have been unavailable. It has been reprinted in a recent compilation of some of Soe Hok-gie's journalism. See 'Sembilan tahun yang lalu mahasiswa-mahasiswa Universitas Peking mengamuk' (Nine years ago Beijing University students ran riot) in Soe 1995: 107-17.
Independence Day speech that had provoked his enemies a month earlier.\(^2\) As public debate intensified among the supporters of the New Order about the future direction of the political reform process, Soe quickly identified himself as an advocate of militant and far-reaching measures. Just after the clash between students and Kostrad troops on 3 October, he prepared a forceful article for the Bandung weekly *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, comparing the arguments of those advocating a cautious and gradual approach to further political change - what he termed 'the middle group' - with the arguments of those like himself who were pressing for the immediate implementation of a more drastic reform agenda:

\[\ldots\text{ the only proper way to put our country's affairs in order is with resolute action. Whoever has been at fault must be brought to justice without taking into consideration their position or their service. Every corruptor must be arrested without taking into account whether they have a green shirt, a white shirt or a red shirt. Only with such tough measures will the people's faith be restored and within a short period of time (because we are racing against time), the economy will begin to improve. The consequences of these tough measures have been considered, that is, the distinct possibility that physical conflict will occur between several social forces. But this is the only course that is visible.}\]

Opposed to such a course of action, according to Soe, were the advocates of what he termed 'the middle group' who took the view that

\[\ldots\text{ we have to be realistic about the existing conditions in our country. They refuse to resort to drastic methods because they believe such methods will lead to civil war. Their argument is 'to put in place the executive, legislative and judicial forces and the laws in accordance with their functions'. They believe that if 'the rules of the game' operate properly our objectives of fulfilling AMPERA will finally be achieved.}\]

Yet Soe doubted whether such a gradual path to reform was possible in the present circumstances:

The economic situation continues to deteriorate, and prices continue to rise although not as crazily as in the past. Economic aid from the IMF and the World Bank remains uncertain as long as Sukarno is allowed to pursue his guerilla politics.\(^3\) Corruptors are also still out of control because they have the backing of such and such a party or such and such a military officer who misuse their authority. Each and every attempt to take action against them is prevented with the excuse that the time is not ripe, we must be tactical etc.

Also efforts to put in place the functions of the legislative, executive and judicial bodies have not been completely successful. The Attorney General still treats Mochtar Lubis et al as under house arrest, for reasons that are incomprehensible to any sane person. The DPR-GR and the MPRS as legislative bodies remain powerless when Sukarno stubbornly refuses to heed MPRS decrees. He still persistently refuses to condemn Gestapu-PKI and ignores the MPRS decree requesting him to provide an explanation for the occurrence of Gestapu as a supplement to his Nawaksara speech. It seems very

---

\(^2\) '18 September 1948 - djangan sekali-kali tinggalkan sedjarah ... Madiun' (18 September 1948 - Never leave history ... Madiun), *Kompas*, 20 and 21 September 1966
likely that the legislative agencies that have been empowered by Pak Harto are actually frightened to use their authority. The problem is that the personnel in the MPRS and DPR-GR for the most part are Old Order men.

If such a situation continues, it is possible that the political strategy of the 'middle group' will ultimately run into a dead end.53

During the final months of 1966 as the militant anti-Sukarnoists voiced their demand for such thorough-going reforms, attention began to centre on the question of what should be done about President Sukarno himself. While the army leadership continued to act with supreme caution, pressure began to mount for Soeharto to take decisive action. On 22 October, General Nasution, in his capacity as chairman of the MPRS, formally requested Sukarno to address the perceived shortcomings and omissions of his Nawaksara speech delivered to the parliament on 22 June. By early November, the militants' campaign against the president continued to escalate, with *Mahasiswa Indonesia* demanding his immediate dismissal and trial. Soe Hok-gie was part of this process, writing another hard-hitting article in which he elaborated on the reasons for acting swiftly and decisively to remove Sukarno from the presidency:

If we want to talk about Sukarno, we must consider him in the widest possible way. We must not adopt a narrow point of view by talking of Sukarno as such. With 'Sukarno' all the problems of the present struggle are involved. When university students and the people initiated the demand to uphold justice and truth, they had immediately declared war against vested interests, those who blow with the wind, political adventurers etc. From January to March the students' target was the PKI, Subandrio et al (including Jusuf Muda Dalam, Chaerul Saleh etc.). This doesn't mean that justice and truth had been established in our country after they had been dragged in front of a court, because they were only the first target of the movement for justice and truth. After that there was a second stage, a third and so forth. The problem of upholding what is just and what is honest is a never-ending struggle.

After the PKI and Subandrio et al were 'brought under control', a further problem arose. After them, who else had to be brought under control? And the people's choice was Sukarno, because (with good reason) he is held responsible for the corruption, the moral decadence and the disappearance of democracy in Indonesia. After Sukarno, the next targets are those groups who assisted him, the corruptors and others. So in upholding the students' and the people's demands Sukarno is the second target. The groups who have become the third target, the fourth, the fifth and so forth are aware that their turn is only a matter of time. And because of that, they are now uniting to defend Sukarno. They are defending Sukarno, not because they love him, but because by defending him they are defending themselves. Sukarno is a battlefield now. He is a fortress, he is the second line. Without the collapse of this fortress, it will be very difficult to widen the struggle. In other words, until Sukarno falls the struggle cannot progress any further. With this problem, Sukarno becomes a political factor.

---

53 'Kehantjuran politik gol. tengah?' (The destruction of the middle group's policy?), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.17, 9 October 1966
In addition there are other problems that we must also consider. In an invisible way, Sukarno's power remains great. As long as the structure of Indonesian society remains influenced by the feudal realm, Sukarno possesses the opportunity to make a comeback. He is a leader in a psychological sense. He is a person who has done wrong (breaking Islamic law about having too many wives, corruption, his political errors etc.) And for the sake of implanting a good democratic tradition, a guilty person must be punished and must be replaced. This is the first lesson in a course on democratic education. It is very difficult to implant the traditions of democracy, justice, honesty and a mature psychological outlook in the Indonesian people, if at the centre of their history they have allowed themselves to be ruled by a person like President Sukarno. And if we replace Sukarno, every Indonesian boy and girl for centuries will learn - 'The people will take action against anyone who tries to become a tyrant'. This is democracy. And here lies the place of Sukarno as a political factor. In the short term and in the long term.54

When this article appeared in Mahasiswa Indonesia, that newspaper's campaign against Sukarno was in full flight. Each edition carried hostile front-page news stories, cleverly written feature articles, and sharply-worded editorials attacking the president's politics and demanding immediate action to be taken against him. In addition, compromising photographs and bitingly sarcastic cartoons combined to personalize the attack on Sukarno by portraying him as a corrupt, lascivious megalomaniac who had brought the country to the brink of political and economic ruin. Soe, having observed at first hand the palace lifestyle on a number of occasions, was an active participant in this very public campaign to undermine further Sukarno's declining prestige.55

In the face of such sustained pressure, the position of the president was steadily eroded to the point where it appeared inevitable that a seemingly reluctant General Soeharto would be forced to move against him. The trial of the airforce commander, Air Marshal Omar Dhani, in early December 1966 was a crucial step in this process. Omar Dhani's testimony was manipulated by the army leadership to create the strong impression in the public mind that Sukarno knew about and approved of the plans of the

54 'Bung Karno, faktor politik atau bukan' (Bung Karno, political factor or not), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.21, 6 November 1966
55 See Soe's article 'Tjerita konjol dari negeri kita' (Foolish tales from our country), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.22, 13 November 1966. Several weeks earlier, the Bandung weekly had published a front-page story based upon an article that had appeared in the foreign press back in February. It described an incident where President Sukarno was alleged to have drugged and raped the fourteen-year-old daughter of a Chinese restaurant owner in Vienna during a visit there in 1961. See 'Roti, gadis dan Bung. Hampir sadja diseret ke muka pengadilan' (Bread, a girl and Bung. Almost dragged in front of the court), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.20, 20 October 1966.
coup's perpetrators. Subsequently, the student action fronts issued statements declaring that they believed that the president was 'involved' in the attempted coup, with the most militant students calling for the reconvening of the MPRS and for Sukarno himself to be put on trial.

By the end of the year, many of Sukarno's most ardent supporters were urging him to complete his report to the MPRS as requested, for they argued that this was now the only way to answer his critics and save his presidency. Despite his obvious reluctance to cooperate with his detractors, by early January 1967 Sukarno finally agreed. But when the president's written response, the Nawaksara Supplement (Pelengkap Nawaksara), was delivered on 10 January, neither its contents nor its tone went nearly far enough to mollify those who were now demanding his dismissal.

Consequently, the clamour to remove him from the presidency increased rather than abated. Towards the end of January, as students held further noisy demonstrations, the hardline anti-Sukarnoists among the senior military echelon held a series of high-profile meetings at a mountain retreat outside Jakarta and announced that they were ready for the final showdown. Meanwhile, the MPRS leadership, after consideration of Sukarno's Pelengkap Nawaksara, declared the president negligent and began to deliberate about what further action to take. Ominously for Sukarno, some of his erstwhile supporters now began to desert him. Towards the end of January, senior NU political

---

57 See, for example, Soe Hok-djin's article, 'Pidato Presiden Sukarno pada tanggal 30 September 1965' (President Sukarno's speech on 30 September 1965), Kompas, 19 December 1966.
58 Although Sukarno did blame the PKI leadership for the coup, he also extended responsibility to include others such as the agents of Nekolim, while refusing to offer any explanation concerning his own alleged involvement in those events. The president once again failed to render a full account of his period of office or provide an adequate explanation for the nation's disastrous economic decline during the previous five years.
59 A further article by Soe Hok-djin was typical of the militant student response. See 'Pengadilan Pres. Sukarno sebagai monumen sedjarah' (The trial of Pres. Sukarno as an historical monument), Kompas, 30 January 1967.
60 Crouch 1978: 213
figures signalled a shift in that party's position, and by February, NU representatives in the DPR-GR were leading the attack upon him with hostile resolutions.\footnote{Crouch 1975: 450-1, and 1978: 217}

Although the president's remaining military and civilian supporters did what they could to protect him, his position now began to look increasingly untenable. By mid-February, the MPRS leadership announced its total rejection of the \textit{Pelengkap Nawaksara} and the convening of a special session of the assembly in early March to resolve the problem of the presidency. Throughout February and early March there was a series of urgent meetings at the highest level involving senior military officers, civilian politicians and party leaders.\footnote{For a full account of the complex manoeuvring within the political elite that occurred before the opening of the MPRS session on 7 March, see Crouch 1975: 452-60, and 1978: 215-17.}

As those most strongly opposed to Sukarno pressed home their advantage, the president and his supporters struggled desperately to find a compromise that would avoid the final ignominy of a public dismissal at the MPRS session. Throughout these weeks, Soeharto, though clearly determined to secure Sukarno's removal, continued to act with studied caution, endeavouring to negotiate a formula that would allow the president to vacate the office voluntarily and with dignity, thereby avoiding a public humiliation.

Yet such a solution proved impossible in the face of Sukarno's dogged refusal to cooperate with Soeharto's emissaries and the determination of the hardliners to pursue the MPRS path to removal. With the trial under way in late February of yet another of the leading coup plotters, Brigadier General Supardjo, and with reports of an uprising by supporters of the president in a remote rural enclave in East Java, the MPRS session opened on 7 March against a background of considerable tension.\footnote{Elite RPKAD units destroyed the Mbah Suro movement's stronghold in East Java in early March. For an account of the movement and its millenarian dimensions, see Mitchell 1968.}

On the very morning that the members of the assembly began their deliberations, an article written by Soe Hok-gie appeared in the Jakarta daily \textit{Kompas}. Entitled 'Politicians
and Manliness', it briefly recounted the rise to power during World War II of French Vichy leader, Marshal Pétain, and his subsequent trial and conviction for collaboration with the Nazis. Soe sought to draw out some similarities between the Pétain affair in France and Indonesia's present predicament as the nation wrestled with the issue of what to do about Sukarno. As a final opportunity to press the case for the president's dismissal and trial, the comparison between Pétain and Sukarno was highly unfavourable to the latter:

Like Pétain, President Sukarno has made many blunders in the field of politics (Nasakom, Nefos, his economic policy etc). Like Pétain, Sukarno has also rendered great service to the people's struggle for independence. And like Pétain, President Sukarno is also now old.

But besides that there are also huge differences between Pétain and President Sukarno. Pétain was a 'clean' individual whereas the private life of President Sukarno is thoroughly sordid (keeping mistresses inside and outside the country, corruption etc). But the greatest difference is the attitude of Pétain and President Sukarno towards accepting responsibility for all of their actions. Unlike Pétain, President Sukarno has not acted like a man. We do not think it is necessary to analyse further the issue of the Nawaksara and its Supplement.

Now the Indonesian people still face a difficult problem. There are elements within society that have declared their opposition to President Sukarno being put on trial. They have all kinds of reasons. There are those who assert that if President Sukarno is put on trial, there is a strong possibility of it leading to civil war. There are those who explain that President Sukarno is old and his services in the past were great . . . so okay, let's just forgive him.

The issue in fact is not one of civil war, of pity or of anything else. The issue is one of principle. The principle that we are always proclaiming, that the law makes no distinctions, that under the law all people are equal.

If we do not put President Sukarno on trial (his involvement in G30S is no longer in doubt), we will have broken the above principle.

The second issue is one of education. What a poor education in public affairs it would be for the Indonesian people if President Sukarno is not brought to justice, for they will discover that when it is anyone of high rank or service, they can expect to evade the web of justice. On the contrary, if President Sukarno had the same great spirit as Pétain, he would actually ask to be put on trial to decide the real truth of whether he is guilty or not.

And the Indonesian people must also display great spirit like the French people did in 1945. Only a people with the courage to uphold the law deserves to become great.64

Throughout most of 1966, Kompas had remained cautious and measured in its criticism of the president. The publication of such a remarkably hostile article was a clear sign that Sukarno's grip on the presidency was close to its end.

---

64 'Politikus dan kedjantanan' (Politics and manliness), Kompas, 7 March 1967
After several days of intense and often heated debate, the MPRS finally resolved on 12 March to dismiss Sukarno from the presidency and appoint General Soeharto as acting president in his place until the holding of general elections. The exact wording of the MPRS decision was confusing and clouded in ambiguity, for it reflected the struggle that had taken place inside the assembly between those members who supported the call for extreme measures to be taken against Sukarno and those who sought his dismissal but did not wish to antagonize further his most ardent supporters, out of fear that they might risk provoking them into armed conflict. Although the final result was essentially a compromise - there was to be no public trial and Sukarno was to disappear quietly from public view - the Sukarno era was finally at an end. The building of a new political order could now proceed without further obstruction by him or his supporters.

The post-Sukarno era: aspirations and forebodings

The thousands of young students from schools and universities who had rallied around the Tritura cause on the streets of Jakarta in early 1966, many of whom had continued throughout the rest of that year to press for Sukarno's removal, had by and large defined themselves politically through their increasingly open and vociferous opposition to all aspects of Guided Democracy political life. Yet while it is perfectly clear what they wished to see destroyed, it is by no means easy to explain what sort of political system this generation of young Indonesians wished to see rise up out of the ashes of the Sukarno era. In all probability, this was a question that most of the students who made up the rank and file of the movement had never seriously considered.

Since the formal organisational basis of the student movement was centred on a loose coalition of student organisations representing a number of different political, social and religious perspectives, achieving a consensus on the nature of politics or the type of political system to be established in the post-Sukarno era was never going to be easy, even among those who had risen to prominence as student leaders. In fact the differences

---

65 For a full account of the MPRS session and an analysis of its outcome, see Crouch 1978: 217-20.
and rivalries between the component elements of the 1966 student movement quickly resurfaced as soon as the Old Order had been eliminated, especially when HMI, as the largest and most powerful student organisation, began to exert its authority over student affairs.

In sharp contrast, however, Soe Hok-gie was one of those student activists who had thought a great deal about the sort of society and government he wanted to see emerge in his country. As the account of his early life reveals, from at least his middle teenage years he had developed a keen interest in Indonesia's political history since independence had been won and he had become firmly opposed to the direction national politics had taken since the late 1950s. It is also apparent that he was committed to the view that the restitution of some form of open and responsible democratic system was ultimately the most desirable goal.

During the political upheaval immediately before and after October 1965 Soe had become preoccupied with attacking the ills of the existing political order, but he never lost sight of these wider perspectives. As the possibility of a post-Sukarno political era emerged into a reality after 11 March 1966, Soe expressed himself forcefully on a number of occasions about his hopes for the longer term. These were general pronouncements, never intended to be anything more than a declaration of a set of ideals. Yet Soe made it quite clear that he regarded the downfall of Sukarno and his allies as merely the first step in a complex task of social, economic and political reform that, if successful, would lead eventually to a more just, equitable and democratic society.

Among the earliest examples of this advocacy was a script that Soe had prepared as a Radio Ampera broadcast towards the end of April 1966. The title of his text, 'The Reform Movement', was no doubt inspired by his participation in the clandestine movement of the same name:

Beginning right now, we must guard against a repetition of the bitter experiences of the period leading up to Gestapu, and for this it is absolutely essential that radical reform be effected within society.

What has been done up till now merely constitutes a small part of the reforms that have to be carried out. We must bring about reforms in ways of thinking, in social and legal
standards, and in systems of leadership and government. At the moment it is essential to develop critical and sound thinking. We must not return to that era when a voice that was not in tune was immediately branded as counter-revolutionary, exploited by outsiders and so forth. Let us give every person the opportunity to be able to express an opinion freely and securely, without any kind of pressure from anyone. Let us guard against any one group or individual feeling so powerful that they refuse to accept criticism or points of view that differ from what they believe to be correct. We must learn from our previous bitter experiences. Only with the existence of the guarantee of academic freedom and the freedom to express an opinion, can we guard against a repetition of the period of party dictators, press dictators, group dictators, or the dictatorship of bureaus and agencies. At this phase of the younger generation’s struggle, the freedom to express an opinion still has to be implemented more effectively, and in this case it is quite appropriate that university and school students provide an example to society. Let us show that in student and youth circles, there are no dictators - KAMI dictators or KAPPI dictators - there are no warlords in the student regiments and battalions. So this can be an example to other circles of society, from academics, labourers, farmers, and entrepreneurs to pedicab drivers. Hasn’t all our struggle been directed at upholding truth and justice?

We have already touched on the need for the reforms of social and legal standards. Recently, it is true, criticism has begun of the ‘yes-man’ mentality, bebekisme, ABSisme and so forth, which previously were infectious diseases spreading everywhere. But to this moment, there are still those who continue to become contaminated with diseases of that type, people who now persist in joining in the attack on the PKI and Subandrio, but who, in fact, in the past always agreed with the words and deeds of the aforementioned PKI and Subandrio. There are still groups or individuals at the present time who still want to talk nonsense by declaring themselves to be ‘the most meritorious’, ‘pillars of the revolution’, ‘standing right behind the leader’, ‘obedient without reservation’, ‘caretakers of the people’s suffering’ and so on. Apparently there are still many who haven’t yet realized that it is no longer the era of ranting and raving. As General Nasution said in front of students in Bandung, if we want to become a nation that acts as a beacon in this world, we don’t need those who keep shouting everywhere to assert that to be the case, but just allow the other nations of the world to judge us properly. The community must now learn to recognise good and bad, right and wrong, not from what is constantly shouted, broadcast or put about in press releases, but from the real facts. In this case, the mass media - whether newspapers and magazines or radio and TV - has a very important role in the elimination of all the hypocrisy by the brave course of releasing genuine news and analysis.

Concerning legal standards, it is unnecessary to explain here how in the past, facilities, control and authority, power and weapons that should have been used to uphold the law and protect the people, were used instead to oppress them and trample on justice. Whether we must experience tyranny of this sort again in the future, largely depends on the willingness of those officials who are entrusted with the task of upholding the law to change their attitudes. Remember that many sacrifices have already been made, and the younger generation especially will not hesitate to continue the struggle to uphold justice.

The reform of the system of leadership and government has already begun with the removal of those ministers and senior officials who lacked discretion and who had damaged the national struggle and supported those entrepreneurs and millionaires who were parasites on society. This reform must be continued of all incompetent personnel: those who in the past acted as dictators and warlords over those they led, those who have damaged the state, those who were involved in mismanagement, those who have low morals, those who have the mentality of yes-men, those who sway with the wind, and so on. Radio Ampera as an exponent and an instrument of the students’ struggle, will continue to carry out its task, consistent with the aims of the reform movement required by society at the present time.66

---

66 ‘Gerakan pembaharuan’ (The reform movement), broadcast 28 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966b: 27-8. The terms *bebekisme* and *ABS-isme* are two colloquial Indonesian expressions that defy simple translation into English. *Bebekisme* means the practice of following along blindly, like ducks (*bebek*)
The theme of reform was one to which Soe was to return in subsequent articles. An essential component of his vision of thorough-going reform was his belief that those individuals who had gained a reputation for personal corruption or those individuals who had actively supported the policies and ideology of Sukarno during the Guided Democracy era should not be allowed to reassert themselves in public life. For Soe, the time had arrived for a complete revitalisation of the personnel in positions of power and influence inside the government, the bureaucracy and the judiciary. Towards the end of 1966 he was becoming concerned that among those who were rallying behind the New Order were too many individuals whose credentials he judged to be suspect. Borrowing a phrase from the Spanish social theorist, Ortega y Gasset, Soe warned that it was imperative to search out those within society who were 'in form' as the spearhead of the New Order's reform efforts:

Before we can carry out this restructuring, we had better ask, are they clean and immune from the diseases that they wish to destroy? Are they 'in form'? 

To be honest, in my opinion they are NOT. On the whole neither the armed forces, the political parties, the action fronts, nor the mass organisations etc are free of the diseases of the old order. We know that certain of their people are corrupt, are disposed to swindling and bootlicking, and are obsessed with status and promotion - in short every infection of the old order is also present within their bodies. Even KAMI-KAPPI-KAPI, who are considered to be the cleanest and most idealistic, are also not free of the sores of the old order. 

From this perspective, there is really no use preparing a strategy merely on the basis of formal organisations. The most that will result will only be resolutions that will never be put into effect. Especially in the case of the political parties that changed their colours three times in the space of three days (9, 10 & 11 March). Perhaps there are some individuals who are honest and respectable among them, but it is clear that as long as their leaders are not 'in form' the social reform that has been entrusted to them will run into a dead end. 

The problem now is to seek more efficient cooperation between those new order elements who really are 'in form' to carry out the tasks of reform. We are formulating strategy and tactics on the basis that those who really are 'in form' are comrades while those who are inflicted with the diseases of the old order are to be excluded from participation in this process of social reconstruction. Because if not, ultimately we will arrive at that vicious circle that we have experienced under Sukarno in the past.67

that follow one behind the other in a long line. *ABS-isme* derives from the abbreviation ABS (asal bapak senang, 'as long as the boss is happy'). 

67 'Orde baru dan pembaruan masjarakat' (The new order and social reform), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.23, 20 November 1966
For several months towards the end of 1966 and in early 1967, Soe's thinking about future political directions was clearly affected by rumours that were surfacing in Jakarta of attempts by surviving PKI activists to reorganise their shattered movement. Armed forces intelligence reports appeared to confirm that some of the PKI leadership had regrouped and were establishing base areas in remote parts of Central and East Java. As the possibility of a PKI comeback became a keen topic of discussion in Jakarta circles, Soe was prompted to consider what positive measures should be taken to ensure that this did not occur.

Historical experience in Indonesia and in other parts of the world suggested to him that repression and formal banning edicts alone would never prevent communism from regenerating. It was imperative, he contended, that a number of important reforms be put into effect to undermine communism's attraction:

According to us, all bans against the PKI will just be in vain if drastic improvements are not introduced in our country. If there is no legal justice, if there is no social and economic justice, we will experience the same fate as Iraq, South Vietnam and Kuomintang China.

First of all, the sources of poverty themselves must be eradicated, in this instance corruption. The government must be firm. Pull in the corruptors no matter who they are. Whether they are soldiers or civilians. Bring them to justice properly....

If we want to destroy communism effectively, we ought not use narrow-minded logic. We must consciously separate those things that are really essential and those that will be made into an instrument of communism. Lately there have been obvious attempts to reject everything put about in slogans by the PKI, on the grounds of the stench of communism. Yet a lot of this is actually valid, such as land reform, the elimination of the ijon (rice purchasing) system, mismanagement etc. The use of this narrow-minded logic will, on the contrary, become a boomerang.68

Despite the arrest of a number of leading PKI activists in late 1966 (including its senior surviving politburo member and secretary-general, Sudisman) and the crushing of the Mbah Suro movement in East Java in March 1967, Soe remained concerned about the possibility of a communist resurgence over the longer term. In a commentary that drew upon his reading of some of the captured PKI documents, in particular Sudisman's own

---

68 This article first appeared as 'Pelarangan komunisme what next?' (Banning communism what next?), *Alma Mater*, 5/6 August 1966. (This was the University of Indonesia semi-monthly student magazine.) It also appeared as 'Pelarangan komunis what next' in *Sinar Harapan*, 9 December 1966. The *ijon* system was the practice of selling a crop to a middleman while it was still green (ijo).
detailed critique of recent PKI policies and his analysis of the party's future directions,

Soe repeated his warning:

The only way to prevent the revival of the PKI is to foster the existence of democracy in Indonesia and at the same time to eliminate corruption and restore economic life and justice. Without these things, it is CERTAIN that Sudisman's plan will succeed within five years.

A year ago the PKI was dissolved by General Soeharto. This was only the dissolution of the formal organisation. Following this, several things had to be done immediately. Firstly, the elimination of corruption efficiently and effectively. This has not yet been carried out. To this moment, there are still many corruptors from the armed forces, the political parties, individuals who are free and in fact keep shouting ORBA and other nonsense. The second step is the development of a society that is democratic. This is apparently in the process of being carried out. Without such far-reaching measures, we are indirectly nurturing the return of the PKI. Moreover, by permitting and tolerating corruption (for whatever reason), in truth we are helping the PKI to revive. A year after the PKI was dissolved, the situation remains dangerous.

The uncompromising nature of Soe's vision of what the New Order should be almost guaranteed that he would soon begin to feel frustrated when the political reality fell far short of his own idealism.

We know very little about Soe's exact movements or his political involvements throughout much of 1967. Nor is there a diary account that might have provided an insight into his private thought-world during these months. Nevertheless, his public writings offer the clearest indication that in the period immediately after the MPRS session of March 1967 he was observing the progress of the New Order very closely.

During 1967 Soe became a fairly frequent contributor to the Jakarta press. Out of nearly thirty articles on a range of topics appearing under his name during that period, several of the pieces written in the second half of the year stand out as superb examples

---

69 'Situasi tetap berbahaja - sesudah PKI dibubarkan setahun lalu' (The situation remains dangerous - a year after the PKI was dissolved), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.39, Week 2, March 1967

70 As well as continuing to write for the student press, especially Mahasiswa Indonesia, in the second half of 1966 Soe began to earn himself a little money by sending articles to both Kompas and Sinar Harapan. He had first met Kompas' founding editor, P.K. Ojong (Auwjong Peng Koen), several years previously when both were actively involved in the assimilation movement. Ojong, impressed by the young man's youthful idealism, had encouraged him to submit occasional articles and had introduced him to his subordinates, including Jakob Oetama. The afternoon Protestant daily, Sinar Harapan, had been the slower of these two newspapers to adjust to the changing political landscape. But by 1967, strong support for the New Order had emerged among its editors and senior journalists. During 1966 a mutual interest in mountain climbing had brought Soe into contact with the brothers Aristides and Josi Katoppo, both Sinar Harapan journalists. By the end of 1967, Aristides Katoppo had become the newspaper's managing editor, while Soe's close friend from the Reform Movement circle, Jopie Lasut, began to work as a Sinar Harapan reporter.
of his capacity to raise difficult and potentially awkward questions about the political direction of the New Order and the failure of its leadership to put into effect the sort of fundamental political and social reforms he believed were essential. Each of these articles was written with a bluntness and a refreshing candour that became the hallmarks of Soe Hok-gie's style of journalism.

In many respects, his two-part article entitled 'The future social consequences of the "Gestapu" affair' that appeared in Kompas in early July was an important landmark, for this was almost certainly the first occasion that the issues of human suffering and massive injustice that followed in the aftermath of the attempted coup had been raised in the Indonesian press. The fact that one of those who had worked actively to bring about the downfall of the Old Order and the defeat of the PKI was speaking out in defence of the victims gave his article an added significance.

Soe, who had become a fan of sixties Western folk music, established the theme of his article at the outset by quoting several memorable lines from the Bob Dylan ballad 'Blowing in the Wind':

> How many times must a man turn his head and pretend that he just doesn't see
> How many ears must one man have before he can hear people cry
> How many deaths will it take till he knows that too many people have died?  

After reminding his readers of the horrendous scale of the post-coup massacres, with various estimates ranging from the Sumarno Report's 85,000 to as many as one million - 'there isn't a person who knows the actual number of victims of these mass killings' - Soe chose to concentrate on detailing the terrible injustices that continued to haunt the lives of those who had survived the massacres but who had been caught up in the wave of anti-communist persecution and retribution that had swept the country throughout the

---

71 In addition to those discussed below, a complete list of all Soe's articles is included in the bibliography.
72 'Akibat sosial dari peristiwa "Gestapu" di masa depan' (The future social consequences of the 'Gestapu' affair), Kompas, 7 and 8 July 1967
73 As they appeared in the Kompas article, the second line of these lyrics was slightly garbled. This may have been Soe's error or it may have been a mistake during typesetting.
previous eighteen months:

But for those who were PKI followers out of economic considerations the situation is extremely difficult. Many former SOBSI members knew nothing about communism. They joined SOBSI because if they didn't the foreman (who was a communist) would have made matters difficult for them. It was the same with BTI. One farmer who was almost killed in Bali begged for mercy and swore that he was not PKI. 'My organisation's the BTI,' he said in tears.

They do not understand why they are suddenly dismissed, killed, isolated by the community and expelled from society. And hardly anyone wants to give them new jobs because they are ex-SOBSI. The positions available to them (that do not require a statement of non-involvement in Gestapu) are as trishaw drivers, day labourers and junk sellers in the back alleys; and for women as servants or prostitutes (for those who are still young and attractive).

In villages where employment opportunities are more difficult they usually become petty traders or flee to the towns. In one village in Central Java, I met a 'Gestapu' wife who had opened a coffee stall starting at 3 am to feed her nine children. Their life was extremely tough. Her children also had developed an inferiority complex because their father was in gaol. These nine children didn't dare play in the paddy-fields or in the street because they were afraid of being abused by their peers. They just played together inside their own house. These small children had learnt about the bitterness of politics.

For the families of those who have been killed the situation is even more desperate. They are silent and do not say much. But deep down hatred and revenge is growing towards those groups that killed their relatives. And at some point this hatred will take shape. We do not know how many of these people there are. But if we take the figure of 300,000 killed during the period mentioned, and these killings have left behind 3 or 4 close relatives (wives, children, siblings, fathers) then at present there are about a million people who live bearing a grudge into the future.

In Soe's opinion, this was a state of affairs with disastrous consequences for the nation. If nothing was done to address these problems, it would certainly mean the existence for many years to come of large numbers of hostile and disturbed individuals, alienated from mainstream society. It also raised the possibility of increasing anti-social and criminal behaviour and the threat of a potentially large pool of supporters for any future communist movement to draw upon. Soe concluded by confronting his readers with two conflicting courses of action:

The first alternative is the Russian alternative (now also being put into effect in China), with its system of concentration camps. Millions of former members of the PKI and its mass organisations (without distinguishing whether they were just followers or not) would be sent to a Neo Digul. And gradually they would be ordered to die there. (If we choose this alternative we will be cursed by the whole civilised world and we will be trampling on our Principle of Humanitarianism and Belief in God.)

The second alternative is to accept them back into society as quickly as possible. If they are perceived to be a threat in certain specified occupations, such as the armed forces, teaching, journalism and other important posts, then a number of new fields of work must be created for them. For example, work as ordinary typists, middle and lower-level workers, drivers and other positions that are not considered sensitive. One consequence of such measures would be that the PKI would obtain a wide area to operate for their 'guerilla politics'....

However, one thing is certain. Attitudes like those at present are very dangerous for the future. Society (government) has rejected millions of ex-members of the PKI and its mass organisations without providing them with a proper outlet. The frustration that
exists in their circles now will eventually become a time-bomb for our nation in ten or twenty years time.74

It is not clear what had prompted Soe to take a public stand on these issues at this particular time. Nor is it apparent at what point he became fully aware of the terrible scale of the massacres and the tragic suffering that followed in their wake. The killings that had begun in late October 1995 were, in the main, centred on small towns and villages in Central Java, East Java and Bali.75 These events were never properly reported by the national press, which in the late Guided Democracy era was in no condition to investigate such highly charged political events with either accuracy or objectivity. Consequently, accurate information about the massacres was completely unavailable in Jakarta in late 1965 and early 1966, and the stories that had surfaced there were largely the product of rumour and anti-communist hysteria. The emotional response these engendered played into the hands of the army as it set about the destruction of its major political opponent.

Most of the killings were actually taking place during that period when Soe Hok-gie and his fellow students were thoroughly absorbed with their own agenda within the context of Jakarta national capital politics: the formulation of their own response to the attempted coup; the establishment of the student action front; the enunciation of the Tritura challenge; and the pursuit of the campaign of protests and street demonstrations that took place between January and March 1966.

However as more precise information emerged during the following year about what had really occurred, Soe was fully conscious of the enormity of the human tragedy. Nevertheless, his article reveals a distinct lack of sympathy for the fate of the PKI leadership:

We do not need to worry too much about them. They are the enemy who wish to destroy us and it's only natural that we are going to [have to] face up to them again.

74 'Neo Digul' is a reference to the infamous Dutch colonial prison camp at Boven Digul in Irian Jaya where many Indonesian activists were incarcerated during the 1930s. Humanitarianism and Belief in God are two of the five fundamental principles of Indonesia's state philosophy, Panca Sila.
75 For the fullest survey of the massacres to date, see Cribb 1990.
In fact, in his Kompas articles he was at great pains to stress that he held the PKI leaders and senior cadres directly responsible for 'sowing the seeds of hate' within Indonesian society during the 1958 to 1965 period, and in particular for the dramatically heightened tensions that occurred after 1963. In his view, these actions had contributed directly to the explosion of violence that erupted immediately after the attempted coup.

On the other hand, Soe drew a very sharp distinction between the elimination of PKI leadership and the fate of the millions of the party's followers - those ordinary party members and those who had rallied behind its various affiliated bodies, such as the Indonesian Peasant Front (Barisan Tani Indonesia, BTI), the All-Indonesia Federation of Labour Organizations (Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia, SOBSI), the Peoples' Cultural Institute (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat, Lekra) and the Indonesian Women's Movement (Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, Gerwani). It was these individuals and their families who had borne the brunt of the killings and who continued to be subjected to persecution and retribution. During 1967 Soe had almost certainly had the opportunity to see at first hand the personal misery of some of the victims during Mapala excursions into the Javanese countryside. He was also becoming concerned about the increasing level of intolerance that was sweeping the country - the screenings and witchhunts being conducted at all levels of society to root out those who were former members of the PKI and its affiliated organisations. His plea for a more humane approach to the surviving victims of these tragic events was bolstered by his own credentials as a well-known student activist and the reminder to his readers of his own tough-minded anti-communism.

In addition, Soe was of the opinion that the massacres and the continuing human rights abuses were playing into the hands of both domestic enemies and foreign critics of the New Order who were intent on using this issue to undermine the government's

76 There were Mapala expeditions to climb Mt Ceramai in West Java in March and Mt Slamet in Central Java in August 1967. See Soe's four-part report 'Menaklukkan Gunung Slamet' (Conquering Mt Slamet), Kompas, 14, 15, 16, and 18 September 1967.
credibility. A week later, Soe took up this particular theme in a separate article, in which he defended the New Order but at the same time issued an implicit challenge to its leadership to institute the sort of reform measures that would reduce the effectiveness of such criticism.\textsuperscript{77} In December 1967, on the eve of Soeharto's first official visit to Bali as acting President, Soe wrote a lengthy two-part account of the massacres that had taken place there. The articles appeared under the pseudonym 'Dewa'.\textsuperscript{78}

Important though it was, the issue of human rights was not the only area of government policy to draw a sharp response from Soe's pen in the second half of 1967. He was also angered by the continuing tendency of the New Order leadership to draw upon the services of certain individuals who had been significant supporters of the Old Order, for it was totally at odds with his own firm belief that such tainted political figures could never be trusted to participate in the building of a new society.

This issue came to a head in July 1967 when Acting President Soeharto announced the appointment of Roeslan Abdulgani as Indonesia's Ambassador to the United Nations in New York.\textsuperscript{79} As noted earlier, Soe had singled out Roeslan Abdulgani for adverse comment in the previous year.\textsuperscript{80} This time his response was an even more public and highly personal attack that began with an anecdote deliberately intended to shock his readers:

\begin{quote}
During World War 2, a Russian crossed to the German side and leaked Russian defence secrets to the commander of the German army. And as a reward for this treason, he requested various facilities for his own pleasure. After the German commander had extracted all the secret information from this Russian fugitive, he gave instructions that the man was to be shot. 'Why?' asked his comrades. 'A dog who changes his master just for a bone is not much of a dog. If he is prepared to betray his own country, he
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{77} See 'Kampanje anti pemerintah Indonesia diluar negeri' (The anti-Indonesian campaign overseas), \textit{Sinar Harapan}, 15 July 1967

\textsuperscript{78} I do not know why Soe chose not to use his own name on this occasion. Nor do I know anything about the source of his information. So far as I am aware he did not visit Bali himself during this period. See 'Disekitar peristiwa pembunuhan besar-an di Pulau Bali' (On the mass killings in Bali) Parts I and II, \textit{Mahasiswa Indonesia}, Weeks 2 and 3, December 1967. Soe's articles have been translated into English by Anton Lucas and appear in Cribb 1990: 252-8.

\textsuperscript{79} Roeslan Abdulgani's appointment was criticised in many quarters. See 'Roeslan Abdulgani dan Ibnu Soetowo banjak disorot' (Roeslan Abdulgani and Ibnu Soetowo under the spotlight), \textit{Sinar Harapan}, 21 July 1967

\textsuperscript{80} See earlier this chapter, p.200.
certainly won't hesitate to change again. And the appropriate reward for someone like that is a bullet, in keeping with the laws of war.'

In Indonesia at the present time one finds many people with the mentality of that Russian traitor. Those who once fawned over Sukarno have suddenly become the most fanatical Soeharto supporters. And many of them are prominent Indonesian political identities. On this matter, I recall a work of Russian literature that angered Khrushchev several years ago. A Russian writer related that at the time when Stalin had just died, his closest comrades held a party beside his coffin. They abused Stalin while they danced. Suddenly, Stalin's eyes opened again (and he seemed to smile). The comrades who were insulting him were startled because they thought Stalin had come back to life again. So they begged for mercy, afraid of the 'ire' of the dictator. After that he died once again. Khrushchev was very offended by this satirical work because he felt stung by it.

And in my imagination, I see Sukarno lying in his coffin. Former loyal friends from the old order are dancing and cursing the old order that they had previously established together. And they are praising the new order to the sky. And one of those who is dancing and praising the new order is Roeslan Abdulgani. What's more he is being sent to an international forum to praise the struggle of the 'new order' and curse the 'old order'.

After tersely outlining his objections to Roeslan Abdulgani's appointment, Soe concluded by condemning it as a thoroughly unacceptable betrayal of principle:

We know well enough who Roeslan Abdulgani is. During the Japanese Occupation he joined the underground movement with Sjahrrir's group. What's more then he became an admirer of Sjahrrir. But when he saw Sjahrrir's star begin to wane in Indonesia's political realm, he became such a staunch supporter of Sukarno that he succeeded in becoming the Goebbels of Sukarno's Guided Democracy. And after Sukarno fell, not a word has fallen from his mouth to explain his intellectual position in the past. He is too much of a coward to talk. Far better are the PKI people who openly and courageously defend their views in the courts.

I respect General Soeharto because, despite all the problems, he has succeeded in guiding the Indonesian nation to overcome the difficult years. But I am certain that General Soeharto has made a mistake over the issue of Roeslan Abdulgani. A dog that changes its master twice because of a bone is not a good dog. And Roeslan Abdulgani is the type of opportunist who is not ashamed to praise the new order that has toppled the old order. Even though he himself was one of the architects of the old order. Yesterday Suwito Kusumowidagdo, now Roeslan, tomorrow perhaps Mualif Nasution and again the day after maybe Ali Sastroamidjojo. And General Soeharto apparently has taken this decision for tactical reasons, forgetting matters of principle. Perhaps this will please the PNI, the Sukarnoists of whom there are, it is true, still large numbers. But it is certain that this action will offend those honest students, academics, officers, journalists, and politicians who are diligently in the process of establishing a new society. Their representative in an international forum has changed masters three times over the issue of bones.

Throughout the following months Soe remained troubled by his growing doubts about the sincerity and integrity of some of those who were claiming to be among the

---

81 'Ruslan Abdulgani dan pengchianatan intelektuil' (Ruslan Abdulgani and intellectual treason), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.59, Week 5, July 1967
82 Suwito Kusumowidagdo was a senior official of the Department of Foreign Affairs during the Sukarno era who had been appointed as Indonesia's Ambassador to the United States. Mualif Nasution was one of Sukarno's personal private assistants and a leading member of the palace circle. Ali Sastroamidjojo was a senior PNI figure.
staunchest supporters of the New Order. In mid October he prepared another article that opened in the following astonishing manner:

Several weeks ago I visited the house of an old friend and was gossiping about the state of the nation. Our conversation turned to the problem of Sudisman, the prominent PKI leader who 'doesn't regret the actions of the PKI and wishes to take responsibility for all its deeds'. Like it or not, one thing is clear. Many people admire Sudisman's attitude. I am also one of those who 'respect' his attitude, because Sudisman is a man who hasn't tried to evade responsibility. Although personally I am one of those who reject communism because to my mind its ideology will bring misery to mankind.

My friend then said, 'If I was ordered to choose between Sudisman and Mr So and So (better that I don't mention his name) I would choose Sudisman as my representative in the DPR'.

'Why?' I asked.

'Because Sudisman is a person who is consistent. He was a communist when Sukarno was triumphant. And when Sukarno fell, he remained a communist. Previously he was a Sukarno supporter, and even now he dares to defend Sukarno and not look for other people's mistakes. Different from Mr So and So. He used to be a Sukarno supporter. In fact, he went along with the bestowing of titles like 'Great Leader of the Revolution', 'Hero of Islam', 'President-For-Life' and so forth. And when Sukarno was about to fall, he suddenly does a 180° about-turn. Mr So and So becomes a person who is completely anti-Sukarno. And he now appears as a hero of the New Order (oh, my poor new order), dancing on the 'corpse' of the PKI and Sukarno. People like that cannot be trusted. And the fate of the Indonesian people is greatly endangered, because there are now many leaders of this type lodged within the state apparatus of the Republic of Indonesia.'

I was silent. Later on several things came to mind. The first was that society loathes and detests opportunists. The second was the conclusion that an opportunist is more dangerous than a communist. The purge of the communists must coincide with a purge of the opportunists, because, if not, all efforts to eliminate communism from society will just be in vain. In fact it will encourage communism to spread again.83

The contrast between Soe's grudging admiration for Sudisman's courage in standing up for his convictions and his withering contempt for those Old Order opportunists now flocking to the cause of the New Order made for an extraordinarily provocative passage - especially since Sudisman had been found guilty and sentenced to death by the Mahmillub only two and a half months earlier. Like many of those who witnessed Sudisman's trial, Soe appears to have been profoundly impressed by the

---

83 'Kedjantanan seorang wartawan' (The manliness of a reporter), *Mahasiswa Indonesia* (edisi Pusat), No.3/2, Week 2, October 1967. I am indebted to Herbert Feith for a typescript copy of Soe's article. Since I have been unable to locate a complete collection of the Jakarta edition of *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, it is unclear if his essay had been prompted by material in an earlier number of this irregular weekly student newspaper. His own article drew at least one angry response from A.M. Chandra, a regular columnist and contributor to a number of Jakarta newspapers. See 'Djalan keluar dari lingkungan tak berudjung pangkal. Menggapi tulisan Soe Hok Gie.' (The way out of a vicious circle. A response to Soe Hok Gie's article), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, 4/2, Week 3, October 1967. Soe penned a brief sarcastic reply in the following issue: 'Pendjelasan atas tanggapan A.M. Chandra' (A clarification of A.M. Chandra's response) *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, 5/2, Week 4, October 1967.
defendant's courageous and dignified demeanour and his eloquent defence of his own and his party's political actions.\textsuperscript{84}

The principal target of Soe's considerable invective on this occasion was a certain section of the Jakarta press corps whom he castigated for their blatant hypocrisy. In his view, this had been exemplified both by the alacrity with which so many journalists had leapt onto the New Order band wagon following Sukarno's demise and by their tendency to indulge in the practice of what he contemptuously termed 'dancing on the carcass' of the Old Order:

Journalists who in the past praised The Great Leader of the Revolution, Dr Ir Haji Sukarno every day in a sloganeering fashion have now changed direction. Now it's Acting President General Soeharto who is worshipped. The methods haven't changed much. Whereas previously reporters on an inspection tour received bribes to praise a certain project, the situation is still much the same... But saddest of all is the issue of 'the destruction of the carcass'. There are still far too many newspapers and magazines whose task now is just to destroy the carcass. The carcass of the PKI, the carcass of Sukarno, the carcass of ASU et al. They dance and sing victory songs on the corpses of their opponents (who are actually their own former bosses) as if they are the heroes who killed these gangsters. And then they stick out their tongues to lick and fawn so that a leader (in this case General Soeharto) will confer his 'holy blessing' to make use of these servants as new kinds of simple slaves. And to indicate that they really are loyal to their prospective employer, they brutally carve up the corpse of their former employer (Sukarno et al) while singing hymns of praise to General Soeharto. It's thoroughly sickening...

Sukarno was only one link in Indonesia's rotteness. That link is now broken. But there are still many other links in the chain. Ibnu Sutowo, Suhardiman, Mas Agung, Roeslan Abdulgani, big-time corruptors, New Order elements who are now dividing the 'loot' of the Old Order. If journalists were really honest and courageous enough to carry out their role as instruments of social control, they should attack the gangsters who are still alive, who are armed and have plenty of followers. Leave the gangsters who are already dead to the undertakers to be properly buried. The struggle in the future will still be very hard, possibly harder. Some of us will be slain by the gangsters' shots. What a pity if at this moment there are still journalist colleagues who are dancing on the carcasses of their opponents (read their former bosses) and shooting these corpses

\textsuperscript{84} Sudisman had been arrested in Jakarta in December 1966. His trial took place in July and he was convicted and sentenced to death on 27th. I do not know if Soe was actually present on any occasion during Sudisman's trial. However, he undoubtedly heard about it directly from some who were, including his friend Benedict Anderson, the Cornell political scientist. (Anderson was one of a number of foreign observers who attended the Tribunal's hearings, and subsequently translated Sudisman's moving defence plea. See Sudisman 1975.)

According to Anderson (personal communication), during the course of the trial, the defence counsel quoted from Soe's articles on the plight of the victims of the Gestapu affair, which had appeared just after the tribunal hearings began. Anderson believes that the 'show-trial' character of these hearings contributed directly to Soe's growing doubts about the New Order. If this is true, the Sudisman trial marked a significant shift in Soe's thinking. Although he had called publicly for the immediate release of the thousands of innocent victims swept up in the mass arrests that had followed the Gestapu affair, on several occasions he had also argued that those directly responsible for the coup attempt should be put on trial and the full force of the law be applied to those who were found to be guilty. See for example the final paragraph of Soe's article 'Kampanje anti pemerintah Indonesia di luar-negeri' (The anti-Indonesian campaign overseas), \textit{Sinar Harapan}, 15 July 1967.
with their pistols. Ahead there are gangsters who are even more vicious - corruptors, communist remnants, sloganeers, and our own former friends who are in the process of enjoying the spoils of the Old Order. Are we brave enough to confront them?85

In the closing months of 1967 Soe was entertaining serious doubts about the direction in which the New Order was headed. There was abundant evidence of widespread and continuing abuses of human rights throughout the country, affecting the lives of a significant group of its citizens. Meanwhile, the New Order leadership under Acting President Soeharto seemed to be intent on forging alliances with a number of prominent political figures and economic power brokers associated with the Sukarno era, while within public life generally there was a growing tendency to resort to mindless political slogans as a substitute for national debate.

It was within this context that Soe's sharp critique of the local press took on a special urgency. As one who had always been a passionate supporter of a free, open and critical press during the difficult years of Guided Democracy, he believed that it was essential for these liberal qualities to reassert themselves if arbitrary authority and the abuse of power were to be held in check. During the following two years, Soe's own frequent contributions to public debate on a broad range of social and political issues were to be directed towards these ends.

85 Brigadier General Suhardiman was the head of PT Berdikari, an army-backed trading company that had assumed control of several Old Order trading corporations. Suhardiman's business operations were an early target for critics of New Order corruption. See Crouch 1978: 281-2. Mas Agung was a prominent Sino-Indonesian businessman and publisher who was close to Sukarno's palace circle.
Chapter 6

GRAPPLING WITH THE EMERGING NEW ORDER

The political upheavals that turned Indonesia upside down throughout 1966 profoundly disrupted the country's education system. In Jakarta, many schools and tertiary institutions were in turmoil for several months as students flocked onto the streets, either to take an active part in the demonstrations or merely to observe the political theatre. Some students became so thoroughly involved in politics that they did not return to the classroom for many months.

As the University of Indonesia had been one of the principal centres of student activism in Jakarta in early 1966, and a rallying point for those students who had initiated the Tritura campaign, its academic program that year was severely disrupted. Several buildings on its main Salemba campus were eventually occupied by some of the most militant students, and in early March the entire campus was officially closed on the orders of the Minister of Education, Leimena. Although the university's rector, Professor Sumantri Brodjonegoro, announced its reopening in late April, many months elapsed before classes were fully operative once more. In fact courses did not recommence properly in many faculties until early 1967.

Resuming the life of a student

As noted already, we do not know precisely when Soe Hok-gie decided to return to the campus and resume his studies, although it seems most likely that this occurred during the second half of 1966. When the attempted coup and the subsequent political upheaval brought the academic program of the university to a temporary halt, Soe had just completed the fourth year in the History Department, and was regarded by his teachers as one of the most accomplished young scholars in the Faculty of Letters. The
major task that remained for the completion of his *sarjana* degree was the successful submission of a thesis in his chosen discipline.

In addition to pursuing his own personal academic goals, there was another important dimension to his desire to see the normal operations of the campus resume as quickly as possible. Throughout the early 1960s, Soe had observed the rapid politicisation of all aspects of life under Guided Democracy. The impact of politics upon the academic world had been especially disturbing to him. Although he knew that many of his fellow students at the University of Indonesia remained quietly cynical about what they saw as the empty political rhetoric of the Sukarno era, he had nevertheless been alarmed by the increasing numbers of students and university teachers who had been pulled into the political maelstrom of late Guided Democracy. Even though the Rawamangun campus had been spared the worst of these tensions, during 1965 serious conflicts had also broken out there as rival student organisations affiliated with political forces outside the campus sought to exert their dominance over the student world.\(^1\) With the dramatic events of late 1965 and early 1966, campus internal affairs were totally overwhelmed by the national political crisis.

During this period, Soe had played a decisive role at Rawamangun by encouraging and directing the participation of his fellow students. Yet in spite of his own activism, Soe regarded the direct involvement of students in national politics as a temporary phenomenon: this was a spontaneous reaction to a political crisis that was threatening to engulf the entire country. Although this was both necessary and unavoidable, by about the middle of 1966 Soe had come to the view that this active participation of students in national politics should be firmly reversed. Teachers and students, he believed, should now return to their primary tasks of teaching and study.

At the same time, Soe wished to see the elimination of what he regarded as the corrosive impact of external political forces upon the campus and the restoration of

\(^1\) See Chapter 3, pp.124-5.
complete academic independence, for he believed that such conditions were essential if
students and intellectuals were to express their opinions openly and without fear of
recrimination. Soe's views about the need to build and preserve campus independence
were grounded in his direct experience of the Guided Democracy years. In addition,
there was also his own inner ambivalence towards the world of politics; for despite his
own political activism there remained deep within him a sense of revulsion against what
he regarded as the rottenness and corruption that pervaded much of political life. For all
these reasons he was committed to doing all he could to preserve the Faculty of Letters as
a part of the university that should be free of political interference and domination by any
outside forces.

Consequently, when the University of Indonesia's academic program
recommenced in earnest in early 1967, Soe was an active and enthusiastic senior student,
eager to contribute to the process of returning campus life to normal inside and outside
formal classes. During the official February orientation program for new students
(Mapram), he was a prominent spokesperson for campus independence. To the
annoyance of those activists who were touting for new members, Soe publicly advised
new students not to join any of the student political and religious organisations until they
had had time to consider the matter very carefully. He also did his best to persuade
students at the Faculty of Letters to remain with the Mapram program and not to go
rushing off to participate in the anti-Orde Lama political demonstrations that were still
occurring in Jakarta in the lead-up to the March MPRS session.²

By 1967 Soe was regarded as a prominent and popular senior student at
Rawamangun. His role as a campus leader in the events of early 1966 had undoubtedly
enhanced his reputation in the eyes of many of his fellow students. When elections were
held in September 1967 to choose a new student senate, he decided to stand for the
leadership position (ketua senat) and was elected by a comfortable majority of nearly two

² The information in this and the following paragraph draws upon notes compiled by Herbert Feith from
discussions with Soe Hok-gie in September 1967.
to one over his GMKI opponent, who had stood on a joint GMKI-HMI ticket. In addition to the support he received from his own immediate circle of friends - what he liked to call the 'Alma Mater' group - Soe's candidacy won the backing of all those students who were antagonistic towards the intrusion of external student organisations onto the Rawamangun campus.

The position of ketua senat was potentially a significant one since, as well as the organisation of a wide range of extra-curricular activities at the faculty level with the support of his chosen student team, the chairperson was also expected to liaise closely with faculty staff in the dean's office, especially with the assistant dean responsible for student affairs. During his period as ketua senat Soe worked enthusiastically with his senate team to put in place a range of extra-curricular activities: there were sporting competitions, visits to and from sister faculties in other Indonesian universities and regular film nights with screenings of quality films followed by discussions.

Soe also took a close interest in the academic progress of his fellow students, advising those who sought his counsel, discussing their results and, if he thought it justified, negotiating with lecturers or heads of departments for special concessions or repeat examinations for those students who were borderline cases. These were responsibilities that Soe took very seriously, and he quickly demonstrated an ability to listen carefully to his fellow students' problems and when he thought it necessary a willingness to take up any issues on their behalf directly with faculty staff and administration.

---

3 The composition of Soe's senate team was announced on 28 September. A complete list appears in Sastranesia, October 1967: 7.
4 There was an additional significance to Soe's victory. Although there had always been a sizeable number of Sino-Indonesian students within the faculty, this was the first occasion that one of their number had been elected to this position. In fact, some pribumi students told Soe that they were supporting him precisely because he was Chinese. The issue of Indonesia's ethnic Chinese minority had been thrown into sharp focus earlier in the year when anti-Chinese rioting erupted in Jakarta in April. See Mackie 1976: 123.
As was the case in other Indonesian tertiary institutions during the 1960s, the standard of teaching and general education that students received at Rawamangun was notoriously uneven. Poor facilities, inadequate resources and low salaries were facts of life. All university lecturers were forced to supplement their meagre incomes with other employment, and some used this as an excuse for poor attendance and inadequate preparation. Early in 1968, in an attempt to improve the quality of the teaching within the faculty and to put pressure on those lecturers who were widely regarded as lazy or incompetent, Soe organised his senate team to conduct a faculty-wide survey of student opinion. Those who took part were guaranteed anonymity: Soe himself took full responsibility for the compilation of the final report containing the names of those lecturers about whom there had been widespread complaints. There was considerable uproar when it was forwarded to the dean's office, for such blunt and open criticism from students was regarded as impertinent and highly irregular by many senior staff.5

With his election as *ketua senat*, Soe was primarily intent on ensuring that the Faculty of Letters developed in accordance with his conception of the university as a place free from the negative influences and corrupting elements of society at large.6 Although he worked hard trying to persuade his fellow students to share his ideals of the university as a forum for free and open debate and rigorous intellectual enquiry, it proved impossible for him to escape entirely from the problems of the recent past. During his period as Senate leader several troubling issues arose that were to cause him considerable personal anguish.

---

5 Soe subsequently wrote a lively account of the affair: see 'Kenang 2 an bekas mahasiswa: Dosen 2 djuga perlu dikontrol!' (Reminiscences of a former student: Lecturers must also be supervised!), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No. 168, 31 August 1969. His penchant for direct dealing and plain speaking when following up student complaints about perceived shortcomings of teaching staff (for example allegations of dictatorial behaviour, incompetence or laziness) made him a difficult opponent in some quarters. As one senior Faculty of Letters academic put it: 'What you have to realise about Soe Hok-gie is that he was a very stubborn young man.' See also Soe's cryptic diary notes on these matters in SHG Diary, 25 February and 6 March 1968.

6 Inside and outside his own campus Soe remained a powerful advocate for campus independence and freedom of expression. For a cogent statement of his views, written towards the end of his term as *ketua senat*, see his two-part article 'Mimpi terakhir seorang mahasiswa tua' (Final dreams of a senior student), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, Nos. 106 and 107, 23 and 30 June 1968.
Foremost among them was the problem of what the faculty should do about those members of the university community who had supported the left in Indonesian politics before the attempted coup. In the early months of 1966 about twenty university lecturers and teaching assistants had been temporarily suspended from duty by the Faculty of Letters pending further investigation. In a small faculty this was a significant number. Most of them were members of the Indonesian Scholars' Association (HSI). A few belonged to other leftist bodies. Although none was known to have been an actual member of the Communist Party, one or two had very close ties to PKI forums and front organisations, and all were well known for their leftist sympathies.

As for students in the faculty, a screening committee had been established at Rawamungan in the latter half of 1966 to vet the backgrounds and political affiliations of all returning students. The screening committee, chaired by a PMKRI student, Paulus Mitung, was firmly under the control of right-wing students closely aligned to KAMI.

The relatively small number of students in the faculty who were members of organisations such as GMNI, CGMI and Perhimi were in a highly vulnerable position in late 1966 with several types of allegations against them. The parent bodies to which these organisations were directly or indirectly linked had been either banned or purged in the aftermath of the failed coup. In addition, throughout 1965 these students had formed an active and vocal minority at Rawamangun, and the wider student community was still very conscious of the fact that the 1965 Mapram program had ended in a shambles when conflicts erupted between left-wing activists and the independent 'Alma Mater' group. But most seriously of all, there had been a number of violent clashes during the January to March demonstrations involving fighting and rock-throwing between rival groups of

---

7 This was an issue that educational institutions all over Indonesia had to come to grips with during 1966-7.
8 See McVey 1990: 20 and 23. A small number of faculty staff had been arrested in the general crackdown on the left following the coup: these included Dra Ina Slamet, Drs Jan Avé, and Drs Kamil.
9 Screening committees were established in work-places and in government departments throughout the country as part of the drive to eradicate communists and leftists.
10 See Chapter 3, p.125.
students. Several of these incidents had occurred on the University of Indonesia campus at Salemba while it was occupied by militant students supporting the Tritura cause.\footnote{11} Subsequently it was alleged that pro-Sukarno and left-wing students had treacherously participated in attacks on their own campus. Following the political eclipse of Sukarno and the organised left in Indonesia and the atmosphere of recrimination and revenge prevailing in many quarters by early 1967, such allegations were sufficient to ensure that any students who had been prominent members of one of the left-wing student organisations were blocked by the screening committees from resuming their university studies.\footnote{12}

Soe Hok-gie's own attitude towards these developments was not entirely consistent. Given his views about the university as a preserve of free and frank debate without the threat of physical intimidation, it was not surprising that he would react angrily when he discovered that some of his fellow students had been involved in attacks on their own university. In April 1966 Radio Ampera had broadcast an emotional onslaught against left-wing student groups, calling for the expulsion of those who had tried to invade the University of Indonesia campus.\footnote{13} Early the following year, in an article directed at new students taking part in the orientation program, Soe reminded his readers of those who had 'betrayed' the university a year earlier.\footnote{14}

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{11} See Chapter 4, pp.165-6, 179 and 188.
\footnote{12} For an impassioned defence of the work of the screening committees at the University of Indonesia, see the editorial by KAMI activist Khoe Hok Kie in the special edition of the university magazine \textit{Alma Mater}, No.5/6, August 1966. Though it is impossible to determine precisely how many students were affected, anecdotal evidence from confidential interviews with former GMNI and CGMI activists suggests that a large number of students who had been members of those organisations were dismissed from the university and were never able to complete their degrees or graduate. Exact details of the number of students adversely affected at the Faculty of Letters are also unknown. It seems that some students who had not been particularly active managed to hide their previous membership of left-wing organisations. Those who had been prominent activists, however, quietly disappeared, although a small number were caught up in the anti-communist wave of arrests, including the younger sister of PKI politburo member and \textit{Harian Rakjat} editor, Nyoto. According to reports, at least one female student was raped by her captors, a not uncommon fate for many female PKI activists and the wives and daughters of party members.
\footnote{13} See 'Mengapa ASU dkk harus dikeluarkan dari universitas?' (Why must ASU and their associates be expelled from the university?), broadcast 24 April 1966, \textit{Radio Ampera} 1966b: 15.
\footnote{14} See 'Alma Mater sebagai sumber inspirasi' (The Alma Mater as a source of inspiration), \textit{Alma Mater}, (Mapram issue), February-March, 1967.
\end{footnotesize}
Yet by the time he took over as senate leader some months later, it seems that his views had to some extent shifted. In a similar vein to some of the developments in his thinking about the wider political world, Soe appears to have decided that the witch-hunting and persecution that was occurring within the academic community was far in excess of natural justice.

Towards the end of 1967 the sociologist Harsja Bachtiar returned from postgraduate studies in the United States and was appointed as assistant dean at Rawamangun. Despite strong objections from both staff and students - including some of his own friends - Soe gave his support to Harsja Bachtiar's decision to readmit a number of staff and students who had been suspended. Some of these individuals had been mere followers and had played no political role of any consequence, while others were the unfortunate victims of blind prejudice and guilt by association. On the other hand, it was decided that those lecturers who were regarded as 'communists' were to be dismissed.

In a series of letters to his friend Herman Lantang, Soe described in some detail these developments and the hostile reaction that followed:

Harsja is also a decisive person. He has decided to reinstate A---- as a teacher and activist at FSUI. The head of department has contacted the senate (myself) to ask our opinion. I said that I was in agreement and was prepared to face up to anyone who tries to stir up trouble. I merely emphasised the principle that we want to rid the university of political influences. Harsja is also solving the problem of B---- who will probably be reinstated. The extremists will probably cause uproar and produce anti-communist slogans but I'm certain that with decisiveness on the part of the assistant dean and the senate, this issue can be settled. On the other hand, those lecturers who are clearly communists like C----, D----, E----, F---- etc will be dismissed. But not those who were just followers.15

But a few days later he wrote again describing in some detail the howls of protest that had erupted from staff and students. Most disappointing was the reaction of some of his closest friends:

What distresses me is not that the students aren't supporting me. I'm always alone and gambling with fate. Most distressing is that the group that calls itself the alma mater and Sastra's finest still has such a short-sighted view. I just told them that the issue I was facing was one of principle. I'm going to press on even though I'm alone. And if

15 Letter to Herman Lantang, 26 November 1967. Soe's friend was in Irian Jaya conducting anthropological fieldwork. The actual names have been deleted from this extract.
a majority of the senate and our inner group do not accept my policy, I will hand in my resignation. I have nothing to lose but my job. In fact so-called freedom of speech is non-existent. Only Dahana and Janti understand my position. Most just abstain and obey because I'm ketua senat.16

It was at such moments when life in Jakarta became intolerable that Soe turned with relief to his beloved mountains.17 In the closing months of 1967 he took every opportunity he could to escape from these problems into the solitude of the high mountains. There were climbing trips to Gede and Pangrango, to Salak, and on his twenty-fifth birthday, to Telaga Bodas near Garut in West Java with a small group of Mapala friends including the Sinar Harapan editor, Aristides Katoppo.

But on his return, he wrote again to his friend, still depressed by the growing gulf that appeared to separate him from his fellow students:

Other factors that make me feel 'alone' at present is that I'm increasingly misunderstood by friends. They complain that I'm pig-headed. Maybe they are right. But I can't change my personality. I don't want to change my convictions as long as I believe I'm right. And I don't want to become one of the mob whose private opinions are decided by placards, slogans and intimidation. Because the PKI was in error, then everything connected with the PKI must be avoided. Perhaps people like me can only emerge in a moment of crisis. After that, society needs leaders who are more moderate. And they don't think creatively, they are too pragmatic. Sometimes I'm frightened to think about the future.

This week I've been doing a lot of thinking. Especially since I returned from the mountains. Maybe because I've had less work to do and I've been preoccupied with my own thoughts. No sadness, no regrets, nothing at all really. It's as if everything is like a cold wind that makes you shiver, but I have no choice but to accept it. I just don't have the enthusiasm of last year. Maybe I'm too worn out and just want to finish my thesis. Maybe all of this is some sort of sign that my world is different from that of my younger friends. It seems that quiet voices are knocking on the door inviting me to leave this world that I've been a part of for so long. With its laughter, its quarrels, its gossip etc. I'll have to face up to it all.

Maybe this is a rather strange letter to you. And maybe a letter like this is not what you expected. If so, I'm sorry, I'm only complaining just to you.18

---

16 Letter to Herman Lantang, 3 December 1967. Dahana and Janti were fellow students.
17 In December 1966 Soe had taken over as chairperson of Mapala. Throughout the following year he organised a number of major ventures, including trips to Mt. Ceramai in West Java in March and to Mt. Slamet in Central Java in August. He wrote a lively and lengthy account of the latter expedition for Kompas: see 'Menaklukkan Gunung Slamet' (Conquering Mt. Slamet), Kompas, 14, 15, 16 and 18 September 1967.
18 Letter to Herman Lantang, 25 December 1967
Student politics: KAMI under the New Order

It was not only the internal affairs of his own campus that was the cause of Soe's low spirits in the final months of 1967. As noted already, he was also deeply troubled by the direction that national politics appeared to be taking under the New Order led by General Soeharto: the absence of any serious attempts at systematic democratic reform, the survival of too many political figures tainted by their association with the Guided Democracy period, and signs of growing repression and intolerance in public life. One additional aspect of national politics about which he had grave misgivings - and one which touched directly on campus affairs - was his increasing concern about the place of KAMI as an organisation claiming to represent the interests and aspirations of all Indonesian university students. In a structural sense, KAMI was nothing more than a loose coalition of a number of externally-based student organisations. It had been hastily formed in October 1965 when PPMI - the existing peak body of Indonesian student clubs and societies - had been unable to respond effectively to the rapidly changing political circumstances that prevailed after the failed coup attempt.

Although Soe had regarded KAMI's emergence and the role it had played in initiating the student demonstrations in January of 1966 as a positive development, as a campus-based activist he soon began to entertain doubts about KAMI's viability over the longer term. He had noted that most of the foremost KAMI Pusat identities had failed the test of leadership by their absence from the streets during February and early March when the student demonstrations were at their most intense and dangerous. Some had further angered him by publicly advocating compliance with the government's demands that students abandon their lecture strike and return to classes.

After March 11, the KAMI leaders had nevertheless reemerged into public prominence. Ironically, by the middle of 1966 when Soe was actively persuading students to return to their schools and campuses and suggesting that it was time for
KAMI to dissolve itself, KAMI Pusat activists began manoeuvring to create a permanent place for themselves within the political forums of the New Order.

In the final months of 1966 - and especially after the disastrous clash between student demonstrators and Kostrad troops in Jakarta on 3 October - the idea took shape to appoint a group of student representatives to sit in the MPRS and DPR-GR. The KAMI activists argued that since students had played such a key role in the January to March period in support of the Tritura, they had earned the right to have their voices heard in these forums. Moreover, they held the view that the battle against Sukarno and his supporters was far from over and that student representatives could play a vital role in helping to defeat the Old Order elements remaining in the MPRS. The issue took on a renewed urgency in the leadup to the all-important March 1967 session of the MPRS. Though some sections of the student movement, notably the independent-minded Bandung branch of KAMI, rejected the idea as 'not yet necessary', KAMI Pusat activists were strongly in favour, negotiating with Soeharto and his advisors over the compilation of a list of possible candidates.

When Soeharto authorised the release of the list of new members of the restructured MPRS and DPG-GR at the end of January 1967 fourteen student activists were included among them. As one of those who had argued from mid-1966 that students should abandon political activism and resume their studies, Soe Hok-gie was fundamentally opposed to these appointments. Throughout the following year he watched subsequent developments with considerable interest.

---

19 The issue of student appointees to the parliament and the national assembly had actually been canvassed some months earlier prior to the June MPRS session. See the articles for and against the proposal in Sinar Harapan on 7, 12 and 14 May. On this occasion HMI activist Mar'ie Muhammad argued in favour of student representation.

20 For KAMI Bandung's statement rejecting the idea of student representation, see the front page of Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.25, Week 1, December 1966. A few days later the views of KAMI Pusat chairman, Cosmas Batubara, were also widely reported: see 'Orba wadjar dapat kursi' (The New Order should obtain seats), Sinar Harapan, 7 December 1966.

21 The following thirteen individuals were listed as representing university students: Slamet Sukirnanto, T. Zulfadli, Fahmi Idris, Mar'ie Muhammad, Firdaus Wadjdi, Soegeng Sarjadi, Cosmas Batubara, Liem Bian Khoen, Djoni Simanjuntak, David Napitupulu, Zamroni, Yozar Anwar, and Salam Sumangat. In addition, Harian KAMI editor Nono Anwar Makarim was appointed as a representative of IPMI. With the exception of Soegeng Sarjadi, who was from Bandung, all were KAMI Pusat or KAMI Jaya activists.
developments closely. During this period both he and his brother Hok-djin contributed a series of articles to the Indonesian press that constituted a powerful critique of those who sat as student representatives in the legislative chambers and also of KAMI as an organisation claiming to represent the interests of the entire student community.22

The basic principle underpinning all their arguments was their belief that students should act as a 'moral force' in the political life of the nation, rather than as a 'political force'.23 By this they meant that students should only emerge as political actors at moments of extreme crisis, as indeed they had in early 1966. When that crisis was over they believed that students should return to their campuses and their vocation. Furthermore, they should not expect rewards for their intervention and it was inappropriate for them to seek to hold positions in government office as officials or as legislators.

During the latter half of 1966, Soe considered that the real nature of KAMI as a loose coalition of competing sectional interests was rapidly reemerging. On several occasions he drew a telling comparison between KAMI and the discredited former PPMI, stressing that despite the quite different political circumstances in which each operated, both bodies shared similar structural flaws which KAMI needed to address urgently if it was ever to function effectively as Indonesia's peak student forum.24 As it was constituted, Soe believed that it was impossible for KAMI to act as an independent voice

---

22 For the first of these articles, see Soe Hok-djin's 'Tjatatan singkat tentang masuknja wakil mahasiswa kedlm lembaga konstitutional' (Brief notes on the entry of student representatives into the constitutional forums), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.35, 12 February 1967, and Soe Hok-gie's 'Beladjar dari kesalahan PPMI' (Learn from PPMI's mistakes), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.44, Week 3, April 1967.

23 The idea of students as a 'moral force' had its origins in the text of a Radio Ampera broadcast prepared by Soe Hok-djin in April 1966. See 'Awas penjakit pahlawan gadungan' (Watch out for the bogus heroes' disease), broadcast 5 and 6 April 1966, *Radio Ampera* 1966a: 16-7. In response to widespread reports of student excesses - demands for money, 'borrowing' of vehicles and so on - Radio Ampera drew upon an example from popular Western movie culture, that of Shane the lone cowboy who arrives to defend the townspeople against the bandits who have been robbing, raping and pillaging the district. After the bandits have been challenged and eliminated and while the townspeople are discussing the rewards they intend to shower on their benefactor, Shane quietly rides out of town into the hills. Though seemingly corny and superficial, the example was one that everyone was familiar with and was intended to impress upon students that their political role was limited and temporary.

24 See 'Beladjar dari kesalahan PPMI' (Learn from PPMI's mistakes), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.44, Week 3, April 1967.
speaking on behalf of Indonesian tertiary students since, like PPMI, almost all of the
member organisations represented on KAMI's central presidium had close ties to adult-
world political parties or religious groupings. It was inevitable that as soon as the issue
of Sukarno and his followers was finally put to rest, these differences would reassert
themselves. Thus KAMI's supposed unity he considered to be a fragile commodity.

In fact, as soon as news of the plan to appoint a group of students to the
MPRS/DPR-GR became public knowledge, bickering between KAMI's member bodies
began in earnest. These conflicting interests became even more obvious after the student
representatives took their places in the legislature, for not only were they unable to act as
a united bloc but several of the most prominent individuals openly aligned themselves
with the political parties or groupings with which their own particular organisations were
closely linked. As time passed it became increasingly difficult to find any major issue on
which KAMI activists could speak with one voice.25

In Soe's opinion KAMI was therefore incapable of nurturing campus
independence. On the contrary, the competition and rivalries existing between KAMI's
constituent elements threatened to involve students in the political and sectarian divisions
of the outside world more than ever. As Soe emphasised in his public critique, KAMI
itself was a quite undemocratic entity: neither those who sat on its central presidium or
the student representatives in the legislature had been chosen directly by the wider student
body, nor was there any mechanism for rank and file students to exercise control over
their actions. The absence of any checks and balances resulted in a complete lack of
accountability. Soe summed up the position of the KAMI activists with characteristic
bluntness:

KAMI Pusat has finally become nothing more than a student clique of vested interests.
Most KAMI activists are just big shots who exist by exploiting their status as

25 KAMI's inability to surmount the divided loyalties and conflicting interests of its member
organisations was clearly demonstrated by its failure to produce a satisfactory response to an outbreak of
anti-Christian violence in Makassar (Ujung Pandang) in October 1967. See the report in Sinar Harapan,
3 October 1967. Islamic activists on KAMI's central presidium refused to agree to a joint statement
condemning attacks on churches. At the local level PMKRI withdrew from KAMI in South Sulawesi in
protest.
university students. On average they are around thirty and have repeatedly failed to
graduate to the next class because they rarely attend lectures. They are no longer
university students involved in politics but politicians with student cards.26

Not surprisingly there was an ever-widening gulf between these erstwhile student
politicians and the ordinary students whom in theory they were supposed to represent. It
soon became apparent that the leading KAMI activists were neither interested in nor
competent to deal with those day-to-day issues which were of most significance to
ordinary students, such as the quality of the education they were receiving, the condition
of university resources such as libraries and laboratories, and the provision of better
sporting facilities. Although initially, as Soe himself was prepared to admit, KAMI had
been a popular body and news of the appointment of student representatives to the
MPRS/DPR-GR had been broadly supported by the bulk of the students who had been
part of the Tritura campaign, by late 1967 there had been a dramatic shift in campus
opinion with signs of growing anger and cynicism.27

An important factor in this process was the issue of corruption within KAMI
itself.28 In addition to various complaints about petty corruption, photographs and
reports appearing in the Indonesian press of KAMI leaders in suits and ties hobnobbing
with officials while on overseas 'study-tours' and 'fact-finding missions' did nothing for
their reputations on campus. What possible justification could there be for these foreign
trips, students wondered? Who selected the individuals concerned and how were these
trips financed? Most damaging of all, however, were the revelations surfacing in the

26 'Moga-moga KAMI tidak mendjadi neo PPMI - menjambut dua tahun KAMI' (Let's hope KAMI
doesn't become a neo PPMI - celebrating two years of KAMI), Kompas, 25 and 26 October 1967. For a
thoughtful critical commentary on Soe's article see Goenawan Mohamad's 'Apa jang sebaiknja diperbaiki
dalam KAMI' (What should be reformed within KAMI), Kompas, 28 and 30 October 1967.

27 The sharply worded critiques appearing in the Jakarta press written by Soe and his brother played an
important part in this change in public opinion. In addition to the articles already mentioned, see Arief
Budiman's 'Mahasiswa seharusnja djadi pedjuang moral, sebuah pendapat ttg. organisasi KAMI' (Students
should be a moral force, one opinion about KAMI), Sinar Harapan, 23, 26 and 27 September 1967. Soe
Hok-djin had changed his name to Arief Budiman in May 1967.

28 In September 1967 Soe had angered KAMI Pusat leaders by his references to corruption in his report
of a conversation with a young village official during a Mapala climbing trip:

Some of the KAMI leaders are also thieves. They're corrupt, they're in uproar over
seats, over the gifts of cars, and are always talking nonsense.

See 'Menaklukkan Gunung Slamet' (Conquering Mt Slamet), Kompas, 14 September 1967. Soe was
called to confront the fifteen-member presidium to justify his remarks but refused.
Jakarta press in the latter half of 1967 that some of the KAMI leaders who had been appointed to the legislative bodies were involved in the racket over the acquisition of motor vehicles by members of parliament.  

Soe's prediction that the acceptance of seats in the legislature was 'poison wrapped in honey' was confirmed by these developments. It was impossible, in his opinion, for KAMI Pusat activists to talk seriously about eradicating corruption in public life when KAMI itself was incapable of putting its own house in order. In fact, when it came to the issue of corruption most of the KAMI leaders were at best reduced to dealing in platitudes and generalities. How could those activists who had close ties to certain senior political figures or parties, themselves allegedly involved in shady business dealings or serious high-level corruption, publicly attack their own benefactors?

Soe's early warnings about KAMI's shortcomings fell on deaf ears. By late 1967 he decided that KAMI's position was almost irretrievable:

On 25 October KAMI will celebrate its second anniversary. KAMI's third year is going to be even more difficult. Within the student world itself frustration and apathy are on the increase. Students are in panic and are repeatedly asking about their leaders who are back and forth overseas, about stories of student leaders' moral decadence, about violent arguments higher up, about letting down the tyres of the car owned by the KAMI presidium leaders at the Arief Rachman Hakim regiment's headquarters, and a thousand and one other questions. On the other hand there is an atmosphere of mutual suspicion within KAMI's presidium. If we regard KAMI as a ship the prevailing atmosphere is as follows. The ship's officers are quarrelling about the direction of its course, although a hurricane has started to blow. The sailors are already fed up and are considering mutiny. KAMI's third year is a year full of question marks. Quo vadis KAMI?

---

29 Members of Indonesia's legislative bodies were allocated Holden Special motor cars under privileged financing arrangements that reduced the price of these vehicles to a level far below their prevailing market value. The Jakarta press was full of reports of the scandal during late 1967. See, for example, Sinar Harapan, 12 October 1967, and the critical reaction from Bandung student activists in Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.71, 22 October 1967.

30 The most blatant example of this was the case of the seemingly inconsequential Pelmasi, a student organisation with a small membership but one which was closely linked to the army-backed trade union body SOKSI. SOKSI was headed by Brigadier General Suhardiman who had been widely criticised over the PT Berdikari affair. Soe also suggested that the PMKRI-Partai Katolik and PMII-NU connections were other examples of the same problem.

31 'Moga-moga KAMI tidak mendjadi neo PPMI' (Let's hope KAMI doesn't become a neo PPMI), Kompas, 25 and 26 October 1967. (It had been reported that some of those who had missed out on the opportunity for perks of office were so enraged that the tyres of a KAMI leader's vehicle were deflated on at least one such occasion.)
Student politics: 'intra-extra' conflict increases

In addition to his pessimistic assessment of KAMI as a flawed and floundering body, by late 1967 Soe was also seriously concerned about the increasing level of involvement in campus affairs being displayed by some of those student organisations that sat on KAMI’s central presidium.

The various student clubs and societies that had their headquarters and secretariats outside the university campus were known as the 'extra' element (ormas extra) in Indonesian student affairs, to distinguish them from those 'intra' level bodies, the university student councils and faculty senates. These ormas extra, some of them based on political affiliations, others with a religious focus, had always been a prominent feature of Indonesian student politics. Yet Soe had always been suspicious of them, regarding them as too narrowly-based, too divisive and essentially only concerned with looking after the interests of their own constituency rather than those of the wider student community. Since many of these organisations had close links to the political world beyond the campus, he believed that there was a real danger of repeating the mistakes of the Guided Democracy era. During that period GMNI and its political allies CGMI and Perhimi had dominated 'extra' university forums such as PPMI, and had steadily managed to wrest control of the 'intra' student bodies - the student councils and senates - at many tertiary institutions throughout the country. With these left-wing student organisations effectively eliminated, the path was now clear for HMI, as the largest and most powerful student organisation in the country, to exert its authority over its rivals in both 'extra' and 'intra' student affairs.

While the position of independently-minded anti-ormas students at the Faculty of Letters was never seriously threatened, during 1967 the University of Indonesia Student Council and most of the other faculty senates came under the control of students who were members of these student organisations, with HMI activists holding the most prominent positions.
As usual the university's official orientation program (Mapram) became an occasion for particular activity since the various ormas used this as an opportunity to sign up new members. Consequently, even at Rawamangun there were several angry confrontations during the 1968 Mapram, held at the beginning of February, as both HMI and PMKRI activists demanded access to the names and addresses of new students and tried to enforce compulsory attendance at lectures and religious observances for students of their own religious persuasion. Soe as ketua senat and the group of anti-ormas students who were responsible for the Mapram program at the Rawamangun campus were implacably opposed to the idea of compulsion. Despite considerable pressure from the university's Mapram central organising committee, and from senior HMI and PMKRI activists, the independent group managed to resist their demands, although Soe found the experience both exhausting and emotionally draining, as he related to his friend Herman:

The Centre [the University of Indonesia's Mapram body] decided that its Spiritual Affairs section was going to give a 2-3 hour lecture every day between 6 pm and about 8 pm. The Faculty of Letters refused and so the UI Mapram general chairman (from HMI) arrived. There was an intense all-night debate between Dahana/Tabrani and Akbar Tanjung (HMI's chairman) and his friends from the IAIN. In addition Jones, Maman, Tenan and Purba were up against the HMI students who wanted to enforce their demands. Thank heavens it didn't come to a fight. The Letters students were united in their refusal, better to withdraw from the Centre if continuing to be compelled. We stressed that religion should not be trivialised and politicised. Eventually the Centre gave in and there was no further insistence. Letters was the only faculty that was able to hold out.

At Letters prayers were voluntary and not compulsory. Nominal Muslims did not have to pray (like last year). At the Law Faculty the students assembled at 5am and were compelled to perform dawn prayers. Those who could not pray were given instructions. The HMI students were quite excessive in their offensive....

In the past we fought against 'revolution' and now we are opposed to 'God'. It's far tougher now, and only people with courage are able to unmask the hypocrites. It's as if they alone are the owners of God, and all of us know nothing.32

After instancing a similar battle with PMKRI activists Soe concluded:

This Mapram made me thoroughly exhausted, especially mentally. On the one hand opposing the sabotage of HMI and PMKRI and on the other hand preventing the overreaction of Udin and Judi. Udin openly accused the ormas of being Nekolim and if a HMI activist appeared he would shout: 'the owner of God has come'. I was horrified to see him. But I was also proud that the Faculty of Letters is now one of the last bastions of the 'alma mater' group that is still on the attack. The Faculty of Letters senate is the only one that has dared to discuss the issue of dancing with the rector, that

---

32 Letter to Herman Lantang, 18 February 1968. Soe's letter was written just as the Mapram ended. A number of his 'alma mater' group friends are mentioned, including Dahana who was appointed by the senate to organise the orientation program at Rawamangun.
has rejected the corrupt UI Student Representative Council, that defends freedom of expression and opposes the nonsense of the New Order.\textsuperscript{33}

In addition to the particular problems associated with the February 1968 Mapram, Soe's letter makes plain his growing frustration with many other aspects of the University of Indonesia's internal affairs. In fact, he had already begun to share these concerns with others. From at least early February he had initiated a series of private meetings with a small group of fellow students drawn from across the various faculties of the university at which a wide range of issues of mutual concern were analysed and discussed.\textsuperscript{34} Despite their different backgrounds the group shared a common view that the university's reputation was being put at risk by the activities of those student leaders who placed narrow sectional interests ahead of the welfare of the wider student community, and who, it was alleged, had frequently misused their positions of leadership for their own private gain. The group also shared Soe's views about the importance of protecting and enhancing the place of the university as a bastion of vigorous and independent intellectual endeavour. Like Soe, they were also committed to resisting any attempts by outside elements to interfere in student and university affairs.

After several months of deliberations the group decided to announce their existence to the rest of the university community. Calling themselves the University of Indonesia Discussion Group (\textit{Group Diskusi Universitas Indonesia}), seventeen students released a joint statement in early July setting out their views on a range of issues.\textsuperscript{35} Though clearly the expression of a minority view, the declaration was a direct challenge to those

\textsuperscript{33} Letter to Herman Lantang, 18 February 1968
\textsuperscript{34} SHG Diary, 2 and 4 February 1968. Although Soe's earlier custom of jotting down his thoughts was not resumed until the middle of that year, some of his appointments and activities during the early months of 1968 are recorded in his 1968 diary.
\textsuperscript{35} See 'Pernjataan 2 Djuli 1968' (Declaration of 2 July 1968), stencilled pamphlet, Group Diskusi UI. The full text of the statement also appeared in \textit{Mahasiswa Indonesia}, No.111, 28 July 1968. The following were the signatories: Antonius Wijana (Letters), Aulia Rachman (Law), Benny Mamoto (Psychology), Dahana (Letters), Djoko Martanto (Engineering), Fauri Ch. Munir (Economics), Gulardi Hanifa (Medicine), Harry Victor (Psychology), Marully (Law), Rudy Hutapea (Economics), Sarsanto (Medicine), Sjahir (Economics), Soe Hock-gie (Letters), Susanto (Engineering), Uno Bintang Sudibjo (Engineering), Vidiapaty (Medicine), Heru Baskoro (Economics). The text of the declaration was written by Soe and his friend Sjahir from the Economics Faculty, who was the other prime mover in the formation of the Discussion Group. Interviews with Sjahir, July 1978
students who controlled the existing University of Indonesia Student Council (DMUI) and marked the beginning of a campaign to reform the prevailing system of student governance at the University of Indonesia:

Based on our experiences and our lengthy and deep discussions we have observed that there are a great many aspects of university life that do not conform with the purposes of higher education. We are aware that within the University of Indonesia student community a great many irregularities remain. The structure of student life is still determined by divisiveness, ideology and narrow sectional interests. Of the student leadership at the University of Indonesia at present, there are many who are involved in dishonest activities, including manipulation, corruption and other kinds of amoral behaviour.

Academic freedom and academic responsibility are still frequently ignored and replaced by attitudes of intolerance and dogmatism, resulting in the thinking of UI people becoming limited and narrowminded. Meanwhile the health of the student community, its character as youth, is interfered with and even terrorised by the slogans of Panca Sila, religion, national identity and so forth. We consider that attitudes such as these threaten the fundamental significance of the University as a centre for research, education and public service.³⁶

Some months prior to the release of their public manifesto the Discussion Group students held talks with the university's rector, Professor Sumantri Brodjonegoro, to inform him of their existence and to outline their concerns.³⁷ The announcement of their existence to the wider public and the elaboration of their views were merely the opening shots in a protracted and increasingly bitter debate about the nature of student affairs inside the University of Indonesia in which Soe was to be a central figure.

National affairs: the rising tide of authoritarian politics

During 1967 Soe had begun to immerse himself once again in day-to-day student affairs at the Faculty of Letters' Rawamangun campus. Yet although this world was of immense importance to him, it was never totally exclusive, for he continued to cast a sharply critical eye on political developments occurring outside the campus as the Soeharto-led New Order continued to take shape.

³⁶ This passage is from the preamble to the 2 July Declaration. The document went on to outline the group's views on three specific matters: the present parlous state of student affairs at the University of Indonesia and, in particular, the failings of the present crop of student leaders; the fundamental importance of protecting and enhancing academic independence and freedom of expression; and a commitment to the notion of 'modernisation' and 'secularisation' within contemporary national and social development. See 'Pernjatataan 2 July 1868'.
³⁷ SHG Diary, 12 April 1968
In mid December 1967, the prominent afternoon Jakarta daily, *Sinar Harapan*, carried a feature article on its front page under the following bold headline: 'General Ne Win's Political Detainees - Democracy Crushed Under the Boot of the Burmese Army'. A few days later, a second article appeared, this time entitled rather less dramatically, 'Ghana Under Military Rule'.

Soe Hok-gie was the author of both articles, which briefly recounted the overthrow of ineffectual and corrupt civilian rule in both Burma and Ghana, after coups by senior military officers. Drawing on reports by the widely-respected human rights organisation, Amnesty International, Soe's articles described how the consolidation of power by a highly authoritarian military junta in both countries had led to a significant diminution in the freedoms of the press, speech and association, and had given rise to a wide range of civil rights abuses, in particular the incarceration of thousands of political opponents of the military rulers under harsh conditions and without recourse to a fair trial.

Although Indonesia was scarcely mentioned in either article, it would have been perfectly plain to Soe's readers that he was sounding a grim warning about the growing threat posed by the excessive concentration of political power in the hands of the circle of senior army officers led by Acting President Soeharto, and the emerging trend to emasculate further those elements within Indonesian civil society who wished to see the nation directed towards some form of responsible democratic government.

The implicit message in Soe's articles soon proved to be almost prophetic when on New Year's Day 1968 the Jakarta political elite was rocked by the news of the arrest of the prominent lawyer and public defender, Yap Thiam Hien. Yap had first risen to public prominence during 1966 for his robust and conscientious defence of the ex-Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, at the Special Military Court following the abortive coup. Subsequently, Yap - a devout Christian and a staunch advocate of the restoration of 'the

---

rule of law' in Indonesia - had gained a reputation as a lawyer who was prepared to take on difficult cases in the courts, especially when it involved defending the poor and under-privileged against arbitrary or corrupt use of power by civilian or military officials. Towards the end of 1967, in the course of defending a client facing criminal charges, Yap had made a number of serious allegations in open court, accusing a senior police commander and a prominent public prosecutor of corruption. His arrest on what were widely believed to be trumped-up charges, was a blatant attempt to intimidate him and to undermine his public credibility.39

News of the arrest spread quickly throughout Jakarta, provoking immediate outrage from a wide cross-section of prominent public figures, including fellow lawyers, intellectuals, newspaper editors and columnists. In the days that followed there was a steady stream of editorials, feature articles and letters in the Jakarta press calling for Yap's release. Soe Hok-gie was therefore not the only individual to spring to Yap's defence, but his own spirited appeal was one of the most powerful.40 Significantly, the three words he chose to use to describe Yap encapsulated those qualities he most admired in a public figure: honest, courageous and consistent (jujur, berani dan konsekwen). In a deliberate attempt to counter the smear currently being put about that Yap had been a prominent member of the proscribed Chinese peranakan organisation, Baperki, and therefore a closet leftist, Soe by-lined his article 'Soe Hok-gie - Ex-member of the Kodam V/Jaya team to investigate Baperki documents'.41

Soe was deeply disturbed by the Yap affair, for it seemed to be symptomatic of those trends at work within society that had troubled him throughout the previous twelve months. Above all, it set him thinking again about the threat posed by the arbitrary use of

39 The PT Quick affair was widely reported in the Indonesian press in early 1968. See also Lev 1972: 278-8.
40 'Yap Thiam jang saja kenal' (Yap Thiam whom I know), Harian KAMI, 6 January 1968
41 During December 1965 Soe was part of a group of LPKB activists who had been appointed by the army to examine Baperki affairs. See Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa 1965b: 53.
power against those who were weak and defenceless, and the grave danger that arose when political smear and innuendo were substituted for open and honest public debate.

Over the following week, Soe prepared a second article for the Jakarta press that sought to address some of these fundamental concerns. He took as the focus for his essay *The Crucible*, the powerful 1953 drama by the American playwright, Arthur Miller, which had used the narrative of the Salem witch-hunts of 1692 as a political allegory to highlight the anti-communist hysteria that had swept the United States during the early 1950s. In his published article, Soe reviewed the broad outlines of the play in some detail for his Indonesian readers, quoting some of the memorable dialogue and explaining the contemporary political parallels Miller intended his audiences to draw. But Soe urged his readers to consider *The Crucible* as a work with a message of much wider relevance:

This drama is applicable anywhere. In America those people who do not believe in 'communist witches' are Proctor. In Russia those people who do not believe in 'capitalist witches' are Proctor. The tendency within a society to look for scapegoats is a powerful one and the wider society will follow along with this. Anything that is regarded as unpalatable is linked to this fundamental cause....

In Indonesia nowadays the Salem drama is still taking place. Society has problems that cannot be explained (because people lack the courage to think). And so they search out scapegoats - Sukarno, the Old Order, subversive foreign Chinese, PKI remnants, political guerillas etc. It is not my intention to declare that these have become victims of slander. They really are guilty (and this has been proven). But they are not the cause of every problem. Our economy is in a mess not merely because of Sukarno, the PKI and the Old Order. The fundamental reason is because we are lazy, corrupt and lack the ability to think for ourselves. If the Pancasila Front, KAMI and KAPPI have grown weak, it is not because of PKI infiltration. The prime reason is because, since the defeat of the PKI-PNI, the political parties and student organisations have been fighting among themselves over official positions and opportunities.

Through his play Arthur Miller actually said NO to McCarthyism in his country. At that point communists were being pursued like witches, and the victims included those who had supported left-wing movements like Paul Robeson, Berthold Brecht (who wrote film scripts for Hollywood after fleeing from the Nazis) and Charlie Chaplin. Oppenheimer (the first head of the Congress for Cultural Freedom), the famous US atomic scientist, also became a victim because he and several other scientists refused to go along with nuclear research activities for military purposes.

I have also been greatly concerned to observe McCarthyism occurring on a limited scale in Indonesia at the present time. Pak Kasur, the former head of the Indonesian Teachers' Union (that was affiliated with the PKI) has been completely destroyed as if he was a sorcerer. Yet the issue should be put in proportion. He was accused of teaching little children the song Nasakom, whereas those who developed Nasakom policies themselves (all parties were involved) have not been criticised any further.

Liem Tjeng Hoat has been singled out for having connections with a subversive network from China, because communist books were found in his former warehouse.

In every society in chaos there is always a tendency to look for scapegoats and follow mass hysteria. Those who display common sense will become the victims. But if we
follow the mainstream we will be destroyed. At times like this, people of integrity are called upon to rescue society.42

Soe's concern over the rising level of intolerance and the implicit dangers of military authoritarian rule merely compounded his growing doubts about the nature of the Indonesian polity that was beginning to emerge under Soeharto's leadership. While it appeared to him that the New Order government's efforts to reform and rebuild the Indonesian economy and its rapid abandonment of Sukarno's brinkmanship foreign policy were measures to be applauded, serious questions remained about its domestic political agenda. There were no indications that Soeharto had any real commitment to building effective representative political institutions. The existing DPR-GR was in Soe's view a degenerate legislative body that no longer conformed to political realities. The entry of the thirteen student representatives into that body was nothing more than window-dressing. In any case, Soe was scornful of their performance and he had nothing but contempt for most of the older generation political party figures who remained: in his view these were the 'yes men' who had sold out to Sukarno in the past and who were now only intent on political survival. But there was nothing to suggest that Soeharto was prepared to countenance a serious restructuring that would permit the entry of fresh faces, for example the so-called 'independent group' forces or some of the younger Islamic political activists.43

One issue of profound importance to him was the quality of some of the key personnel that had attained positions of power and authority in the New Order regime. Jakarta gossip circles were alive with stories of the blatant corruption and high living of a number of senior military officers who had been appointed to key positions. During 1967 there had been frequent references to the most glaring cases, especially in the two

42 'Arthur Miller dan intoleransi' (Arthur Miller and intolerance), *Kompas*, 16 January 1968. Liem Tjeng Hoat may have been one of the many Sino-Indonesians who were arrested in a general crack-down on the Indonesian Chinese community during 1967.

43 On the attempt throughout 1967 by a number of prominent intellectuals to establish a new political body, the 'independent group', see Crouch 1978: 265.
student newspapers Harian KAMI and Mahasiswa Indonesia. On this matter Soe was candid in his criticism:

At the present time Acting President Soeharto is still a popular leader on the campuses, in both student and graduate circles.

But frustration is becoming apparent on the campus. Especially concerning his advisors and the ministers of the Ampera Cabinet.

Stories are beginning to emerge of Ampera Cabinet ministers adding to their collections of wives. And of big shots like Ibnu Sutowo, Alamsjah (who is at present under attack from the student magazine Mimbar Demokrasi that is being posted up around the UI campus), Suhardiman, B.M. Diah, Achmad Tirtosudiro and his National Logistics Board, and other lesser figures all adding to the existing level of frustration. 'Doesn't Pak Harto know? And if he does know why does he allow this to continue?'

In the light of these serious problems Soe suggested that students on the campuses were entitled to consider whether they should continue to support Soeharto wholeheartedly. There were some who out of fear of the military were prepared to throw their support behind the existing political parties, but the path that seemed to him to be attracting support in student circles - and which appeared to represent his own position - was as follows:

.... to remain critical concerning Soeharto but to refrain from joining forces with the parties that had sold democracy to Sukarno and Nasakom.... This group of students is prepared to continue to cooperate with the military because they believe that there are still many ABRI officers who are respectable, courageous and honest. They firmly believe that Indonesia's future will be in ABRI's hands for another decade. But this group are becoming increasingly frustrated by the behaviour and the corruption of some of those around Soeharto.

For the time being Soe tried to put these concerns to one side. For several months in the first half of 1968 he reduced his commitments in faculty and university affairs in

---

44 'Di balik krisis kemahasiswaan Indonesia' (Behind the Indonesian student crisis), Sinar Harapan, 1 February 1968. In fact, Soe's article began with an account of the conflicts emerging in student circles, especially the growing antagonism being directed towards the student representatives in the DPR-GR as campus opinion across the country turned against them. Major General Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara had been appointed head of Soeharto's personal staff (Staf Pribadi, Spri) in August 1966 (see Crouch 1978: 243). B.M. Diah, long-time owner of the Jakarta daily Merdeka, was appointed Minister for Information in 1968. Brigadier General Achmad Tirtosudiro had been appointed in 1966 to head the National Logistics Board (Badan Urusan Logistik Nasional, Bulog), the body formed to oversee trading in essential food commodities, especially rice. Bulog quickly gained an alarming reputation for internal corruption and speculative trading. See Crouch 1978: 278-9.

45 'Di balik krisis kemahasiswaan Indonesia' (Behind the Indonesian student crisis), Sinar Harapan, 1 February 1968. Soe's article appeared little more than a month before the special MPRS session which was to confirm Soeharto in the presidency. Shortly before the session opened, his brother, Arief Budiman, contributed an article of his own on the same issue that reached similar conclusions. See 'Djendral Soeharto dan mandat pemerintahan' (General Soeharto and the mandate of government), Kompas, 11 March 1968.
order to concentrate on completing a draft of his *sarjana* thesis.\(^\text{46}\) However, in early July news of the death in custody of a former senior University of Indonesia academic persuaded Soe to return to the issue of the thousands of political prisoners still awaiting resolution.

Until early 1966 Professor Sukirno had been a distinguished senior professor in the Faculty of Medicine at UI. However, since he had also been the general chairman of the leftist scholars' body, HSI, he had been one of those swept up in the post-coup wave of arrests and was subsequently held without trial in a Jakarta detention centre. When he fell seriously ill early in 1968 his captors refused his request for medical attention, forcing him to endure the misery of his cramped prison cell. When finally and ignominiously delivered in a truck to the Armed Forces Hospital it was too late and he died there shortly after. Soe had personally never met Sukirno, though his brother Arief had spoken favourably of him as a teacher. However, he sensed that this was an opportunity to bring to the public's attention yet again the plight of the thousands of other political prisoners whose cases remained in limbo. He compared the shameful treatment of Professor Sukirno with the circumstances surrounding the death of former Prime Minister Sutan Sjahrir after his imprisonment by Sukarno. Such appalling treatment of its people was quite out of place in a country claiming to be based on Humanitarianism and Belief in Almighty God.

What happened to Sjahrir has now been repeated to Professor Sukirno. Sjahrir was detained in the name of 'revolution', Sukirno was detained in the name of 'anti-communism'. But the pattern is the same - even though the political situation is totally different. And because of this Prof Sukirno's death (like Sjahrir's) is a clear indication of the inability of the Indonesian people to uphold the principles of justice concerning detainees....

Prof Sukirno's death has already happened and nothing can be done about it. What we can do is to think about improving the treatment of those 80,000 New Order political prisoners who are present in jails and concentration camps all over Indonesia so that for them at least principles of justice can be put into effect. So that there will be no

\(^{46}\) Letter to Herman Lantang, 18 February 1968. Despite his studies, he still found time to write the occasional newspaper article. See in particular his biting attack on the hypocrisy surrounding the annual celebration of Kartini Day: 'Tjita\(^2\) Kartini dlm pengalaman seorang mahasiswa Indonesia' (Kartini's ideals in the experience of an Indonesian university student), *Kompas*, 20 April 1968. For a complete list of Soe's writing during this period, see the attached bibliography.
further repetitions of new Sjahirs, new Sukirnos, dying in detention because of years and years without ever being brought to trial.47

Privately he conceded that there was really little prospect in the short term of the military releasing those innocent of any wrong-doing.48 The Indonesian press continued to be full of articles raising the spectre of communism, and Soe knew from his own contacts that the army leaders remained seriously concerned about the possibility of a PKI resurgence based on the Yenan-style resistance underway in remote parts of East Java under the leadership of a new central committee.49 Nevertheless, his own commitment to truth and justice compelled him to speak out on this occasion.

**Considering the options**

By the middle of 1968 Soe began to realise that his time as a student was quickly coming to an end and that a new and more uncertain phase of his life was about to begin. This awareness was accompanied by a renewed burst of introspection as he began to consider the possibilities that lay ahead.50 Despite the important place Rawamangun held for him, there was a growing sense of distance and isolation from many of his campus friends.51 No doubt the trials and tribulations of the previous twelve months as *ketua senat* had contributed to his sombre mood. But there were also periods of restlessness, even depression:

Spent the whole day typing an article.... Feeling depressed because of friends' attitudes. These weeks have been a tough time for me because I've decided to stick to my principles. Better to be isolated than to give in to hypocrisy.

I asked Josi last night whether I've changed or not. I think I have changed.

---

47 'Sebuah prinsip dan kematian seorang professor tua' (A principle and the death of an old professor), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.111, 28 July 1968
48 Soe's realistic and sober assessment is conveyed in a letter to the Australian political scientist Herbert Feith, 11 July 1968. Feith had come to know Soe while teaching at UI in 1967.
49 The army did not succeed in crushing this PKI resistance until the middle months of 1968. See Crouch 1978: 226-7.
50 Soe also took the opportunity to draft a strong reassertion of his own views about the fundamental importance of a truly liberal education where campus independence and freedom of expression inside and outside the classroom were guaranteed, and to launch a stinging attack upon the growing signs of hypocrisy, stultifying conformity and rigidity on the campus. See his two-part article 'Mimpi terakhir seorang mahasiswa tua' (Final dreams of an old student), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, Nos.106 and 107, 23 and 30 June 1968.
51 SHG Diary, 12, 16 and 19 August 1968
Read some of the poems of Ho Chi Minh and feel refreshed. What a lot of problems there are in the world. I don't want to be like a bamboo tree, I want to be like an oak tree, brave in the face of the wind.\textsuperscript{52}

There were also moments of anxiety and self-doubt about the path he had chosen for himself as an uncommitted critical intellectual. A visit to Yap Thian Hien elicited the following diary response:

Talking with Yap makes us optimistic about the future even though the road ahead is very hard. In Indonesia there are only two choices. Become an idealist or become apathetic. I decided long ago that I must become an idealist as far as it is possible to do so. Sometimes I'm frightened about what will happen to me if I'm broken. Apathy or anarchy. Let's hope not both.\textsuperscript{53}

Soe was well aware that his candid and sharply-worded articles in the Indonesian press attracted considerable attention. For him it was both a calculated risk and an essential act. Yet a number of his friends and acquaintances, no doubt solicitous of his welfare, suggested that he be more circumspect in his criticism of the military and of government policy; above all, they urged him to refrain from mentioning the names of powerful and potentially vindictive public figures.\textsuperscript{54} He also heard second-hand about the comments of others who did not know him personally, but regarded him as an opportunist who was trying to establish a public reputation for his own ends.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{52} SHG Diary, 30 July 1968. The reasons for Soe's depression on this occasion are not entirely clear, though it was almost certainly compounded by his discovery the previous day that Sinar Harapan had quoted a supposedly 'off-the-record' conversation with his friend Benedict Anderson in a front page article on the PKI's attempted revival in rural Java. The journalist who wrote the article was Soe's own friend Jopie Lasut. See 'Yenan di lautnya Loro Kidul?' (Yenan in Loro Kidul's sea?), Sinar Harapan, 27 July 1968. Since Anderson had already been publicly attacked in the Indonesian press on several occasions over his joint authorship of the so-called 'Cornell Paper' - the controversial interpretation of the attempted 1965 coup - Soe was concerned for his friend's position. Upon learning of the indiscretion, he immediately confronted Aristides Katoppo and attempted to hand back his Sinar Harapan press card. Katoppo refused to accept it and the matter was quickly settled. Josi was the younger brother of Aristides Katoppo and a close friend who often accompanied Soe on mountain climbing ventures. He also worked at Sinar Harapan as a journalist.

\textsuperscript{53} SHG Diary, 20 August 1968. Soe and the Kompas publisher P.K. Ojong visited Yap the day after the prosecutor had demanded a sentence of three years imprisonment and the cancellation of his licence to practise as a public defender, at the culmination of Yap's trial over the charges arising out of the PT Quick affair. (See the page 1 report in Kompas, 20 August 1968.) The visitors found Yap optimistic that the case would eventually succeed in his favour and the 'rule of law' upheld. In mid October Yap was convicted and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. However this was later quashed on appeal to the High Court.

\textsuperscript{54} Letters to Herbert Feith, 1 and 28 August 1968; SHG Diary, 26 August 1968

\textsuperscript{55} Some of these remarks were relayed to him after he had organised and led a student demonstration to the Soviet Embassy on 23 August to protest about Moscow's brutal crushing of the Dubcek Government in Czechoslovakia. Despite his attempts to involve them, both KAMI Pusat activists and the UI Student Council refused to participate on the grounds that this was an 'internal communist affair'. Both bodies issued statements disclaiming any responsibility for the demonstration. SHG Diary, 22 and 23 August...
Whenever the issue of his public outspokenness had been raised in the past Soe had always been quite clear about his position. But the frequency of the comments he was receiving and perhaps his own inner anxieties encouraged him to prepare a more considered response to the problems of defining where he as an individual stood in relation to the world around him.

He used as his point of departure an account of the Czech film 'And the Fifth Rider is Fear' which had recently been screened at Rawamangun by the faculty's film group. Soe believed that the film raised a number of fundamental existential questions for the individual when confronted by awkward or uncomfortable moral, social or political choices. His article was the clearest possible statement of his own personal moral code; it was also an implicit challenge to others in his own society to search for their own solutions:

The issue posed by this film is a human problem. And as human beings we are faced by confusing choices. Before we do anything we must answer for ourselves, 'Who am I?' And our answer will determine our choices....

Sometimes we ask ourselves: 'Who am I?'

Am I a party functionary who by chance has become a university student so that I must obey the instructions of my masters in the party? Am I a politician who must always be realistic and ready to accept compromises of principle and not possess high-sounding idealism? Am I just a little person who must always obey every decision of the central committee of my organisation, or my faculty leadership, or my superiors? Or am I a person who is still learning about life and continually trying to develop and critically evaluate every situation? Even though my experience and knowledge are limited.

Every day this question presents itself. I say to myself: I'm a university student. As a student I cannot deny my own reality. As a young person still studying and with lots of ideals I must act in accordance with this reality.

1968. See also his report on the demonstration 'Mahasiswa Indonesia protes imperialis Rusia' (Indonesian students protest against Russian imperialism), Kompas, 24 August 1968, and a later article 'Soal Tjekoslawakia soal kemanusiaan atau soal komunisme' (The Czechoslovakia problem, an issue of humanity or communism), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.116, 1 September 1968.

56 'I remember Merapi', Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.58, Week 4, July 1967:

People who used to knock about with me suddenly want to give me lectures about the tactics of the struggle. 'Soe, what you say is true, but we have to be realistic. Don't go to extremes. It's dangerous.' But to this point I don't feel that I am an extremist. If I see corruption, manipulation, moral decadence and then I say so, they say that I'm an extremist.

But for me one thing is certain. We must always be honest to our own conscience, however high the price. Racism, mass-kilings in Central Java, East Java and Bali, civil and military corruption or even corruption in the action fronts - these are all crimes. And it's also a crime if we are not brave enough to say so and just pretend we don't know.
Because of this I will always have the courage to be candid, despite the possibility that I might be wrong. Better to act in error than to refrain from acting out of fear of being wrong. If I'm honest to myself, I'm sure that eventually I will discover the right path. I'm a human being, not just anyone's tool. Truth doesn't come in the form of somebody's instructions, but must be creatively inspired. A man is as he thinks.57

Yet with his student days about to end Soe realised that he had to think seriously about his immediate future. At the urging of a foreign acquaintance who felt that he would benefit from the broadening experience of overseas study and a lengthy period away from Indonesia, Soe wrote to his friend Herbert Feith to enquire about the possibilities of post-graduate study in Australia.58 He was surprised to receive an immediate and enthusiastic reply. In the midst of considering his response and his immediate responsibilities at the Faculty of Letters where he was already a part-time teaching assistant, he received another foreign invitation of a different kind.

During August he was approached by the US Embassy with an invitation to be Indonesia's representative in a State Department-sponsored three-month study tour of the United States for a group of university students from the Asia-Pacific region. Soe found the invitation immediately appealing. In addition to the attractions of the official program, there would also be the opportunity to visit old academic friends at Cornell and Berkeley.

During the two months before his departure Soe was busy with the supervision of elections for the new faculty senate at Rawamangun and the official handover to the incoming senate team, led by his friend Dahana. With the help of close friends he completed all the necessary bureaucratic arrangements for overseas travel. In the process he was stunned - and angered - to discover that as an Indonesian of Chinese descent he was required to provide proof of his citizenship, and, in addition, to furnish statements of his non-involvement in the 1965 attempted coup.59

57 'Siapakah saja?' (Who am I?), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.117, 8 September 1968. Bold type as in the original published essay.
58 Letters to Herbert Feith, 1 August 1968; SHG Diary, 28 August 1968
59 See Soe's comments on these issues in one of the first of his articles describing his travels: 'Kelujuran di campus Amerika Serikat: Saja bukan wakil KAMI' (Roaming around US campuses: I'm not KAMI's representative), Sinar Harapan, 1 February 1969.
Despite these distractions and the round of farewells from close friends, Soe still found time to write a provocative article for *Mahasiswa Indonesia* which appeared on the eve of his departure. In a way, it summed up his sense of all that was going wrong with the society around him: his fears about where Soeharto's New Order regime was leading Indonesia, his sense of frustration with the failings of the legislative chamber that he had hoped might develop into a meaningful representative body and, above all, his sense of disillusionment with those of his own generation whom he believed had betrayed the ideals that had been at the heart of the struggle to overthrow Sukarno and the Old Order.

He introduced his article with his own bitter interpretation of a poem by the well-known Russian 'protest poet' Yevgeny Yevtushenko:

> Yevtushenko's psychological condition is reflected in a recently published poem. The poem, 'Monologue of the Arctic Fox', is in the form of a monologue by a person who has long experienced slavery and is afraid of freedom.

I am the blue fox on the gray animal farm  
But since I am destined for death by the color of my coat  
Behind the impenetrable iron fence  
I take no consolation in the beauty of my fur

(The blue fox escaped but overawed by freedom, returned to captivity of his own accord)

But I was tired and snowstorms overcame me  
I could not extricate my frozen paws  
And I had no friend or sweetheart there:  
The children of captivity are too weak for freedom  
He who was born in a kennel bemoans best in the kennel.  
With horror I understood that  
loved the chain that binds me  
The animal farm is my beloved native land  
wanted to be innocent like my fathers  
But unlike them I was born into slavery  
Whoever feeds me, by him shall I be given over  
And he who strokes me, flays me to my fur.

The Blue Fox that loves its binding chains is Yevtushenko and thousands of other leaders who have sold themselves for comfort.

There is nothing new in the tale of the Blue Fox above. It is a classic story of millions of people from olden times and on into the future. It has appeared in Russia, in America, in China, in Bandung and in Sukarnapura. But stories like this will always attract our attention. Tales about the rise of idealists and their fall. History documents it and we hope we become wiser through reading as many tales of blue foxes as possible.

I then recalled similar stories that are happening around me. My friends who have now become members of the DPR-GR (whether from KAMI, the KASI Functional Group or from the political parties). Formerly they talked of legal controls and of honesty and justice and who knows what else. But to this moment I have never heard their critical questions (like Bujung Nasution's) about the tens of thousands of people imprisoned without process (whether as political PKI detainees or out of simple extortion), about the corruption of the generals (that is talked about behind the scenes), and the manipulation of prominent civilians.

'What is your opinion on the problems of education and Mashuri?' they ask me. Then I talk, in the cafeteria or the coffee stall. 'What can we do to solve the problem of PKI prisoners so that they will not become a danger in the future?' Then I talk again for hours about sociological and political matters. And I talk on until finally I realise that
they are blue foxes. Realise . . . with horror that I love the chain that binds me'. . .
That they are the window-dressing for Indonesia's democracy, just as Yevtushenko
became the window-dressing for the democracy and freedom of the USSR.

This morning I dreamed that I had entered the DPR-GR building. And I saw the colour
blue everywhere, on moustached snouts, and the colour was beautiful. Everywhere I
saw blue foxes. Leaders (from the Head to his deputies) and members. Sometimes I
saw a blue fox with a yellow jacket (the jacket of my own alma mater of which I am
very proud), sometimes a jacket of another campus. Then I prayed with great
uncertainty . . . 'Please Father don't let it all be coloured blue as I see now. Let there
be other colours amongst the blue multitudes'. And I am still waiting for the
protestations of my friends about the arbitrary imprisonments occurring in the
provinces, the women prisoners who are being prostituted by their own guards, the
business touts who have the rank of admiral or general, and bandits who use the identity
of KAMI, KAPPI and KAPI. 'Father, let the colour blue that I see be only a false Fata
Morgana'.

An overseas interlude

On 8 October Soe flew out of Jakarta bound for Hawaii where he was to link up
with the other ten invitees to the oddly-named 'Experiment in International Living'
program. This was the first stage in a 75-day study tour sponsored by the US State
Department, with visits to more than fifteen major locations across the United States.
Soe and the other students arrived to find the 1968 US presidential election campaign in
full swing, but also to discover a nation racked by racial conflict and deeply divided by
the Vietnam quagmire, and where university campuses had become centres of both
organised opposition to the war through the activities of groups such as 'Students for a
Democratic Society' and 'Resistance', and the Black Panther movement.

In fact, beginning with the University of Hawaii and the East-West Centre in
Honolulu, American university campuses were a central focus of the students' tour. As
well as visits to prestige institutions such as Berkeley, the University of Chicago, Cornell

60 'Srigala biru' (The blue fox), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.121, 6 October 1968. Adnan Buyung
Nasution had been a KASI representative in the DPR-GR until the 1968 re-shuffle.
61 The other student participants were from Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, South Vietnam, the Philippines,
Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Soe quickly discovered that his political
perspective and general outlook on the world was closer to that of the two Australian and New Zealand
students; most of the Asian students in the party he found to be not especially interested in political
issues or simply far too bourgeois.

Throughout the course of the study tour, Soe turned to his diary to record his immediate thoughts and
impressions. In addition, he contributed a lively series of twelve articles for Sinar Harapan on selected
aspects of his travels and another single article for Kompas. Two of his personal letters to friends were
also passed on to Indonesia Raya for publication. See the bibliography for complete details. The
following account of his American visit draws on all these sources.
and Yale, there were also visits to smaller regional universities in Oregon and New York State and to almost exclusively black campuses in San Francisco and Houston. On these occasions, there were welcoming receptions hosted by university administrators, formal and informal meetings with groups of student leaders and a wide variety of individual activists, from Nixonite Republicans to radicals and Black Power advocates. The visiting party also had the opportunity to attend specially arranged lectures or sit in on classes and seminars on a range of contemporary issues: aspects of US domestic politics, foreign policy, the Vietnam War, social and religious change and black history.

In addition, there were numerous semi-official briefings from State Department officials in Washington, from politicians during visits to both Congress and state legislatures, from the US military in Colorado, and from newspaper editors in New York and elsewhere. The program included tours to farms, factories, schools, art galleries and museums, to the White House and FBI headquarters in Washington, and to the UN complex in New York. There were also visits to Niagara Falls, Harper's Ferry, NASA in Houston, and of course, Hollywood and Disneyland.

The visiting students' schedule was arranged to include several homestays with American families. Soe especially enjoyed one lengthy billet with the family of a former US airforce pilot in Salem, Oregon. On such occasions there were opportunities for trips with new friends into the outdoors, and to Soe's delight, he was able to spend several days in the Rocky Mountains under snow. Whenever there was free time in the cities he enjoyed browsing in record stores and bookshops - especially those radical bookshops he found on the fringes of the university campuses - and also taking in as many films as possible, from Ingmar Bergmann to pornography.

During the course of his American visit Soe was also able to renew his acquaintance with academic friends at Berkeley, Cornell and Yale who shared his interests in Indonesian affairs. He was pleased to be invited on several occasions to give a lecture to students on Indonesian politics, especially the role played by students over recent years. While at Ithaca he used the resources of the Cornell Modern Indonesia
Project and the university's library to gather some additional materials for his still unfinished sarjana thesis on the Madiun rebellion.

Soe found it all to be a positive and valuable set of experiences. He welcomed the opportunity it gave to observe American society at first hand and to learn something of its peculiar strengths and weaknesses. More importantly, he drew much from the experience to reinforce his own determination to chart a course as an independent public intellectual in his own country. He was surprised, by and large, with the vigour and determination of the radical student movement that he found throughout America. He shared their uncompromising rejection of US policy in Vietnam, but when discussion turned to Indonesia he was frequently disappointed by the lack of knowledge and superficial judgements many of the student radicals displayed.

His response to the issues of race that continued to plague American society and to the challenge of black militants was a somewhat ambiguous one. He acknowledged the long history of brutal exploitation, discrimination and blind prejudice that black America had experienced and he could understand how this had fuelled the sense of frustration, resentment and anger that was driving the Black Power movement. However, he could not bring himself to accept the politics of black separation that was being advocated by the most militant activists he encountered on the campuses across America, except as a regrettable although perhaps inevitable first stage in the struggle for black self-respect and identity.

---

62 See his thoughtful article on the choices facing voters in the US presidential election: 'Perang Vietnam dan tjalon2 presiden jang tidak mejakinking' (The Vietnam war and the unconvincing candidates for the presidency), Sinar Harapan, 30 October 1968. See also his account of contemporary religious and social alienation: 'Agama dlm tantangan' (Religion under challenge), Sinar Harapan, 12 February 1969; and 'Klujuran di campus2 AS: Sebuah generasi jang ketjewa' (Roaming around US campuses: A disappointed generation), Sinar Harapan, 5 March 1969.

63 SHG Diary, 15 October 1968; Generasi jang marah' (The angry generation), Sinar Harapan, 2 November 1968.

There were, however, other independent voices arising out of Soe's American experiences that he found especially challenging and inspiring. There was the example provided by a Catholic priest who described his efforts to establish basic education and health facilities for poor peasants in Guatamala and his eventual expulsion for collaboration with the underground guerilla movement.65 And there were several lengthy encounters with former Peace Corps workers who had been radicalised by their experiences in the Third World and who were now trying to find a niche for themselves back in their own country.66

On such occasions Indonesia and the question marks over his own future were never far from his mind:

Father Art Melville mentioned a total of 400 peasants who had been murdered. I was reminded of the 300,000 who died without protest of any kind. For many people this is just a number. For me too. I don't know the face of one of those victims. But I will always endeavour not to depersonalise this 'number'. I will always imagine them coming to me. Speaking to me like the soldiers slain in the Civil War spoke to Walt Whitman....

What a lot of injustice there is in this world. Not just in Indonesia but everywhere. In Guatamala, in Vietnam, in the United States, in the Soviet Union, in Czechoslovakia, in Africa and elsewhere. It's as if the world is a rubbish heap of the lust and greed of mankind. Sometimes I wonder whether it wouldn't be better to blow the world up so that it all comes to an end.

But as well as all this we also find people struggling for ideals. Some succeed and become widely respected - Gandhi, Kennedy - but millions sink in the rubbish and are swallowed by time. But more distressing are those who experience disappointment and become consumed by hatred of their opponents. Determined to destroy their enemy's world and brutal towards all of them. I think the great idealists whether communists, fascists, Black Power activists, or any others are fired by the same ideals. Revulsion against the world's obscenity and devotion to those who are oppressed. How many are able to survive in defeat? I don't know about my own future. A successful person? A person who fails in his idealism? And who sinks with time and old age? A disillusioned person who then attempts to terrorise the world? Or a person who fails but who gazes at the setting sun full of pride. I want to try to love it all. And hold firm in this life.67

From his own perspective one of the most powerful impressions that he had gathered from his observations of the United States concerned the role intellectuals could play in public life.

---

65 'Seorang pastor, pemberontakan petani dan keketjewaan' (A priest, peasant rebellion and disappointment), Kompas, 20 November 1968
66 'Klujuran di campus AS: Sukarelawan perdamaian jang kembali' (Roaming around US campuses: The returning peace volunteers), Sinar Harapan, 18 March 1969
67 SHG Diary, 26 October 1968
But there is one thing we can see from the attitude of American intellectuals. And that is the courage to look at problems clearly. Without being confused by accusations of 'guerilla politics', 'old order', superhumanism' and so on.

I was thinking about this problem while flying from Fiji to Sydney on Christmas Day 1968. I remembered the deaths in Indonesian concentration camps. I remembered the murders of communists that are still continuing here and there. I remembered our Attorney General who goes on and on at random with empty slogans. I remembered our generals, who knows how many hundred of them, talking about the rule of law. I remembered our religious leaders from the political parties. Pretending to be pure and honest but full of hypocrisy. Then I remembered the faces of my friends on the campus. As cowardly as rabbits but with loud voices. Corrupt and exploiting their name as students.68

After a brief Australian stopover to visit friends in Melbourne, Soe arrived back in Indonesia early in January 1969.69 The months ahead were to be full of growing doubts about national politics and intense personal anguish.

Returning to old problems

When Soe Hok-gie returned to Jakarta in January he was intent on bringing his student days to a close as quickly as possible. Drawing on the additional material he had gathered during his visit to Cornell University, he planned to spend much of his time at Kebon Jeruk completing the final revisions to his thesis so that it could be submitted for examination and a date arranged for the formal oral defence.

But Soe soon became aware of several significant political developments occurring in the immediate world around him that made single-minded concentration on academic matters difficult to sustain. As far as student affairs were concerned, two separate yet related issues soon attracted his attention. During the first six weeks of 1969 a very public and bitter debate erupted inside and outside student circles over the question of whether KAMI should continue to have a central role as an organisation representing the interests of university students throughout the country. The renewed debate about KAMI was sparked off by some harsh criticism of the organisation from within. In late

68 'Klujuran di campus' AS [Penutup]: Awal dan achir ' (Roaming around US campuses [Conclusion]: Beginning and end), Sinar Harapan, 7 April 1968
69 Upon arriving in Sydney on 25 December, Australian customs seized his Joan Baez records and the literature recently acquired in US radical bookshops. He was then questioned about his attitude to the Vietnam war and asked whether he was a communist. SHG Diary, 25 December 1968
December 1968 IMADA leader and KAMI Jaya activist, Marsillam Simanjuntak, who had recently been elected as Secretary General of SOMAL - the peak umbrella body of Indonesian locally-based student organisations - launched a stinging attack on KAMI, describing it as a body without a future.  

During January debate intensified with a flood of articles in the Indonesian press by KAMI's supporters and detractors. When debate over the organisation's future reached an impasse at KAMI Pusat's 11-13 February plenary session, SOMAL and its six constituent member bodies finally declared their withdrawal. Against a background of growing cynicism on the part of rank and file students on the campus, the departure of the SOMAL group, which had played such a pivotal role in the action front's formation in late 1966, marked the beginning of the end for KAMI. Though the rump of the organisation lingered on for some time, its viability as a national student forum was all but over.

Although not directly involved in these events, as one of those who had fuelled the debate over the previous two years with his trenchant criticisms of KAMI, Soe watched these developments closely as they seemed to confirm his publicly expressed doubts about the capacity of KAMI to transform itself into an effective representative body. But the signs of KAMI's ultimate demise were not matched by any evidence that the struggle between extra and intra-oriented student leaders for control of student affairs on the campus was any closer to resolution. On the contrary, the start of a new academic year and the opening of the University of Indonesia's official Mapram signalled a renewed round of tension, especially between the central UI Student Council (DMUI), dominated

---

70 See 'KAMI sudah sukar dipertahankan, kata Marsillam Simanjuntak' (KAMI's hard to defend, says Marsillam Simanjuntak), Pedoman, 27 December 1968.
71 See, for example, the editorials and feature articles in Mahasiswa Indonesia during January and February 1968.
72 See 'Enam organisasi mahasiswa keluar dari KAMI Pusat' (Six student organisations leave KAMI Pusat), Kompas, 15 February 1969; and 'Pidato perpisahan Marsillam Simanjuntak' (Marsillam Simanjuntak's parting speech), Kompas, 17 February 1969.
by HMI and PMKRI activists, and those faculties such as Letters where anti-ormas independents still retained control.

On this aspect of student affairs, Soe was not content to remain a mere observer, making time to fire off two public broadsides at HMI and PMKRI respectively over two separate instances of what he regarded as improper interference in the independence and integrity of the campus and its student community.73 Trivial as these events may have seemed, they were an early indication of a rapidly escalating power struggle between two opposing groups within UI student politics, a struggle in which Soe was himself to emerge as a central protagonist.

Beyond student and campus affairs, Soe was also distracted by what he saw as certain worrying developments within the wider body politic of the New Order, in particular some alarming signs that the relative press freedom that he and others had enjoyed since mid 1966 might soon be curtailed. When Harian KAMI ran several articles on the unresolved issue of the thousands of political prisoners being held in detention centres throughout the country, its editor Nono Anwar Makarim received a blunt warning from the military. Soe heard other reports of threats and intimidation being used against independent-minded journalists and editors and discovered that he himself was under scrutiny:

Nono says that he's scared (and so am I) but we can't continue to keep quiet on this. Apparently AB has attacked me not just once but on three separate occasions. According to insiders I've qualified as an anti-army figure because of my excessive criticisms. I'm frightened that the relative press freedom that exists in Jakarta will be lost in a fairly short time.... Several generals consider that if press criticism like this continues the armed forces will split. Certain matters that were previously only clique secrets are now being broached in the press. And demands from inside to clean out corrupt officers are increasingly strong. I'm not yet able to predict Pak Harto's attitude,

73 During the 1969 UI Mapram, as part of the official program HMI activists distributed a questionnaire to all new students whom they were able to identify as Muslims. It contained a number of detailed and highly personal questions about the religious life and practice of both the students and their immediate families. Soe attacked the questionnaire as a gross invasion of privacy. See 'Hak untuk tidak mendjawab' (The right not to reply), Kompas, 8 February 1969. For a HMI activist's response to his criticism, see Azrul Azwar's 'Sebuah angket telah dipersoalkan' (A questionnaire has been criticised), Kompas, 11 February 1969. Soe's second article criticised the way in which Catholic students who had been accepted into Catholic student hostels in Jakarta were pressured into joining PMKRI. See 'Hak untuk tidak berormas' (The right not to belong to a mass organisation), Harian KAMI, 11 March 1969.
but if the vested interest group is strong enough it will be able to convince the leadership to stop criticism from the press or dissension.\textsuperscript{74}

Despite these threats, in late February it was \textit{Harian KAMI} that broke the sensational story alleging that a wave of army-organised killings of several thousand PKI suspects had been taking place since November 1968 in the Purwodadi region of Central Java.\textsuperscript{75} The report drew on information collected by human rights activist Haji J.C. Princen during a recent visit to the area. It was quickly followed by a series of official denials and clumsy attempts to brand Princen as a former Dutch communist.\textsuperscript{76} Several Jakarta newspapers despatched reporters to the area in an attempt to investigate the allegations, though not all their reports were published.\textsuperscript{77} Soe's friend Jopie Lasut wrote a report for \textit{Sinar Harapan} after an attempted incognito visit to Central Java in an effort to avoid military surveillance of his investigations. In addition, Soe also read a detailed account prepared by a \textit{Kompas} reporter which that newspaper's editor, Jakob Oetama, decided to suppress following pressure from senior military officers. Soe believed that both reports provided prima-facie evidence that a series of army-sponsored killings had in fact occurred, although a proper investigation of the Purwodadi affair was thwarted by the release of official denials by senior government ministers that anything untoward had taken place.\textsuperscript{78} For Soe, the probability that serious army-initiated human rights abuses had occurred was compounded by the signs of growing intolerance of press criticism, especially in senior military circles. Consequently, he regarded the Purwodadi affair as an indication that the democratic aspirations of some of the New Order's supporters were

\textsuperscript{74} Letter to Herbert Feith, 14 January 1969. 'AB' is a shorthand reference to \textit{Angkatan Bersenjata}, the Jakarta daily newspaper reflecting the interests and views of the armed forces.

\textsuperscript{75} See 'Pembunuhan bergelombang dalam 3 bulan di Purwodadi' (A wave of killings over 3 months in Purwodadi), \textit{Harian KAMI}, 26 February 1969.

\textsuperscript{76} The smear was soon exposed as nonsense. Princen, vice-chairman of the recently formed Human Rights Institute (\textit{Lembaga Hak \textit{Azasi Manusia}}, had deserted from the Dutch army during the revolution in favour of the Republican cause. With strong Siliwangi connections, he had represented IPKI in the DPR following the 1955 elections but had been imprisoned by Sukarno from 1962 to 1966 for his participation in the anti-communist 'Liga Demokrasi affair'.

\textsuperscript{77} For an overview of the Purwodadi affair and a translation of two of the published reports, including that of Jopie Lasut, see Cribb 1990: 195-226.

\textsuperscript{78} Letters to Herbert Feith, 21 March and 1 April 1969. For \textit{Harian KAMI}'s response to these official denials, see Nono Anwar Makarim's hilariously sarcastic editorial 'De teerling is geworpen ... "peristiwa Purwodadi tidak ada"' (The die is cast ... "The Purwodadi affair did not exist"), 21 March 1969.
running counter to a rising tide of authoritarianism from within the armed forces leadership.

Such fears were underscored by a series of transfers of senior military officers announced in the first months of 1969. Among those moved sideways were Major Generals Kemal Idris and Dharsono, both held in high regard on the campus, especially by those who had been part of the 1966 student movement, as army officers untainted by allegations of corruption and who were intent on finding ways to reform the political system without compromising with the political parties or surviving old order elements. Soe was quite aware that this series of transfers had serious implications for the nature of the New Order:

The present situation is more and more appalling. My friends and I regard the reshuffling of the army leadership as extremely worrying. Kartakusumah, Dharsono, Kemal Idris and Askari have been transferred. They are all from Siliwangi. Most of us regard them positively because despite all their military-mindedness they are senior officers who are still able to communicate with the intellectual and university circle. Among officers at army headquarters they are regarded as strict officers who wish to extend intellectual freedom as far as possible (except for the PKI) - a free press and university autonomy.

The Siliwangi who have been retained are hopeless individuals like Sugiaroto and Amir Machmud. In internal army circles the totalitarian Brawijaya and Sriwijaya group (Soemitro, Alamsyah, Ibnu Sutowo and their associates) have apparently become more powerful. We are worried that the militaristic Brawijaya group will eventually become more influential in the determination of Indonesian politics.

The private realm

For all the concern and distraction these various issues created, none of them matched the emotional turmoil that began to cloud Soe's thoughts in early April. Towards the latter half of the previous year he had formed a close friendship with a young woman who was also a student at Rawamangun. Several years his junior, G - - -

79 For a full account of the changes taking place within the army's command structure and the consolidation of Soeharto's control, see Crouch 1978: 228-41.
80 Letter to Herbert Feith, 1 April 1969. Dharsono was appointed as ambassador to Thailand, while Kemal Idris was transferred to the East Indonesia interregional command in Ujung Pandang, technically a promotion. Kartakusumah and Askari were both senior Siliwangi officers. Sugiaroto had been appointed as Attorney General in 1966, while Amir Machmud became Minister for Internal Affairs in 1969. Soemitro, who had been acting as commander of the Brawijaya Division in 1966, was appointed chief of staff within the Department of Defence and Security and deputy commander of the army's security and intelligence command, Kopkamtib.
was a student in the French Department at the Faculty of Letters.  
Like Soe, she was from a Sino-Indonesian family, though of more substantial means than his own. This was not Soe's first girlfriend but it was obvious to all who observed them that this was more than a mere casual relationship. Within the small world at Rawamangun where he was such a high profile figure, the friendship was quickly noted and widely commented upon. Following his return from the United States visit, friendship had clearly developed into love, though this may not have been declared. In early April, however, Soe learned from G-- that her parents were strongly opposed to their deepening relationship.

For Soe this was a painful blow. It was a reminder of events of the previous year when the family of another girl objected to him on the grounds of ethnic and religious differences. History now seemed to be repeating itself although this time the grounds for objection were rather different:

I'm also beginning to understand G--'s mother's reaction. These Chinese like me because I'm courageous. I'm honest and I have personality. But no more than that. The moment they sense that I want to join their group they refuse. 'Soe's fine but not for our family.' I recall the fate of soldiers who many people were prejudiced against. They were worshipped and kissed on the road as liberators. But if a daughter wanted to marry one - wait on! This is how I feel at the moment.

I've been aware of this problem for some time. But when it becomes reality, it's a very painful feeling. However, I won't become emotional. I think I'm far too calm and mature.

Despite his attempt to put on a brave face, it is evident from his subsequent diary entries that Soe found the news extremely distressing. Throughout the following weeks an air of uncertainty prevailed as they discussed ways to resolve the problem. However, when it became clear that G-- was not able or inclined to battle with her family, the relationship was doomed. The end came one evening at the end of April: despite tears and an admission of love on G--'s part they would return to being just friends.

---

81 Actual names have been replaced by initials on these pages.
82 SHG Diary, 4 April 1969. Soe's account of this development was the first entry in his diary since his return from the United States. This was obviously no mere coincidence. From this point entries appear almost every day, many of them quite lengthy. A large proportion of his journal concerns his private anguish over his relationships with friends, and his confused and emotional response to the complexities of his private world.
83 SHG Diary, 4 April 1969. Soe and H-- remained close friends but both knew that anything further was out of the question.
84 SHG Diary, 5-6 April 1969
85 SHG Diary, 28 April 1969
Though they continued to see each other frequently, Soe tried hard to adopt an unconcerned public attitude for the sake of his pride and self-respect; in fact he had been deeply wounded by the affair:

Since the night she asked to break it off, I've paid her a lot of attention. But then I felt she was scared and trying to avoid it all out of fear of public opinion. I think I also have to learn to prepare myself to live once more as intensely as in the past. Since returning from Ciremai I feel it's starting to succeed. Unless there's some big changes I'll start again exploring this life without borders. And I'm beginning once more to feel absorbed in my own solitude.

At 9 pm I went home without feeling anything. Let her go back to - - - although I pity her life that will be monotonous and hypocritical. And I with my usual feelings will endure the night again. Alone.86

This unfortunate series of events coincided with the final preparation of his *sarjana* thesis. His completed study, *Simpang kiri dari sebuah djalan* (The left fork in the road), was a detailed analysis of the revolutionary strand in Indonesian politics during the years 1945 to 1948, culminating in the 1948 rebellion at Madiun.87 As well as an account of the circumstances and impact of the rebellion itself, Soe's thesis also included material on the organisational development of Indonesian radicalism and its leading identities, and the social and political context within which the movement had emerged.

Soe had worked hard to prepare a balanced account of this controversial period of Indonesian history.88 His sense of fairness to those whom many had branded as the nation's traitors can be judged from the comment he included on the facing page to his thesis:

My sympathy is for those who have sacrificed everything for the nation, the state and the people of Indonesia,
those on the left as well as those on the right...89

Despite all the additional difficulties the thesis was submitted in mid April. At the oral examination on 13 May, after some perfunctory questions from the panel of

---

86 SHG Diary, 5 June 1969
87 Soe 1969
88 Soe's requests to interview surviving PKI leaders from the late 1940s who were being held in detention (principally Tan Ling-djie) were refused by the military, while copies of certain PKI publications held in the Central Museum Library remained sealed.
89 His friend Benedict Anderson quotes Soe's comment in his own study of the revolution. See Anderson 1972: vi.
examiners, it was accepted as satisfactory. After the traditional dunking in a nearby muddy pond by his fellow student friends, Drs Soe Hok-gie now began to turn his attention to his immediate future.

**Prostitutes or partners: the place of intellectuals in public life**

Despite the invitations he had received from Monash and Berkeley, Soe had already made up his mind to remain in Indonesia for at least another year. Although he found many of the routine duties he had been assigned rather boring, he felt both a moral obligation to stay on for a while teaching at the Faculty of Letters, and a personal debt to Harsja Bachtiar who was soon to be appointed acting dean.

The passing of his student days was accompanied by a period of subdued reflection. In a personal sense Soe was conscious of a growing distance between himself and many of his younger friends, although this had already been evident for some time. In addition, he began to give serious consideration to the question of his own future directions. Beyond his formal university commitments, he was determined to find some other outlet for his time and energy. As one of that generation of young Indonesians who had been swept up in the dramatic events that had marked Indonesia's recent history, it was only natural that he would maintain a strong interest in the most central political and social issues of the day. Yet Soe was not a joiner. As one who eschewed membership of any political parties of groupings, and who held no official government positions or appointments, he remained firmly on the outside. Nevertheless, he was determined at the very least to find some way to contribute to public debate about the problems arising within Indonesian society and, in particular, the nature of the emerging New Order regime which was controlling the country's immediate future. From such a perspective, he decided that the one task he could usefully perform was to continue to write regular

---

90 SHG Diary, 13 May and 17 June 1969
91 SHG Diary, 13 May 1969. The student high jinks were filmed by an Australian film crew that was shooting material for a documentary. See 'A House in the Jungle', 1969 Australian Broadcasting Commission Film directed by John Powers.
articles for the Indonesian press on those social, moral or political questions that he identified as of particular importance.

In one sense this was quite consistent with his own personal history of active involvement from the early days of the New Order in early 1966, and in finding an outlet for his views he was after all able to draw on the close connections he had established during that period with many of Indonesia's leading newspapers. Yet it was also a role that appealed to Soe's perception of himself as an independent critical free spirit, with a strong sense of responsibility to put out his opinions for public scrutiny irrespective of the consequences.

He was also driven by a fear that the time for free, open and vigorous public discussion of many issues inside Indonesia was almost certainly limited. In addition to the numerous indications of rising intolerance within public life that had already become evident during the previous year, he knew that there were many senior officers in the armed forces who were impatient with any criticism of them or the government. As a consequence, he sensed that it was important to take advantage of whatever opportunities remained available for freedom of speech and the press.

It was in this vein that he returned in early April to a consideration of the unresolved fate of Indonesia's 80,000 political prisoners. For Soe this was a profoundly important moral problem, which he regarded, along with the 1965 massacres, as a dark stain on the New Order's origins. By early 1969 other voices were being heard in the Indonesian press calling for the government to respond. Yet he knew that this was a sensitive issue with the most authoritarian elements inside the armed forces, especially with the Purwodadi affair so fresh in everyone's mind. Consequently, he deliberately set out to write about the problem in a way that would avoid antagonising this group. Nevertheless, his candid description of the plight of the political prisoners was

---

92 Among the most prominent were the series of articles by M.A.W. Brouwer in Kompas, 2 and 9 May, 11 and 28 June 1968, and 21 February 1969. See also Yap Thiam Hien's 'Masalah tahanan' (The problem of detainees), Kompas, 13 December 1968.
confronting: the arbitrary nature of the arrests based simply on the claim of 'indications of involvement in G30S'; the lack of any time limit to the period of detention; the growing evidence of inadequate and deteriorating physical conditions in many of the detention centres with overcrowding, insufficient food and medical attention, accompanied by rumours of an unknown number of deaths in custody; and the reports of widespread intimidation and exploitation of prisoners and their families by those in authority. After reviewing the arguments, both humanitarian and political, in favour of resolving the problem, Soe issued the following challenge:

On this matter the Government must have the courage to take a position. Does the government have the courage to be consistent by releasing these political prisoners within a specified period if it does not succeed in proving any wrong doing? For instance, by the end of 1969 if guilt is not established then they have to be released (meaning they have already been detained for four years). If not then we will be forced to admit that we are no better than the Netherlands Indies Government or the infamous Tsarist Russia with their prison camps at Digul and Siberia.93

In this and a subsequent article Soe also took up the vexed issue of the 'Letter of Non-involvement in G30S' (Surat Tidak Terlibat G30S) which all citizens were now required to produce for all manner of official purposes: seeking employment, moving one's place of residence, applying for government licences and permits, enrolling at educational institutions - even in some places registering a marriage. The procedures that had to be undertaken to obtain this official document were both inefficient and time-consuming, and were frequently used as a means of petty extortion by local officials.94 Soe noted the ineffectiveness of a system which could easily be circumvented by bribery and pointed out some of the more farcical aspects, for children not even in their teens in 1965 were still required to apply for this official statement. Essentially, however, he regarded this process as an inappropriate way of dealing with the millions of Indonesians who could be discriminated against because of their membership of one of the many PKI-affiliated front organisations.95

93 'Persoalan tawanan politik' (The political prisoner problem), Harian KAMI, 4 April 1969
94 'Surat Tidak Terlibat G.30.S' (The Letter of Non-involvement in G.30.S), Kompas, 29 April 1969
95 Some months later Soe attacked a plan to apply a special mark to the citizenship identity cards of those living in the Greater Jakarta region who were former PKI members, comparing it to the Nazi policy requiring Jews to wear the yellow Star of David in Germany and occupied Europe during World War Two.
For Soe, as for many others, the question of the role of intellectuals within the wider society, and in particular the relationship between intellectuals and government, was brought into sharper focus through a series of articles written by 'Wira' that appeared in *Indonesia Raya* during mid April, under the provocative title 'Examples of intellectual prostitution during the Sukarno regime'. The five principal targets of the articles (Mohammad Sadli, Ismail Suny, Sutjipto Wirjosuparto, Barli Halim and Emil Salim), all senior University of Indonesia academics, were each accused of committing serious compromises with the truth and with scientific objectivity during the Sukarno era by their public acceptance of many of Sukarno's ideological formulations. The series, written in a deliberately confronting style, created something of a sensation in Indonesian intellectual and elite circles. Many of the leading Jakarta dailies ran editorials on the issue, most of them criticising 'Wira' for excessive self-righteousness and hypocrisy. There was also a number of articles by prominent figures, including a robust defence of the University of Indonesia's economists by their mentor and current Minister for Trade, Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, while two of those accused prepared their own detailed rejoinders.

Soe's response to this issue was an interesting one in view of his own uncompromising approach when faced with matters of principle. Choosing to avoid the polemics about those particular individuals who had been targeted by 'Wira', he tried to present a measured and balanced approach to the difficult problem of making judgements.

---


96 The series appeared under the pseudonym of 'Wira' but it was soon common knowledge that the articles were the work of a senior *Indonesia Raya* journalist D.H. Assegaff. See 'Tjontoh2 pelatjuran intelektuil dizaman resim Sukarno', *Indonesia Raya*, 14-18 and 21-3 April 1969.

97 Professor Sadli, who was currently chairman of the Foreign Investment Committee trying to attract foreign capital into the country, was alleged publicly to have opposed foreign investment before 1966. Both Sadli and Emil Salim had recently been appointed to the Spri group of presidential advisors.

98 See, for example, *Harian KAMI's* editorial on 18 April 1969: 'Tentang pelatjuran intelektuil' (On intellectual prostitution).

99 See *Kompas*, 19, 22 and 30 April 1969.
about any individual’s conduct in such circumstances.\footnote{In the case of Professor Sutjipto, Soe almost certainly was in agreement with the assessment of ‘Wira’. See Chapter 3, pp.84-5.} There were two quite different ways to tackle the problem he concluded, depending upon whether one applied a system of ‘absolute values’ - implying black and white or right and wrong choices - or a system of ‘relative values’. According to the latter, although right and wrong may exist in theory, within the real world it was possible for certain compromises to be made with principles for the sake of future perceived advantages. Soe argued that there was in fact a place for both responses although the application of relative values as a guide to action was potentially more problematic:

- Both these value systems are needed in society. In theory these perspectives are in conflict, but the boundary is rather vague. We can only say ‘intuitively’ that every situation and every position must be judged in a balanced manner. Even though the boundaries are unclear, the basis of every action should always be supported by the motives that lie behind them. Precise boundaries do not exist, and a final judgement will be given by our own conscience. However, everyone who applies relative values should have a limit. And if that limit is crossed, they must be courageous enough to act differently, because they will be swept away by the current if they are too flexible.

When Sukarno began to bare his teeth after 1958 Indonesian intellectuals were faced with a difficult problem: what attitude should they adopt in the face of this increasingly deteriorating situation? A small group of them (for example, Mochtar Lubis) took the view that the existing regime could no longer be relied upon. The only way to improve the situation was to expose Sukarno’s mistakes constantly and through public opinion press for a change of government. He was consistent and prepared to go to jail for nine years. Irrespective of whether we agree with him or not, Mochtar Lubis’ attitude is one that must be respected and admired.

However, there were also those who believed that if they abandoned the government administration in its entirety, then Sukarno, the communists, and the boot-lickers would reign supreme. The situation would be even worse and because of that they had to participate within the government administration and maintain the situation as best as they could, and if possible improve matters. A lot of opinions had to be sacrificed and many convincing compromises had to be taken. Without believing in Manipol, Nasakom, Nefos and so on they had to participate in the use of these slogans. They had to speak about politics in the style of Sukarno.\footnote{“Pelatjuran” intelektuil (Intellectual ‘prostitution’), Sinar Harapan, 21 April 1969} I also have a lot of sympathy for those who assigned themselves this difficult task.

Yet Soe did not wish to dwell exclusively on the past as the Indonesia Raya series had done. He was determined to take the opportunity presented by the controversy to direct public attention to the role intellectuals were playing under the emerging New Order: since a number of senior academics had accepted government posts during the
previous year, this was a highly relevant issue. Consequently, Soe began his article on 'intellectual prostitution' in the following manner:

When the University of Indonesia Rector, Professor Dr Sumantri Brodjonegoro was appointed Minister for Mining I went to see him. I asked why he wanted to become a minister and work with oil gangsters, foreign capital touts, and corrupt and sloganeering officials. The Rector replied that he was also aware of those problems. 'But we have two choices if we see something rotten occurring in government circles. Leap in and try to improve matters (without being sure of success) or remain outside and wait for the institution to collapse. I've chosen the first with all its consequences.'

I received the same answer when I questioned my friends who have also joined the government administration and who are now occupying senior positions around the country. I know that several of them have made compromises, have given out 'special licences', and sometimes have not taken any action against the corruption going on around them. But despite this, I still respect them, because they are working in a difficult situation and they are trying to achieve maximum results.

This controversy over alleged 'intellectual prostitution' provoked Soe to reflect further on the nature of the relationship that had emerged between certain civilian intellectuals and the armed forces under the New Order. In a subsequent essay, he traced the origins of this relationship back to the Guided Democracy era, stressing the important pioneering role played by Brigadier General Suwarto in attracting a number of university academics and prominent intellectuals to teach at Seskoad in Bandung during the early 1960s. With the collapse of Sukarno's Old Order, Soeharto and the armed forces had been able to draw on the knowledge and technical expertise of this group in the urgent tasks of reconstruction, especially the rebuilding of the shattered Indonesian economy. The participation of these academics in the New Order government had also enhanced Indonesia's reputation abroad and had facilitated the task of attracting badly needed foreign aid and investment. However, as Soe emphasised, control over domestic

---

102 By 1968 the following academics had been appointed to cabinet posts: Professor Sumantri Brodjonegoro (Rector University of Indonesia, Mining), Professor Tojib Hadiwidjaja (Rector IPB, Agriculture), Professor Ali Wardhana (Dean of the Economics Faculty UI, Finance), Professor Oemar Senoajji (Senior Professor Law Faculty UI, Justice), and Professor Sumitro Djojohadikusumo (Trade). In addition, a number of senior UI economists had joined the president's inner group of advisors, the Spri: Professors Widjojo Nitisastro, Emil Salim, Mohammad Sadli and Subroto.

103 "Pelatjuran" intelektuil (Intellectual 'prostitution'), Sinar Harapan, 21 April 1969; 'friends who have also joined the government administration' is almost certainly a reference to Sumitro Djojohadikusumo.

104 Letter to Herbert Feith, 1 May 1969

105 'Kuli penguasa atau pemegang saham' (Ruler's slaves or shareholders), Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.153, 18 May 1969
politics remained firmly in the hands of the military who knew that their civilian 'partners' could never become rivals for power.

Soe noted some of the arguments used to justify cooperation between university intellectuals and the military in developing countries like Indonesia, where the civilians were regarded as the agents of social change imparting essential ideas, knowledge and skills, and where, with increasing development and modernisation, the position of technocratic specialists would be strengthened as society's problems and the tasks of government grew more complex. But for all these noble arguments, Soe and many of his student friends remained uneasy about the so-called ABRI-civilian 'partnership' in the face of growing signs of authoritarian political control and increasing corruption on the part of some of the most powerful army officers. Consequently, Soe believed that a serious doubt remained over the position of those intellectuals who had decided to serve in the New Order government:

During discussions a student asked what guarantee was there that we would not be deceived by the military. 'In the present situation the armed forces as the largest and strongest party has no other choice but to use the technocrats. But if by some chance the economy is put in order and the armed forces get the bright idea to dismiss Emil Salim, Sumitro, Sumantri and the others, what bargaining position do we have?.... I can't answer this question. I'm unable to convince myself that all the ABRI leaders are individuals with good intentions towards the Indonesian people. There have been too many irregularities and violations of the law. Ultimately I ask myself the question: 'Are they the ruler's slaves or are they shareholders who are also genuinely able to share in decision-making?'

A downward spiral

Throughout the second half of 1969 little occurred within the various strands of Soe's public and private life to allay a growing sense of personal restlessness. On the one hand, there was his increasing pessimism about the direction in which Indonesia appeared to be moving under Soeharto's leadership and his awareness that the emerging political order was falling far short of the ideals and aspirations that had inspired his own activism and involvement throughout the previous decade. On the other, there were the

\[106\] 'Kuli penguasa atau pemegang saham' (Ruler's slaves or shareholders), *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.153, 18 May 1969
gnawing bouts of inner loneliness and isolation that he continued to experience within the seemingly familiar fabric of his everyday circle of friends and acquaintances.

As far as politics and national affairs were concerned, Soe continued to write regular essays and commentaries on a range of issues for the Jakarta press. Of the twenty or so articles he contributed between May and December, several stand out for their thoughtful and challenging perspective to national issues; but there is a sharp edge to much of his writing that is indicative of growing frustration and scepticism.\textsuperscript{107}

Since he was well aware that open criticism of government personnel and politics in the national press was viewed with immense hostility by many senior officers in the armed forces he realised that it was crucial to use the existing opportunities to maximum effect. At the same time he believed that it was timely to express the frustration that many felt about the lack of any official action or investigation over those instances of corruption and mismanagement that had been already revealed by the revitalised Indonesian press:

\begin{quote}
Some time ago \textit{Indonesia Raya} reported the corruption surrounding the purchase of tankers involving millions of US dollars. In an honest fashion this newspaper mentioned the name of Major General Surjo as the individual involved. The armed forces promised to provide an explanation but to date the outcome has been zero.

Problems like this have frequently occurred throughout the last three years. I recall \textit{Sinar Harapan} engaging in a holy war against Major General Ibnu Sutowo, exposing irregularities in the oil sector. There was uproar and disputation backwards and forwards. Society wondered whether the government was prepared to take action. Punish whoever was guilty or prosecute the newspaper involved in the courts for publishing lies. The outcome was also zero.\textsuperscript{108}
\end{quote}

Soe believed that lack of any proper action or investigation by the government over what were very serious allegations involving senior government officials was not only frustrating, it was also potentially very revealing about the real nature of the political regime. He expressed his fears in the same essay in the following blunt fashion:

\begin{quote}
Press freedom should be followed up quickly by the legal apparatus. Otherwise there will only be disillusionment that will ultimately become a destructive force within society. If the government (the President and his assistants) really wish to build a new order, not just some sort of window dressing, then as a consequence there must also be some rapid changes to accommodate society's expectations. Development followed up
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{107} In addition to the articles discussed here there are also several film reviews and a number of articles on student affairs and the university world. For a complete listing, see the attached bibliography.

\textsuperscript{108} 'Kebebasan pers dan keketjewaan masjarakat' (Press freedom and society's disillusionment), \textit{Indonesia Raya}, 12 May 1969
by improvements in the apparatus of government, press freedom followed up by efficient legal institutions (police, prosecutors, judiciary etc).

On the other hand, if the government doesn't honestly have any intention in that direction (just overthrowing Sukarno and replacing all his lackeys), then don't change any of the existing fundamentals. Don't extend press freedom, don't give academic freedom etc. And wipe out any opposition voices, no matter how small. Because changes that are confusing will ultimately only destroy all that society and government hinges upon.

In mid July Soe reflected on what he believed to be the New Order government's failure to communicate its development message to the various layers of Indonesian society. In this regard he believed that it compared unfavourably with former President Sukarno who had been so successful in inspiring the nation and attracting support for his own programs and policies. Despite his own admitted lack of expertise in economic matters, Soe was quite aware of the critical importance of the economic reform program that was being implemented by the technocrats who were occupying the key economic posts in the New Order government. Yet it disappointed him that not enough was being done by Soeharto and his senior ministers to communicate the importance of the government's program in a manner that was both comprehensible and inspiring:

It is precisely in the context of social mobilisation that groups are needed who are able to talk with all levels of society. To the university, to village society, as well as army circles. In this respect the Soeharto government has not yet been successful.... This year is the first year of the Five Year Plan. But until now my impression is that the Indonesian people are singularly indifferent about this important plan. There is hardly any communication that is comprehensible by the general public and this overly pragmatic government has ultimately failed to attract the enthusiasm and working support of the people.109

Towards the end of the year Soe used several of his essays to reflect more generally on some of the wider dimensions of national politics. On the anniversary of Indonesia's independence in August he wrote with feeling about the hopes and ideals of his own generation of young Indonesians who had no direct experience of the revolution and the struggle for independence but had grown up full of optimism only to experience the frustrations and failures of the decades that followed.110 Then in October on the

109 'Betapa tak menariknya pemerintah sekarang?' (How unattractive is the government at present?), *Kompas*, 16 July 1969
110 'Generasi jang lahir setelah tahun empat lima' (The post '45 generation), *Kompas*, 16 August 1969. Another version of the same essay was translated into English for a special issue of *Quadrant*: see 'Children of independence: the post-war generation in Indonesia', *Quadrant*, September-October 1969, pp.
occasion of the celebration of the historic 1928 Youth Pledge - a significant milestone in
the development of the nationalist movement - he described some of the regional, ethnic
and religious divisions which had from time to time threatened to destroy the spirit of
national unity that had inspired the struggle for independence and the creation of the
Indonesian state. 111

In addition to the public voice Soe revealed in his journalism there was also a
personal dimension to his deepening disappointment with the direction of national
politics. By late 1969 he was beginning to have serious doubts about some of those
individuals in whom he had previously invested great hope for the future. Two of the
most significant figures in this regard were Mochtar Lubis and Professor Sumitro, both
men he had personally admired for their principled rejection of Sukarno and Guided
Democracy politics.

When *Indonesia Raya* reappeared on the streets in October 1968, Soe was pleased
to contribute occasional articles and believed that Mochtar Lubis' voice would strengthen
the standing of the independent critical free press that had reemerged during the previous
three years. Yet during the following year Soe was disappointed to discover that Lubis
did not share his own views about a number of issues. In April there were sharp
disagreements between, on the one hand Soe and his brother Arief, and on the other
Mochtar and several supporters, over plans to organise a festival of Russian films in
Jakarta. 112 Mochtar Lubis' more thorough-going commitment to the cause of
international anti-communism also led to differences over the Vietnam war where he

---

78-81. The same essay was also published in *Indonesia Raya* as 'Putera2 kemerdekaan, generasi sesudah
perang di Indonesia', 5 January 1970. There are several references to army corruption that were deleted
from this version while Soe's estimate of 300,000 victims of the 1965 massacres was changed to 3000.
111 'Tantangan kepada semangat ke-Indonesia-an' (Challenge to the Indonesian spirit), *Kompas*, 29
October 1969
112 SHG Diary, 21 and 23 April 1969. Mochtar Lubis, Jakob Oetama and others were opposed to the
screening of any Soviet films in Indonesia on the grounds that these might be used as a propaganda tool
in any attempt by the PKI to launch a comeback. See the *Kompas* editorial on this issue, 15 April 1969.
remained implacably opposed to the withdrawal of US ground forces. But for Soe the most distressing news of all was the discovery that Mochtar did not share his views about the release of those political prisoners on whom the government had no evidence of wrong-doing.

Until the middle of 1969 Soe continued to regard Sumitro's return to public life and his appointment to cabinet as one of the more positive aspects of the New Order. He had written a laudatory article about him for the Jakarta press when Sumitro first returned to Indonesia in May 1967. On a personal level his contacts with the Sumitro camp remained as close as ever. In fact, in the middle of the year he was invited by Sumitro's son, Prabowo, to participate in a project to establish a volunteer development worker scheme drawing on the skills of young Indonesian university graduates in rural development projects throughout the country. During the second half of 1969, however, Soe's attitude towards Sumitro and some of his closest supporters appears to have hardened. The reasons for this are not fully apparent from Soe's diary entries, but it undoubtedly grew in part out of the expectations that he and others had placed on Sumitro after his return from political exile.

---

113 SHG Diary, 30 July 1969
114 SHG Diary, 3 August 1969. The differences emerged during a visit to Indonesia by an Amnesty International delegation during July:
Mochtar Lubis doesn't agree with my suggestion that Pak Harto put out a statement about accepting them back into society. I don't understand Mochtar Lubis' anti-intellectual attitude. Whereas he was defended by Pramoedya when he was arrested back in 1958.

Mochtar Lubis (interview, 17 March 1982) claimed that he believed that at the time the army was so antagonistic to the idea that it was pointless to pursue it.

115 In mid May Soe's diary records a lively meeting at which Sumitro detailed his attempts to create opportunities for indigenous Indonesian entrepreneurs to participate in economic development projects. Soe and his friend Sjahir, who accompanied him on the visit to Sumitro's house, seemed to be impressed with the minister's plans. Sjahir, who had not met Sumitro before, thought him 'a man of action', in comparison to the 'generalist' Soedjatmoko. SHG Diary, 15 May 1969

116 See 'Siapakah Sumitro jang dihebohkan itu' (Who is this Sumitro who's causing a stir), Kompas, 19 May 1967.

117 SHG Diary, 1 May 1969. Prabowo, who had only recently returned to Indonesia, drew upon some of the young activists in the Gerakan Pembaharuan circle to assist him with his plan. During May and June Soe participated in a series of informal meetings in Jakarta and Bandung with university staff and senior bureaucrats in various government departments and agencies. SHG Diary, 7, 11, 18 and 19 May 1969. However, as the meetings progressed Soe began to have doubts about the feasibility of such a scheme and to question Prabowo's capacity to implement it effectively. SHG Diary, 22 and 25 May 1969. From early July Soe seems to have played no further part in the project.
Idealistic young men like Soe and his close friends in the Gerakan Pembaharuan circle had been committed and loyal supporters of Sumitro’s movement inside Indonesia during the difficult years before 1966. They had taken heart from Sumitro’s public critique of Guided Democracy and regarded him as a man of determination and principle. Following his return to Indonesia in mid 1967, many within the group entertained hopes that their hitherto clandestine movement might be the basis for a new democratic political force inside the New Order.\(^{118}\)

Although Sumitro’s elevation to cabinet in 1968 had at first been regarded with great optimism, by 1969 any hopes of launching a new political organisation based on Gerakan Pembaharuan had evaporated with the Soeharto government’s plans for reform of the existing party system and its promotion of Golkar.\(^{119}\) The only course open to Sumitro, like the other technocrat ministers, was to work on the ‘inside’ to implement essential reforms, in spite of the compromises that such a path might entail.

By late 1969 Soe Hok-gie’s own very public criticisms of the New Order had increased to the point where a certain distance may have been expected; but Soe’s attitude towards Sumitro seems to have been coloured by a number of disturbing reports he had received about various instances of corruption involving some of the minister’s closest supporters.\(^{120}\) On several occasions Soe took up the issue directly with members of

---

118 Interviews with Henk Tombokan, 24 February 1982; Jopie Lasut, 2 March 1982; and Suripto, 19 March 1982
119 Crouch 1978: 247-66
120 During July Soe learned of corruption with the Jakarta office of the Ministry of Trade (SHG Diary, 24 July 1969); but more serious were the allegations that certain key members of the Sumitro inner circle - including his own father Margono - had been receiving kickbacks from private companies (SHG Diary, 8 August and 15 November 1969). The truth of the allegations is impossible to judge, but there is no doubting the anger and frustration Soe felt. It may explain the following curious comment in his Independence Day essay, ‘Generasi jang lahir setelah tahun empat lima’:

... what is most distressing is that money for the PRRI-Permesta struggle was frittered away in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Soe may have been unaware of it, but Sumitro himself had been accused of corruption in the 1950s. Prior to linking up with the 1958 regional rebellions he had fled Jakarta in May of the previous year to avoid a corruption investigation into the misuse of state funds for the PSI election campaign. See van der Kroef 1957b: 120; Feith 1962: 585; and Sundhaussen 1982: 118.
Sumitro’s inner circle:

I said that I was disappointed precisely because the GP people who had actually fought in the past and had now ‘retreated’, had expected and put their trust in friends in the field to realise their shared ideals, had now been misused.121

Soe’s anger and sense of betrayal finally erupted at a meeting of Gerakan Pembaharuan supporters in early December at which he criticised the behaviour of certain individuals and challenged the older generation to stand aside if they were no longer able or inclined to provide proper leadership.122 His perception that those whom he had considered to be political allies had failed him was particularly distressing, since it came at a time when he was also beginning to hear reports that serious corruption under the New Order reached up to the highest levels, including President Soeharto’s own family.123

Soe’s obvious disenchantment with the wider world of politics was matched by a deepening personal malaise. Despite his prominence and considerable popularity within university student circles, as the months passed he began to feel increasingly isolated and alone. Although his day to day contact with a wide circle of friends and acquaintances continued undiminished, he sensed a growing gulf with many of his campus friends and a feeling that he no longer shared their outlook, their values or their interests. Yet this was at best a partial explanation for the melancholy and loneliness that he kept largely hidden from public view.

The bitter disappointment over the break with G - - - was never far from the surface, and meetings with either G - - - or H - - - were a constant and painful reminder of the emptiness he felt, and the longing for love and companionship that remained unfulfilled.124 In early June following a Mapala trip to climb Mt. Ciremai, Soe began a new friendship with I - - -, a young anthropology student at Rawamangun; but although

121 SHG Diary, 15 November 1969
122 SHG Diary, 2 December 1969
123 SHG Diary, 28 October, 4 and 20 November 1969. Friends with ‘inside’ contacts claimed to have documentary proof of corruption involving the president’s wife, Tien Soeharto.
124 SHG Diary, 6 July, 9, 10, 16 and 20 August, 18 and 29 October, 8 December 1969
the pair spent a great deal of time together during the following months, the real nature of their friendship remained enigmatic. They assured one another on more than one occasion that this was not a serious affair, but merely a platonic friendship to fill the void until someone else appeared. Yet when her strict and conservative family learned of the friendship, an angry confrontation ensued with wild and humiliating allegations. Soe was once more branded as a thoroughly unacceptable person: it was another painful reminder of the barriers imposed by ethnic chauvinism:

H - - - who understands the problem just remarked: 'That issue again.' I just thought to myself, am I really that bad to be always distrusted? Am I wrong to associate with I - - - as a fellow human being? What's more, I've no special feelings towards her at all except an honest sense of friendship.

What Soe really felt about the nature of his friendship with I - - - is difficult to assess, although his subsequent diary entries lay bare the knife-edge on which his emotions and desires were so frequently and precariously balanced.

For one who displayed remarkable confidence and maturity in dealing with so many aspects of the external world, Soe's inner emotional state was marked by ambiguity and confusion during these months as he struggled to come to terms with his feelings towards each of the three young women who had become such an important part of his life. Now in his twenty-sixth year, he could only look with envy upon those of his friends who were married or secure in established relationships. His own personal moral code prevented him from plunging headlong into casual sexual encounters; but many of his diary entries during the final months of 1969 reveal a tortured fascination with the exploits of some of his wilder acquaintances and an almost obsessive interest in the love affairs of others, highly suggestive of his own sexual tension. Soe's teenage reflections on the nature of love and desire were once more powerfully revisited; but his

---

125 SHG Diary, 20 June, 20 and 24 September, 1 November 1969
126 SHG Diary, 27 June and 5 July 1969
127 SHG Diary, 27 June 1969
128 SHG Diary, 18 July, 24 September, 17 and 31 October, 1, 10 and 11 November 1969
129 There are numerous anguished passages in his diary following encounters with each of them during these months: 6, 9, 11, 16 and 29 August and 6 September, and especially a long entry on 8 December 1969.
130 SHG Diary, 30 April 1969
131 SHG Diary, 21 and 28 August 1969
anguished quest for someone to share his deepest thoughts, his hopes, his fears, for someone to share his love and satisfy his own desire remained as hopelessly out of reach as ever.

**Conflict on the campus**

Towards the end of October Soe found himself at the centre of a bitter and protracted public row over the nature of student government within the university. Since he believed that the issues at stake threatened the integrity of the institution that had been such a central part of his intellectual and emotional life throughout the previous eight years, he could not avoid becoming involved. Yet his participation in the affair added considerably to the burden of stress and unhappiness that was pressing in upon him in late 1969.

The conflict that finally erupted was not entirely unexpected. From at least the beginning of the 1969 academic year there had been serious disagreements within student circles over the formation and composition of the incoming University of Indonesia Student Council (DMUI). It was readily apparent to Soe and other non-ormas students that HMI activists were intent on dominating the new council and that if this occurred 'intra'-oriented independent students would be effectively sidelined.

As a result, the Student Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Mahasiswa, MPM) reached a state of deadlock over the appointment of formateurs despite pressure from the university's rector, Professor Sumantri. Opposition to HMI principally came from independent-minded students throughout the university but was

---

132 In addition to the sources listed below, the following account also draws on interviews with the following student leaders: Harry Victor (1969 Senate chairman, Faculty of Psychology), 7 February 1985; Hendro Budidharma (1969 Senate chairman, Faculty of Letters), 20 March 1982; and Sjahrir, July 1978.
133 SHG Diary, 11 and 29 April 1969
134 SHG Diary, 1 May 1969. The MPM was a 48 member body elected by the entire student community. In theory it was the student 'legislative' body but its major function appears to have been the appointment of the formateurs who decided upon the composition of the DMUI and the ratification of their deliberations.
centred in three of the smallest faculties - Letters, Psychology and Dentistry - where anti-ormas feeling was particularly strong. In early June the three student senates in these faculties formed an alliance to resist HMI moves. Among those who were most active in the anti-HMI campaign were several students who had also been members of Group Diskusi UI formed a year earlier: in particular, IMADA leader and economics student Sjahrir was one of the most prominent.

Negotiations between the two parties proceeded during the following months but by mid August were no closer to resolution. When the demands of the rebel faculties for increased representation were rejected, seventeen members of the MPM withdrew from that body, and announced that they were severing relations with the DMUI to form what was, in effect, a rival organisation, the UI Student Coordinating Body (Koordinasi Kegiatan Kemahasiswaan-UI, KKK-UI). A meeting between the three rebel senate leaders and Rector Sumantri failed to provide any solution.

By this stage Soe was technically no longer a student and had already become a junior university staff member. However, because of his reputation as a leading advocate for campus independence and his well-known hostility towards the political activities of externally-based student organisations, it was inevitable that he would continue to be a central figure in subsequent attempts to resolve this conflict. In addition to further discussions with the incoming DMUI leadership under Hariadi Darmawan, Soe met directly with the rector, Professor Sumantri, on several occasions to discuss the impasse within student affairs. At the first of these meetings on 8 September, Soe made plain his own belief that the issues at stake were far more serious and pervasive than the vexed

---

135 SHG Diary, 26 May and 3 June 1969
136 Soe was himself directly involved in many of these negotiations: SHG Diary, 12 June, 12, 13 and 17 July, 13 and 18 August 1969.
137 See 'Krisis lembaga mahasiswa UI, kenapa Rektor diam?' (Crisis in UI student institution, why is the Rector silent?), Pedoman, 23 August 1969; 'Rektor UI tentang keriuhan di universitasnya' (UI Rector on the chaos in his university), Kompas, 23 1969; SHG Diary, 20 and 23 August 1969.
138 SHG Diary, 28 August 1969; '3 Senat keluar dari DMUI' (3 Senates withdraw from DMUI), Sinar Harapan, 29 August 1969
139 SHG Diary, 20 September 1969. Hariadi Darmawan was a senior HMI activist. He had also been appointed to the DPR-GR as one of the student representatives in the 1968 reshuffle.
question of the composition of the new DMUI and the various personality conflicts that had emerged within student circles. He stressed that there were serious question-marks over the entire system of student government at the university. The nature of the relationship between the DMUI and the various faculty-level student senates remained confused, and the institutional procedures - 'the rules of the game' - to elect these various bodies were neither consistent nor properly implemented. In addition, Soe raised the problem of serious financial mismanagement and corruption within student affairs, instancing to Sumantri some of the most blatant examples. According to Soe's diary account of the meeting, Sumantri's response was indecisive but the rector stressed the importance of keeping these problems out of the press on the grounds that there were those who would use it to damage the university's reputation within the community.

By the end of the month the university administration's attitude had hardened towards the dissident faculties grouped under the KKK-UI. When the rector issued a statement declaring his opposition to the existence of such a body, Soe sensed that a decisive stage had been reached:

I'm beginning to see that the DMUI and Sumantri share the same interests on this issue. I imagine the rector is not pleased by these problems being discussed outside (especially in the newspapers) because its effect is likely to snowball. People will begin to ask about the chaos within the UI student world and will see how weak and rotten it is. Ultimately this rottenness will be evident and for certain it will give rise to the same question for the organisation at UI. UI is certainly damaged but succeeds in covering it up. I'm sure that the UI establishment will ultimately support the DMUI. I have to be prepared for a clash with the UI leadership including Sumantri.

Soe and others attended another inconclusive meeting with the rector in early October at which Sumantri, while requesting that the dissident faculties return to the DMUI fold, could give no more than a vague assurance that corruption would be dealt with in the future. A week later the DMUI issued a formal ban on the KKK-UI and

---

140 SHG Diary, 8 September 1969
141 A few days before their meeting, a lengthy article had appeared in the Jakarta press written by Sjahrir with Soe's assistance attacking the incoming DMUI and outlining the conflict within the MPM. See 'Konflik dalam tubuh mahasiswa Indonesia' (Conflict within the Indonesian student body), Kompas, 5 September 1969.
142 SHG Diary, 27 September 1969
143 SHG Diary, 6 October 1969
its program of activities within the university. On 17 October the Faculty of Letters senate leaders were called in by the rector and attacked as trouble-makers for continuing to operate under the KKK-UI banner. That afternoon Soe read an article in Harian KAMI which he regarded as a completely one-sided account of the conflict and a snide misrepresentation of the motives of the independent anti-ormas students. His patience at an end, he immediately drafted a detailed rejoinder which he read out that evening over Radio UI.

Soe's article was written in anger and it showed. He put the blame for the present impasse within student affairs at UI squarely at the feet of the ormas-extra, especially HMI and its central leadership, which he claimed had deliberately set out on a mission to dominate student forums throughout the university, refusing to cooperate with 'intra'-oriented students in either faculty or university-wide forums.

I don't know how many ormas have put UI down as their major project... 'to work on UT'. Or how many prominent student figures have been entrusted with the task of carrying out their 'organisation's mission'. Or how many secret agreements between ormas have been arranged.

I recall how in mid 1968 the UI student leadership and the UI administration were in uproar because they received a HMI document concerning the takeover of the DMUI by the HMI Executive Board, and its caretakers, the putting into position of prominent UI student figures who really shocked many people. The issue was taken up directly with them but their answer went round in circles, although it was never denied.

The ormas often have pretensions that they are 'the owners' of UI. This really offends those who do not belong to an ormas. At the time of the formation of the last DMUI the senates were not approached or asked for their opinion. Those approached were the ormas headquarters (PMKRI, PMII, GMKI etc). This really irritated those who do not belong to an ormas. One reason for the withdrawal of the Letters and Psychology student senates (their leadership are non-ormas people) was because they felt that they were regarded as of no consequence by the Student Council. When they pulled out because of the manipulations of the ormas, they (Letters and Psychology) were immediately branded as troublemakers, rebels, separatists and so on.

144 SHG Diary, 15 October 1969
145 SHG Diary, 17 October 1969
146 See 'Djurnal kemahasiswaan: asjik ... asjik' (Student journal: infatuation ... infatuation) by AC. Zen Umar Purba in Harian KAMI, 17 October 1969.
147 SHG Diary, 17-22 October 1969. Soe's article did not actually appear in print for several days. He offered it at first to Kompas, but Jakob Oetama declined to publish it on the grounds that it was too harsh in its criticism. The Kompas editor admitted to him that Professor Sumantri had contacted him with a request that Soe be 'controlled'. The article was subsequently accepted by D.H. Assegaff at Indonesia Raya: see 'Wadjah mahasiswa UI jang bopeng sebelah' (The pock-marked side of the UI student face), Indonesia Raya, 22 October 1969.
He also trenchantly criticised the UI administration for failing to ensure that fair and consistent university-wide procedures were in place to guarantee that those representative bodies accurately and fairly reflected the wishes of the student community. Yet probably the most inflammatory and controversial aspect of the article was his direct attack on the issue of corruption within student affairs at UI:

As a student activist I have had a gutful of this experience. In my 'small republic' (UI) I have been 'governor' (senate leader) and think I know quite well how unhealthy student life is at my place. In this 'small republic' called the University of Indonesia we can encounter all the kinds of dirtiness that we usually come upon in the larger republic - in the Republic of Indonesia.

If you meet an UI student activist (especially from the Central level) try asking whether he knows about corruption occurring within his circle. Both out in the open and in secret. If he's honest he will know and be able to tell you about the financial confusion occurring there. If he says he doesn't know, there are two possibilities. He's either so stupid that he can't smell the stench of corruption or he's pretending and doesn't want to speak out because he doesn't want outsiders to know about corruption and UI internal matters.

Soe backed up his allegations by giving numerous instances of some of the most blatant examples of financial mismanagement and lack of accountability which he claimed ran into millions of rupiah each year.

He had been involved in a number of political upheavals during the 1960s but he found this conflict on his own campus a particularly distressing experience. Not only was he challenging his opponents within the student body, but he also had placed himself at odds with the university's senior administrators. His diary entries during these weeks record the stress and anxiety the affair was causing him. Yet he felt that he had no choice but to take a very public stand over these issues.

The provocative nature of his article immediately attracted the attention of friends and enemies alike, and a number of rejoinders appeared in the days that followed. See in particular the following: 'Hariadi Darmawan [Ketua DMUI]: Tunduk hidung siapa 2 jang lakukan korupsi' (Hariadi Darmawan [DMUI chairman]: Accuse anyone who has committed corruption), Indonesia Raya, 22 October 1969; 'Bekas tajtar air pada sebahagian wadjah mahasiswa Universitas Indonesia' (Traces of chicken pox on a section of the UI student face), Drs. Med Biran Affandi, Indonesia Raya, 24 October 1969; 'Benarkah UI sudah sedemikian bopengnja?' (Is UI really that pockmarked?), Bustanil Arifin, Indonesia Raya, 25 October 1969; 'Sebuah lokasi film di UI. Titik ke-3 polemik Drs Soe Hok-gie versus Drs Biran Affandi' (A film location at UI. Third period of the polemic between Drs Soe Hok-gie and Drs Biran Affandi), Sinansari Etjip, Indonesia Raya, 27 October 1969.

---

148 SHG Diary, 22 October 1969. Fearing he may have caused trouble for his own faculty, Soe offered his resignation to Harsja Bachtiar at Rawamangun.
149 See in particular the following: 'Hariadi Darmawan [Ketua DMUI]: Tunduk hidung siapa 2 jang lakukan korupsi' (Hariadi Darmawan [DMUI chairman]: Accuse anyone who has committed corruption), Indonesia Raya, 22 October 1969; 'Bekas tajtar air pada sebahagian wadjah mahasiswa Universitas Indonesia' (Traces of chicken pox on a section of the UI student face), Drs. Med Biran Affandi, Indonesia Raya, 24 October 1969; 'Benarkah UI sudah sedemikian bopengnja?' (Is UI really that pockmarked?), Bustanil Arifin, Indonesia Raya, 25 October 1969; 'Sebuah lokasi film di UI. Titik ke-3 polemik Drs Soe Hok-gie versus Drs Biran Affandi' (A film location at UI. Third period of the polemic between Drs Soe Hok-gie and Drs Biran Affandi), Sinansari Etjip, Indonesia Raya, 27 October 1969.
addition to the public comments, Soe also heard reports from friends of several instances of personal abuse, some of it tinged with racism.\footnote{Soe was told that the Rawamangun campus had been described as a 'PKI-G30S centre' by a senior professor in the Medical Faculty; he also heard that he had been attacked as 'that little chink Soe Hok-gie who is only now brave enough to talk' and even more ludicrously as 'PKI-Baperki'. SHG Diary, 22 September, 22 and 24 October 1969} Perhaps most wounding of all was the discovery that several of his own 'Alma Mater' group at Rawamangun had approached the DMUI leadership with their support.\footnote{SHG Diary, 23 and 24 October 1969; 3 and 4 November 1969. See also the letters by Hidayat Sutarnadi and Attabrani Kasuma Tabri in Harian KAMI, 24 October 1969. Soe regarded this as an act of treachery arising from personal rivalry and petty jealousy.} Stung by the various reactions to his article, Soe prepared a tersely-worded reply.\footnote{See 'Sikap dewasa thd. kritik' (A mature attitude to criticism), Indonesia Raya, 5 November 1969. During the following month negotiations between the DMUI and the rebel faculties continued. By early December the conflict appears to have been resolved, though the terms of the settlement were never made clear. See 'Senat mahasiswa FSUI dan F.Psy.UI pulihkan hubungan dgn DMUI' (FSUI and F.Psy.UI senate resume relations with DMUI), Kompas, 16 December 1969.} From this point his personal role in the conflict seemed to be at an end.

In the weeks that followed he began to turn his attention to other matters, in particular the planning of a Mapala trip to climb Mt. Semeru in East Java with his old friend Herman Lantang who had recently returned to Jakarta from Irian Jaya. Climbing Semeru was something he had talked about with Herman on several occasions over the previous two years. With the bitter conflict at UI so fresh in his mind, in addition to his growing disquiet over so many aspects of politics under the New Order and his own private melancholy, Soe looked forward with special enthusiasm to the solitude of the mountain peaks as a place of retreat from so much personal torment and restlessness.

Yet in the midst of preparations for his departure he could not resist the opportunity to leave behind two additional small pieces of political provocation. On 22 November the much-debated General Elections Law and associated legislation were finally passed by the DPR-GR, clearing the way for the holding of national elections which the Soeharto government announced would take place in July 1971.\footnote{For the background to these developments and the Soeharto government's efforts to reform the existing party system, see Crouch 1978: 247-53.} Several days after this announcement, Soe interviewed a group of students, including his brother Arief...
Budiman, on the issue of the elections for Radio UI's regular evening program. During the course of the discussion Arief floated the idea of boycotting the forthcoming elections on the grounds that none of the existing parties were worth supporting. Soe reported Arief's remarks in a satirical piece that appeared in *Sinar Harapan* several days later, also detailing another friend's facetious and tongue-in-cheek proposal to compile a register of all those students who could not decide on a choice and to auction off all their votes as a bloc to the highest bidder:

Now, whoever dares to pay the most, we'll support them. It doesn't matter - PNI, NU or MKGR. As far as we're concerned there's no difference.155

At the same time Soe was also involved in another political prank. In collaboration with several friends, he hatched a plan to deliver a 'Christmas-Lebaran' gift to each of the thirteen student representatives in the DPR-GR.156 Packets of lipstick, a mirror, needles and thread were prepared, and signatures collected for the attached letter:

Dear Sir,

We, university students in Jakarta, herewith respectfully send you, the 'representatives of the students' in the DPR-GR, Lebaran and Christmas packages. In this Lebaran and Christmas atmosphere, we salute the struggle you have made over the years in this institute of people's 'representatives'.

The democratic conditions in Indonesia and the present Rule of Law surely constitute the results of the struggle of you all, students who are relentless and unbeatable, who never give in, and who know no compromise with what is right!

With this letter, we are sending you a small gift of cosmetics and a little mirror so that you, our honoured brothers, can make yourselves more attractive in the eyes of the authorities and your colleagues in the DPR-GR.

Work well, long live the New Order! Enjoy your sittings - sleep well!

Your fellow students in Jakarta and former '66 demonstrators.157

---

154 SHG Diary, 27-29 November 1969
155 See 'Siapa mau beli suara mahasiswa untuk PEMILU?' (Who wants to buy the students' vote for the elections?), *Sinar Harapan*, 1 December 1969. The idea of the 'vote auction' came from a journalist friend, Fikri Djufri. MKGR (Musyawarah Kekeluargaan Gotong Royong) was one of the numerous organisations grouped under the banner of Sekber-Golkar, the army-backed Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups.
156 Soe had initially suggested to his friend Jopie Lasut sending a kain kebaya to the chairman of the DPR-GR 'in recognition of his cowardice'. SHG Diary, 26 November 1969. The idea of sending cosmetics as a calculated insult was not a new one. During the revolution East Java *pemuda* had sent lipstick to a Bandung *pemuda* leader who had been forced by the Japanese into a humiliating backdown. See Anderson 1972: 142. Soe may have been aware of this incident from his own study of the period.
157 The text of the letter appeared in *Nusantara*, 15 December 1969. Soe had some misgivings about sending the package to those student representatives in the DPR-GR whom he regarded as friends (Rachman Tolleng and Nono Anwar Makarim) but he felt he could not make any exceptions.
The parcels were delivered on 12 December. Meanwhile a lively debate had already erupted within student circles over the idea of an election boycott, with a stream of articles appearing on the subject in the Jakarta press. But by this time Soe was already heading for the slopes of Java's highest mountain.

**Semeru**

Only a few days before his departure for East Java Soe learned of the sudden death of an old school friend from his teenage years. The unwelcome news seemed to elicit a disturbing reaction:

I don't know what's the matter with me. Since I heard about the death of Kian Fong from Arief last Sunday I have the feeling of being constantly aware of death. I want to say goodbye before leaving for Semeru. With G--- and H---, and I also want to spend some time alone with I---. I suppose this is the influence of Kian Fong's strange and sudden death.

As a consequence, in between a steady stream of other visitors, the final arrangements for the despatch of the parcels to the student-politicians and last-minute packing, Soe made a special effort to farewell in turn each of the three young women to whom he felt so close.

The Mapala circle had never paid much attention to the technical aspects of their outdoor activities. In fact, they seemed to enjoy the challenge of travelling light and pitting themselves against the elements. Their equipment and provisions were invariably rudimentary at best, although on this occasion Soe and Herman had taken the trouble to consult some old maps and the memoirs of the one of first vulcanologists to visit the region. Mt. Semeru was, after all, a highly active volcano and at 3676m it was the highest mountain in Java. Although the surrounding villages were easily accessible from nearby Malang, the peak itself was in remote and isolated terrain.

---

158 See in particular the various articles for and against the boycott proposal in *Sinar Harapan*, 4, 8, 10, 15 and 16 December 1969. For a clear restatement of Arief Budiman's views, see his rejoinder to criticism: 'Hak untuk memboikot pd Pemilu 1971 - djawaban terhadap Sdr Zaenul Arifin' (The right to boycott the 1971 elections - a reply to Zaenul Arifin), *Sinar Harapan*, 8 December 1969.

159 SHG Diary, 8 December 1969
Soe, Herman and six other friends set off from Jakarta on 12 December, travelling via Surabaya and Malang.\textsuperscript{160} The actual climb began on 14 December from the village of Gubukklakah, the highest settlement on the mountain's north-eastern approaches. It was a long and difficult two-day trek to the summit. The party had to negotiate thick forest on the lower slopes and recent rains had made the ground very heavy. After leaving the tree-line it was still a gruelling slog through the loose ash and scoria that covered the sixty-degree incline of the mountain's upper slopes. After making a base-camp 500 metres from the summit the party pushed on, reaching the rim of the crater late on the afternoon of 16 December.\textsuperscript{161}

When the climbers finally arrived at the top of the smouldering active volcano they were all thoroughly exhausted. One by one they began the descent to seek shelter from the bitter evening chill and the clouds of thick smoke billowing up from within the crater.

Despite his slight frame Soe was a tough and resilient climber but he too was feeling the effects of the last two days. While waiting for his friend Herman to follow him down from the summit he sought somewhere to shelter from the freezing wind. As Herman approached he noticed that something was seriously amiss. Soe had begun to tremble and to babble incoherently, and had to be restrained from rushing wildly about. His body was suddenly racked with violent convulsions and then became dreadfully still. Soe had died in his friend's arms a day short of his twenty-seventh birthday.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{160} The other members of the party were Aristides Katoppo, Abdurrachman (Maman), Antonius Wijana, Freddy Lasut, Rudy Badil and Idan Lubis (a nephew of Mochtar Lubis).

\textsuperscript{161} This account draws on the numerous press reports that appeared in late December 1969. See in particular 'Soe Hok Gie tewas dipuntjak G. Semeru' (Soe Hok Gie dies at top of Mt. Semeru), \textit{Harian KAMI}, 22 December 1969; and Rafik Pontoh, 'Semeru minta korban' (Semeru demands a victim), \textit{Mingguan Chas}, Week 1, January 1970. I am also indebted to Herman Lantang for his recollections of the trip to Semeru. Interview 10 and 12 February 1982

\textsuperscript{162} Minutes later Idan Lubis was also struck down in exactly the same manner, while their friend Abdurrachman had staggered into the arms of those waiting below where he too collapsed gravely ill. (Fortunately Abdurrachman was eventually able to make a full recovery after receiving medical attention in Malang.) All three were evidently the victims of asphyxiation by a deadly poisonous gas - odourless, colourless and heavier than the surrounding air - seeping from the volcano's surface. The 20 year old Idan Lubis was a student at Tarumanegara University, one of Jakarta's many private or non-government institutions. He had also been a prominent KAPPI activist in early 1966.
EPILOGUE

It was several days before news of the Semeru tragedy reached Jakarta and almost a week before the bodies of the two young men were able to be removed from the place where they had met their death. Even after the alarm had been raised the task of retrieving their bodies from such a remote and inaccessible location proved extremely difficult. Bad weather and the rugged terrain thwarted initial attempts by a navy helicopter to reach the site and it was not until late on the afternoon of 22 December that a rescue team arrived at the place near the summit where Herman Lantang had maintained a lonely vigil for many days. The bodies were carried down the mountain the following day to the village where Soe's brother Arief Budiman was now waiting, and then transported by road to Malang.

On 24 December an airforce Hercules was used to bring the coffins containing the bodies of Soe and Idan Lubis to Jakarta. A large crowd of grief-stricken friends and fellow students were waiting when the aircraft landed early in the afternoon at Kemayoran. One busload of students had travelled down from Bandung in a vehicle provided by the Siliwangi Division and adorned by a large banner bearing the words 'Gerakan Pembaharuan'. Minister of Trade Sumitro Djojohadikusumo was one of the few prominent public figures among the mourners.

From Kemayoran arrangements had been made for the young men's bodies to be first taken separately to the houses of their respective parents before a joint ceremony at Rawamangun later in the day. The narrow streets around Soe's home in Kebon Jeruk became choked with traffic as a large cavalcade escorted the hearse bearing his coffin to the simple house where his grieving parents waited. Later in the afternoon, Soe's body left Kebon Jeruk for the last time, bound for the place that his own mother admitted to his

---

1 This account of subsequent events in East Java and the Jakarta funeral that followed draws on the extensive coverage given to these matters in the Jakarta press.
friends had become his emotional second home, the Faculty of Letters campus at Rawamangun.

Soe's coffin was placed beside that of Idan Lubis on the stage of the faculty auditorium filled to overflowing with students, friends and family members of both young men. During the simple ceremony that followed Soe's friend and fellow student Dahana, who had led the ad hoc committee formed to take charge of the funeral arrangements, spoke on behalf of the Faculty of Letters' senate and student body. Hariadi Darmawan, chairman of the UI Student Council - and one of those student leaders with whom Soe had been in bitter conflict during 1969 - represented the university's rector, Professor Sumantri, who was unable to attend.

The principal tributes on behalf of the mourners were delivered by the Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Harsja Bachtiar, and Professor Sumitro. Harsja Bachtiar spoke with feeling of Soe's courageous pursuit of those things in which he believed, his struggle to uphold the ideals of justice and progress, often in the face of harsh criticism from those around him who felt that their own position was threatened by his outspokenness. Sumitro described Soe as a young man who was 'a true patriot whom he had known personally'.

There was almost no reference to religion throughout the ceremony, although Mochtar Lubis, speaking on behalf on Idan's family, used a few appropriate Arabic phrases. Arief Budiman, responding very briefly on behalf of his own family, was overcome by emotion and struggled to thank everyone who had rendered assistance to his younger brother. As dusk was settling over Jakarta and the monsoon rains that had soaked the city throughout much of the day continue to fall, the sombre procession headed off for the Menteng Pulo Cemetery where the two friends were laid to rest side by side.

---

2 A report of the ceremony and the speeches appears in Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.185, 28 December 1969.
A short time afterwards, however, when the Soe family were troubled by petty extortion at Menteng Pulo, Arief Budiman arranged for his brother's remains to be transferred to the former colonial cemetery in Tanah Abang which was also much closer to his parents' home. There Soe's grave was marked with a simple white marble plaque on which was inscribed a quotation paraphrased from one of his favourite folk spirituals: 'Nobody knows the troubles I see, nobody knows my sorrow'. Four years later, in December 1973, a small group of Mapala members made the difficult trek to Mt Semeru, constructing a memorial near the summit with a marble marker post as a tribute to their lost friends. In 1975 when the Jakarta government announced that it intended to demolish the old Tanah Abang cemetery for a new development, Soe's family arranged for his remains to be cremated and his ashes scattered by his friends on the anniversary of his birthday at one of his favourite places when he was in search of tranquillity and solitude, the valley at Mandalawangi near Mt. Pangrango around 90 kilometres south of Jakarta.

Reactions, responses and the legacy

Soe's sudden death in such dramatic circumstances was guaranteed to receive a high level of publicity and the Jakarta press carried reports of the Semeru tragedy and its aftermath for many days. His own standing within student and intellectual circles and his close association with many of the leading independent newspapers ensured that his life and his activities would also be commented upon in feature articles.

On 23 December Indonesia Raya, which had been conducting a searching exposure of corruption within Ibnu Sutowo's Pertamina empire in a series of special investigative articles, announced a three-day 'moratorium' in its campaign as a mark of respect for the young men who had died on Semeru, promising to fill its pages instead with material by and about Soe Hok-gie. His friends at Kompas described him in the following terms:

---

3 See also its obituary column 'Dalam kenangan: Soe Hok Gie, patriot tulen' (In memory: Soe Hok Gie, genuine patriot), Indonesia Raya, 23 December 1969.
An extraordinary young man ... extraordinary in many respects. Intellectual, brilliant. Honest and open. A pure idealist with a keen sense of justice. A human being with a free spirit. And all of this adorned with extraordinary courage.4

The Bandung weekly Mahasiswa Indonesia devoted a special editorial to his death, stressing his contribution to the overthrow of Sukarno but also emphasising his commitment to the notion of uncompromising moral force in politics:

Perhaps the undeviating path followed by Hok-gie is not easy to put into practice in a political struggle. But without demanding that everyone become a Soe Hok-gie we merely wish to reveal this young man as a model of purity in a struggle. Not everyone can or should become Soe Hok-gie but in this life we need people like him to become an alarm bell to remind us every time we make mistakes.5

Several personal tributes also appeared in the Jakarta press.6 His old friend Jopie Lasut used his position as a Sinar Harapan reporter to write his own rambling and discursive recollections of Soe's political activism from the time that he had come to know him in the early 1960s. The five articles were timed to appear just prior to the fourth anniversary of the 1966 student movement.7

Soe's death did not pass unnoticed outside Indonesia. In mid January in the course of an address to the Asia Society in New York on the role of the intellectual in developing countries, Indonesia's ambassador Soedjatmoko made the following remarks:

... I would like to pay tribute to the memory of Soe Hok-gie, one of the most dynamic and promising intellectuals of the young post-independence generation who recently died as the result of an accident while climbing Mt. Semeru. His total commitment to modernisation and democracy, his reckless honesty, and his complete lack of self-consciousness in waging his fights made it possible for him to overcome the traditional reservations towards him that many held because of his Chinese origin. To me he

---

4 'In memorium Soe Hok-gie: mahasiswa idealis meninggal digunung Semeru' (In memorium Soe Hok-gie: idealistic student dies on Mt. Semeru), Kompas, 22 December 1969
5 'Editorial: In memorium Soe Hok-gie', Mahasiswa Indonesia, No.185, 28 December 1969
6 See 'Soe Hok Gie, kenangan duka seorang sahabat' (Soe Hok Gie, sad memories of a close friend) by Benjamin, Indonesia Raya, 24 December 1969; 'In memorium: Soe Hok Gie, dalam mono-dialog "G"', by Gerson Poyk, Indonesia Raya, 26 December 1969; 'Soe Hok Gie dan Idhan (sic) Lubis jang mati muda' (Soe Hok-gie and Idan Lubis who died young) by Zainal Arifin, Sinar Harapan, 27 December 1969.
7 The articles appeared in Sinar Harapan between 6 and 10 January 1970 under the series title 'Menjongsong "Hari Kebangkitan Mahasiswa" 10 Djanuari' (Commemorating 'The Day of Student Resurgence' 10 January). In the second article of the series, Lasut recounted the incident when Soe had led a student delegation to Ibnu Sutowo's office in January 1966 to protest about the petrol price rise. He reminded his readers that unlike Jusuf Muda Dalam, Ibnu Sutowo had been too frightened to leave his office and face the demonstrators outside, adding the colourful but dubious detail that the minister had become an object of student ridicule because he had been so scared 'he had pissed himself'. Interestingly, Ibnu Sutowo who was already under attack from the Jakarta press at this time for corruption, felt sufficiently stung by the article to order one of his subordinates to write a reply, denying that the former minister had ever received such a student delegation and alleging that he had been a staunch opponent of the Old Order and the PKI long before that time. See the letters to the editor column, Sinar Harapan, 16 January 1970.
exemplified the possibility of a new type of Indonesian, of a truly Indonesian Indonesian. It is this message I think that his brief life contains for us.  

In April Benedict Anderson published his own moving personal tribute to his friend in Cornell University's *Indonesia*, quoting from Soe's recent letters including some of his characteristic remarks about his own journalism:

> I feel that all there is in my articles is a few firecrackers. And I'd like to fill them with bombs.9

In addition to the various published responses to Soe's death there is an entirely different sense in which his passing may be seen to have had an immediate important effect. In January 1970 his brother Arief Budiman emerged into public prominence as one of the leaders of a series of student demonstrations against corruption. Calling their movement The Students' Demand (*Mahasiswa Menggugat*), the group targeted high-level corruption by senior members of the government, the bureaucracy and the armed forces. The spate of demonstrations seemed to have had some impact when, at the end of January, President Soeharto appointed a Commission of Four to conduct an inquiry into the problem and write an official report.

When the government appeared to delay releasing the report or acting upon its recommendations, Soe's friend and *Sinar Harapan* editor Aristides Katoppo embarrassed the government by publishing in full a leaked copy of the entire report.10 After further student demonstrations in July and August, Arief Budiman was one of a small group of students who had two inconclusive meetings with Soeharto to discuss the corruption issue.11

How much Hok-gie's death contributed to Arief's decision to take an active leadership role in these demonstrations is difficult to say. Certainly, the two brothers had

---

8 This was one of the very few references to Indonesia in the ambassador's address. See Soedjatmoko 1970: 4. His speech was subsequently translated into Indonesian and published in a number of edited collections.

9 See Anderson 1970. The essay was translated and published in *Kompas* the following month. See 'In memorium: Soe Hok Gie', *Kompas*, 4 May 1970.


11 Budiman 1974
put the emotional conflict of their teens well behind them. Though a degree of reticence may have remained, the brothers had grown closer in the previous two or three years and shared much the same views on a range of matters, especially on political questions. Arief was deeply distressed by his younger brother's death, and proud of his determination to speak out on awkward or politically sensitive issues. Above all, the two brothers placed the same emphasis on the notions of moral force in politics and Arief's activism in early 1970 was firmly in that mould.

In July of 1971 Arief took up the idea that he and Hok-gie had first discussed shortly before his brother's death. With other student activists he formed the White Group (Golongan Putih) to campaign for a protest boycott against the 1971 elections. Then in the following December, he was again a prominent figure in the demonstrations that occurred against the construction of the Taman Mini Indonesia Indah theme park, a project sponsored by Tien Suharto, the president's wife. In addition to his brother Arief, most of those who played a prominent part in these demonstrations between 1970 and 1972 were students and activists of Soe Hok-gie's own generation. Some of them had known him personally and shared many of his own values and perceptions about politics.

For the Soeharto government these opposition movements were little more than minor irritations. But the demonstrations that erupted in late 1973 and early 1974 were to cause the government much more serious concern. Student protests directed against the government's economic policies and the nature of foreign investment in Indonesia culminated in mass demonstrations in Jakarta in January 1974 that coincided with an official visit by the Japanese prime minister Tanaka. However, these demonstrations degenerated into widespread anarchic rioting that raged throughout Jakarta for several days. The Malari Affair as it became known (Malapetaka Januari, January Disaster),

---
12 Arief Budiman was arrested in December and detained by the military for a month. Shortly after his release he left Indonesia for post-graduate studies in the United States.
13 See Crouch 1978: 310-16.
shook the government into a stern response as it sought to pin the blame on disaffected PSI and Masjumi elements for instigating the demonstrations and riots. In the crackdown on students, activists and intellectuals that followed, many of Soe's former friends and acquaintances were arrested and several of them were detained for lengthy periods.\(^{14}\)

Although the government moved to tighten its control over the campuses following the Malari Affair, student and intellectual dissent continued to be heard from time to time. However, those who were involved in student activism in the late 1970s and 1980s were by and large students of a younger generation who had not been directly involved in the 1966 student movement, who had no personal connections with Soe Hok-gie, and probably knew little or nothing about him.

Yet from time to time there have been indications of renewed interest in Soe from younger generations of student activists. Perhaps some were curious to find out more about one of the '66 generation student leaders who had not become a government minister, a Golkar functionary or a successful businessman like those who received such frequent publicity and media-attention as heroes of the New Order in January each year. Perhaps a few even saw him as a possible role model. There were occasional articles in the Jakarta press by some who knew him, usually on the anniversary of the Semeru tragedy.\(^{15}\) However wider public interest in Soe was awakened by the publication of an edited version of his diary in 1983.\(^{16}\) As a published volume, his diary presented a

\(^{14}\) These included Jopie Lasut, Henk Tombokan, Sjahrir, Marsillam Simanjuntak, Rachman Tolleng, Dorodjatun Kuntjoro-Jakti, Haji Princen, Yap Thiam Hien, Adnan Buyung Nasution and Mochtar Lubis. The student newspapers *Mahasiswa Indonesia* and *Harian KAMI*, along with *Indonesia Raya*, were banned and did not appear again. Soe's name was mentioned at the trial of Hariman Siregar (the young University of Indonesia medical student accused by the government of being one of the ringleaders of the movement) in connection with Grup Diskusi, the body he and Sjahrir had formed in July 1968 and which had continued after Soe's death to be a forum for independent campus debate. Sjahrir was also one of those put on trial after Malari. See van Dijk 1975: 6.

\(^{15}\) See for example the following: 'Mengenang sejenak Soe Hok-gie, perjuang besar Orde Baru yang kerempeng' (Recalling a moment Soe Hok-gie, great if skinny fighter for the New Order) by Satygraha Hoerip, *Sinar Harapan*, 16 December 1975; 'Soe Hok Gie' by Haifa Shahab, *Mutiaara*, No.206, 26 December 1975; 'Soe Hok Gie dan Idhan (sic) Lubis dalam ingatan rekan seperjalanan' (Soe Hok Gie and Idan Lubis as remembered by their fellow travellers), by Rudy Badil, *Kompas*, 16 December 1984.

\(^{16}\) Soe 1983. The diary had been prepared to galley proof stage as early as 1972 but its publication was postponed when objections were raised in some quarters. For further commentary on Soe's diary in both its original manuscript and published form, see Maxwell 1987 and the relevant section of the bibliography of this thesis.
number of problems. It was not very literary and many of the entries were obviously written in haste. It was also quite fragmentary in its coverage of his life, leaving many large gaps in his experiences unaccounted for. Moreover, in the later years it was especially preoccupied with the small world of the Rawamangun campus that must have been almost incomprehensible for many outsiders. Yet in spite of these drawbacks many readers would have been attracted by the diary's frankness and authenticity: it was clearly a highly personal record that had obviously not been written with an eye to future publication. Fortunately, the published version was enhanced by a thoughtful and lucid introduction by Daniel Dhakidae.\textsuperscript{17} In fact the diary proved so popular that a second printing was issued at the end of 1983 with an additional appendix containing a selection of the numerous reviews that had appeared in the Indonesian print media in the previous few months.

A number of commentators, including many readers of the diary, frequently expressed the view that a volume of Soe's collected journalism would make an even more useful and accessible introduction to his life and his thinking. In 1995 such a volume finally appeared, containing thirty-six of his essays arranged thematically.\textsuperscript{18} Although this is less than a third of his complete journalistic output and some of his finest essays were not included, it nevertheless gave many Indonesian readers an opportunity to sample the range of Soe's interests and the hard-hitting and confronting style of his newspaper writing.

**Final reflections**

The question of an author's judgements about another human being's life is invariably a difficult and demanding responsibility for any biographer. In reflecting upon the totality of Soe's experiences I am very conscious that I have been writing about a young man whose life ended suddenly and quite prematurely, and with the future still full

\textsuperscript{17} See his essay 'Soe Hok Gie Sang Demonstran' (Soe Hok Gie the Demonstrator) in Soe 1983: 6-76.
\textsuperscript{18} Soe 1995
of immense possibilities. In such circumstances it seems to me that any attempt to pass judgement or present a set of tightly drawn conclusions would be inappropriate, even unfair.

Nevertheless, I would like to conclude this study by touching on what I see as some important features of Soe’s approach to politics. We have noted how the young Hok-gie became absorbed by politics and national affairs from at least his early teens. It is apparent that at some point during this period of his life he had already reached the conclusion that his own generation would be called upon in the future to intervene in the political life of the nation. As his knowledge and understanding about national politics continued to deepen during his university years, there was a powerful urge to move beyond observation and to become in some way directly involved in practical politics. This desire to participate at some level as a political actor strengthened with his perception that Sukarno’s Guided Democracy regime was leading Indonesia to disaster.

Yet this urge to political action was tempered by his own judgement that the world of politics was essentially rotten, in his own words ‘filthy mud’. Everything that he observed about politics seemed to point in that direction: his early harsh perceptions of the qualities of the country’s leaders were confirmed during his own chance meetings with President Sukarno; those around Sukarno he judged to be corrupt and venal, while party leaders and prominent politicians were either sycophants and ‘yes men’ or had given up altogether. Despite his deep suspicion of totalitarian systems, he grudgingly admired many of the PKI leaders for their advocacy of social justice for the poor and the oppressed. Yet the PKI had seemed to him to have abandoned principle for the sake of political expediency as it moved into closer alignment with Sukarno and his policies.

Consequently he sensed that the world of politics was essentially rotten and corrupt. These same perceptions seemed to lie behind Soe’s advocacy of the notion of a ‘moral force’ in politics in early 1966. His own intervention in national politics, he declared, was temporary - an inevitable and unavoidable response to a national crisis. By the middle of that year he was arguing that it was time for students to step back, to
withdraw from the field of politics and to allow the full-time professional politicians to get on with the task of rebuilding the nation's political institutions. Hence his scorn and condemnation of those student leaders whom he judged to have exploited their position by remaining full-time politicians.

The same antipathy towards the malign and destructive aspects of politics lay behind his efforts to keep the external world of political parties and mass organisations from intruding into the life of the university. Many of his fellow students disagreed, others regarded his views as hopelessly impractical, but Soe wanted the university to be a safe haven, a fortress free from all that he regarded as repellent about the political world beyond.

By the late 1960s, despite the sense of loneliness and isolation he increasingly felt, Soe seemed to have found his metier standing on the outside of politics as a free, independent and critical spirit. He expressed his admiration for some of the technocrats who had joined the government, recognising that their work was important, even essential. Nevertheless, he still feared the corrosive influence of politics whenever it was necessary to make compromises on matters of principle and to turn a blind eye to entrenched corruption or the arbitrary use of authority. It was something he could never have done himself.

During those periods of his life when he did become actively engaged in politics at some level, Soe was never really comfortable with large organisations. He never joined a political party or mass organisation. He fell out with the LPKB assimilationists over matters of principle in 1965, he was never part of the KAMI organisational structure and by late 1969 it seemed he was becoming disenchanted with the Gerakan Pembaharuan circle. Essentially, Soe was most at ease working with small groups of people where there was a clear sense of common purpose based on close bonds of trust and personal commitment.
Despite his fears about the rottenness of politics, when the critical moment suddenly came in October 1965, he had decided to plunge headlong into that arena. This was a momentous decision for he knew that in reality it meant taking the side of the army in a struggle against the PKI that was bound to be violent, although he could not have foreseen the terrible consequences and the massive scale of human suffering that was to result.

The events of 1 October 1965 brought all anti-communist liberal intellectuals in Indonesia who were desperate to see the end of Sukarno and everything he stood for face to face with difficult choices. It is to Soe's credit that when he did become aware of the scale of the massacres and the plight of the innocent victims of the anti-PKI vendetta he became one of the government's most determined critics in his pursuit of fair treatment for them. Yet there is a sense in which Soe may not have completely come to terms with his participation in the events of late 1965 and 1966 either emotionally or intellectually. We do not know what, as a student of history, he made of the various conflicting interpretations of the events of 1 October, especially since two of the most incompatible accounts were those of his teacher and mentor Nugroho Notosusanto and his friend Benedict Anderson.

Although Soe continued during the late 1960s to support publicly those senior army officers he had hoped would steer Indonesia on a path to a more equitable and just society, it must have been increasingly apparent to him by late 1969 that his faith had been misplaced. A growing sense of personal isolation and despondency and a renewed disenchantment with the pervasive political world of Jakarta compelled him to make the journeys to the mountain peaks of Java where he could for a time feel at one with nature and, above all, clean.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</td>
<td>Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ampera</td>
<td>Amanat Penderitaan Rakyat</td>
<td>Message of the People's Suffering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anggota</td>
<td>member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ansor</td>
<td>Muslim youth organisation affiliated with the Nahdatul Ulama (literally refers to the Prophet Mohammad's followers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anti-ormas</td>
<td>anti-mass organisations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asimilasi</td>
<td>assimilation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASU</td>
<td>Ali Sastroamidjojo-Surachman - acronym for left wing of PNI; also means 'dog' in Javanese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bapakisme</td>
<td>exaggerated deference to authority; from bapak lit. father, a respectful form of address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baperki</td>
<td>Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia</td>
<td>Consultative Body for Indonesian Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barisan Sukarno</td>
<td>Sukarno Front</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berdikari</td>
<td>Berdiri Diatas Kaki Sendiri (Standing On One’s Own Feet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhinneka Tunggal Ika</td>
<td>Unity in Diversity, Indonesia’s national motto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biro Penerangan</td>
<td>Information Bureau</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPPK</td>
<td>Badan Pembina Potensi Karya (Body for Developing the Potential of Functional Groups)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS</td>
<td>Badan Pendukung Sukarnoisme (Body to Support Sukarnoism)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brimob</td>
<td>Brigade Mobil (Mobile Brigade)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTI</td>
<td>Barisan Tani Indonesia (Indonesian Peasants' Front)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulog</td>
<td>Badan Urusan Logistik Nasional (National Logistics Board)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buruh Marhaenis</td>
<td>Marhaenist Workers (labour organisation affiliated with PNI)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGMI</td>
<td>Consentrasi Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia (Unified Movement of Indonesian University Students)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency of USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>case officers (in Gerakan Pembaharuan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conefo</td>
<td>Conference of the New Emerging Forces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSB</td>
<td>Corpus Studiosorum Bandungense (Bandung University Student Corps)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dekon</td>
<td>Deklarasi Ekonomi (Economic Declaration)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demokrasi Termimpin</td>
<td>Guided Democracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dewan mahasiswa</td>
<td>student council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMUI</td>
<td>Dewan Mahasiswa Universitas Indonesia (University of Indonesia Student Council)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPR</td>
<td>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representative Council)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPR-GR</td>
<td>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat-Gotong Royong (Mutual Assistance People's Representative Council)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drs/Dra</td>
<td>doctorandus/doctoranda (academic title for holder of sarjana degree)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwikora</td>
<td>Dwi Komando Rakyat (People's Dual Command) based on Sukarno's two slogans: crush Malaysia and defend the revolution.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakultas Economi (FE)</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakultas Hukum (FH)</td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakultas Kedoktoran (FK)</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakultas Psikologi</td>
<td>Faculty of Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakultas Sastra (FS)</td>
<td>Faculty of Letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formateurs</td>
<td>individuals appointed by an assembly to form the executive leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Pancasila</td>
<td>Pancasila Front</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G30S</td>
<td>Gerakan 30 September (30 September Movement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ganyang</td>
<td>to crush</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gema Bung Karno</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Bung Karno (University Student Movement of the Bung Karno University)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemsos</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Sosialis (Socialist University Students' Movement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerakan Pembaharuan (GP)</td>
<td>Reform Movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMAHII</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Students' Movement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germindo</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian University Students' Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerwani</td>
<td>Gerakan Wanita Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian Women's Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestapu</td>
<td>Gerakan September Tigapuluh</td>
<td>(Thirtieth of September Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMKI</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian Christian University Student Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMNI</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian Nationalist University Student Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMNI-ASU</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Nasional Indonesia - Ali Sastroamidjojo-Surachman</td>
<td>(left wing faction of the Indonesian Nationalist University Student Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMS</td>
<td>Gerakan Mahasiswa Surabaya</td>
<td>(Surabaya University Student Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golkar</td>
<td>Golongan Karya</td>
<td>(Functional Groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golongan Putih</td>
<td>White Group, radical group advocating the boycotting of the 1971 General Elections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gotong royong</td>
<td>mutual assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSNI</td>
<td>Gerakan Siswa Nasional Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian National Secondary School Student Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCS</td>
<td>Hollandsch-Chineesche School</td>
<td>Dutch-Medium primary school for Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>Hotel Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMI</td>
<td>Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam</td>
<td>(Islamic University Students' Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSI</td>
<td>Himpunan Sarjana Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian Scholars' Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAIN</td>
<td>Institut Agama Islam Negeri</td>
<td>(State Institute for Islamic Studies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMABA</td>
<td>Ikatan Mahasiswa Bandung</td>
<td>(Bandung University Student League)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMADA</td>
<td>Ikatan Mahasiswa Djakarta</td>
<td>(Jakarta University Student League)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPB</td>
<td>Institut Pertanian Bogor</td>
<td>(Bogor Institute of Agriculture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPKI</td>
<td>Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia</td>
<td>(League of the Upholders of Indonesian Independence)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IPMI
Ikatan Pers Mahasiswa Indonesia (Indonesian University Student Press League)

ITB
Institut Teknologi Bandung (Bandung Institute of Technology)

Kabinet Karya
'Working' Cabinet

Kain kebaya
a blouse and a wrap-around batik skirt.

KAMI
Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia (Indonesian University Student Action Front)

KAMI Jaya
KAMI Jakarta Raya (The Greater Jakarta branch of KAMI)

KAMI Pusat
The national leadership body of KAMI

KAMI UI
University of Indonesia branch of KAMI

KAP-Gestapu
Kesatuan Aksi Pengganyangan Gestapu (Action Front for the Crushing of the Thirtieth of September Movement)

KAPPI
Kesatuan Aksi Pelajar Pemuda Indonesia (Indonesian Student and Youth Action Front)

KASI
Kesatuan Aksi Sarjana Indonesia (Indonesian Graduates' Action Front)

Ketua
chairman

Ketua Presidium
Chairman of the Presidium

Ketua Senat
Chairman of the (Student) Senate

KKK-UI
Koordini Kegiatan Kemahasiswaan-UI (UI Student Coordinating Body)

KKO
Korps Komando (Marines Commando Corps)

Kogam
Komando Ganyang Malaysia (Crush Malaysia Command)

Kolaga
Komando Mandala Siaga (Mandala Vigilance Command)

Konfrontasi
confrontation (with Malaysia)

Kontra-revolusi
counter-revolutionary

Kopkamtib
Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban (Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order)

Kostrad
Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat (Army Strategic Reserve Command)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koti</td>
<td>Komando Operasi Tertinggi (Supreme Operations Command)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laskar</td>
<td>militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laskar A.R. Hakim</td>
<td>Student Militia named after Arief Rachman Hakim, a student killed during a demonstration on 24 February 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebaran</td>
<td>holiday period following the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lekra</td>
<td>Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (Peoples' Cultural Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lembaga Hak² Azasi Manusia</td>
<td>Human Rights Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemhanas</td>
<td>Lembaga Pertahanan Nasional (National Defence Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liga Demokrasi</td>
<td>Democratic League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPKB</td>
<td>Lembaga Pembina Kesatuan Bangsa (Institute of Promoters of National Unity) later known as Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa (Institute for the Promotion of National Unity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lurah</td>
<td>village or sub-subdistrict head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahmillub</td>
<td>Mahakamar Militer Luar Biasa (Special Military Court)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malari</td>
<td>Malapetaka Januari (January Disaster), 1973 Jakarta demonstrations and riots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manikebu</td>
<td>Manifes Kebudayaan (Cultural Manifesto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipol</td>
<td>Manifesto Politik (Political Manifesto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipol-USDEK</td>
<td>President Sukarno's 1959 political manifesto based on five guiding principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapala</td>
<td>Mahasiswa Pencita Alam (University Student Nature Lovers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapancas</td>
<td>Mahasiswa Pancasila (Pancasila University Students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapram</td>
<td>Masa Prabakti Mahasiswa (University Student Orientation Program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masyumi</td>
<td>Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Council of Indonesian Islamic Associations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MKGR</td>
<td>Musyawarah Kekeluargaan Gotong Royong (a functional group body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMB</td>
<td>Masyarakat Mahasiswa Bogor (Bogor University Students' Society)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMI</td>
<td>Majelis Mahasiswa Indonesia (Indonesian University Student Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPPR</td>
<td>Musjawarah pembantu pimpinan revolusi (Consultative Council of the Leadership of the Revolution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPM</td>
<td>Majelis Permusyawaratan Mahasiswa (University Student Consultative Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPR</td>
<td>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPRS</td>
<td>Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara (Provisional People's Consultative Assembly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mufakat</td>
<td>consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musyawarah</td>
<td>consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasakom</td>
<td>Nationalisme, Agama, Komunisme (Nationalism, Religion, Communism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nekolim</td>
<td>Neo-kolonialisme, Kolonialisme dan Imperialisme (Neo-colonialism, Colonialism and Imperialism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU</td>
<td>Nahdatul Ulama (Islamic Scholars' Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orde Baru</td>
<td>New Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orde Lama</td>
<td>Old Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ormas</td>
<td>organisasi massa (mass organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ormas-extra</td>
<td>mass organisation affiliated with political parties and religious bodies external to the universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osa-Usep</td>
<td>after Osa Maliki Wangsadinata, general chairman, and Usep Ranuwidjaja, general secretary, the PNI leaders supported by the army in 1966 - acronym for right wing of PNI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancasila</td>
<td>Five Basic Principles of the Republic of Indonesia: belief in God, humanity, unity of the nation, democracy, and social justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkindo</td>
<td>Partai Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panitia Penyuluhan Asimilasi</td>
<td>Committee for Assimilation Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partai Katolik</td>
<td>Catholic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partindo</td>
<td>Partai Indonesia (Indonesia Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelopor</td>
<td>Pioneers, elite regiment of the Police Mobile Brigade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepelrada</td>
<td>Penguasa Pelaksanaan Dwikora Daerah (Regional Authority to Implement Dwikora, martial law authority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peperti</td>
<td><em>Penguasa Perang Tertinggi</em> (Supreme War Authority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peranakan</td>
<td>acculturated Chinese communities in Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhimi</td>
<td><em>Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia</em> (Indonesian University Student Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permesta</td>
<td><em>Perjuangan Semesta</em> (The Total Struggle, regional uprising in Sulawesi in late 1950s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permina</td>
<td><em>Pertambangan Minyak Nasional</em> (National Oil Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemuda Islam</td>
<td>Islamic Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemuda Marhaenis</td>
<td>Marhaen Youth (PNI youth organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemuda Rakyat</td>
<td>The People's Youth (PKI youth organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertamina</td>
<td><em>Pertambangan Minyak dan Gas Bumi Nasional</em> (State Oil Corporation, a state-owned oil company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perti</td>
<td><em>Pergerakan Tarbiyah Islamiyah</em> (Islamic Educational Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGRI</td>
<td><em>Perserikatan Guru Republik Indonesia</em> (Republic of Indonesia's Teachers' Union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PII</td>
<td><em>Pelajar Islam Indonesia</em> (Indonesian Islamic Students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKI</td>
<td><em>Partai Komunis Indonesia</em> (Indonesian Communist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLN</td>
<td><em>Perusahaan Listrik Negara</em> (State Electricity Enterprise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMB</td>
<td><em>Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Bandung</em> (Bandung University Student Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMII</td>
<td><em>Pergerakan Mahasiswa Islam Indonesia</em> (Indonesian Islamic University Student Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMKRI</td>
<td><em>Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia</em> (Catholic University Students' Association of the Republic of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNI</td>
<td><em>Partai Nasional Indonesia</em> (Indonesian Nationalist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomad</td>
<td><em>Polisi Militer Angkatan Darat</em> (Army Military Police)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPD</td>
<td><em>Perusahaan Perangkutan Djakarta</em> (Jakarta Transport Enterprise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPMI</td>
<td><em>Perserikatan Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia</em> (Federation of Indonesian University Student Organisations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRN</td>
<td><em>Partai Rakyat Nasional</em> (National People's Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRRI</td>
<td><em>Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia</em> (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pribumi</td>
<td>indigenous, not ethnic Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>priyayi</td>
<td>member of Javanese aristocracy or bureaucratic elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td><em>Partai Sosialis Indonesia</em> (Indonesian Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSII</td>
<td><em>Partai Sarikat Islam Indonesia</em> (Indonesian Islamic Association Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPKAD</td>
<td><em>Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat</em> (Army Para-Commando Regiment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRI</td>
<td><em>Radio Republik Indonesia</em> (Radio of the Republic of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>santri</td>
<td>strict adherent of Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarekat Islam</td>
<td>Islamic League, early nationalist organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sarjana /sarjana muda</td>
<td>degree, diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sastra</td>
<td>Letters, Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sekber-Golkar</td>
<td><em>Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya</em> (Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seskoad</td>
<td><em>Sekolah Staf Komando Angkatan Darat</em> (Army Staff and Command College)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
<td><em>Sekolah Menengah Pertama</em>, junior secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMA</td>
<td><em>Sekolah Menengah Atas</em>, senior secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOBSI</td>
<td><em>Sentral Organisasi Buruh Seluruh Indonesia</em> (All-Indonesia Federation of Labour Organisations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOKSI</td>
<td><em>Sentral Organisasi Karyawan Sosialis Indonesia</em> (Indonesia Socialist Employees Organisation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOMAL</td>
<td><em>Sekretariat Bersama Organisasi Mahasiswa Lokal</em> (Joint Secretariat of Local University Student Organisations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spri</td>
<td><em>Staf Pribadi</em> (Personal Staff of the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOVIA</td>
<td><em>School Tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen</em> (School for the Education of Native Doctors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suku bangsa</td>
<td>ethnic group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Semar</td>
<td><em>Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret</em> (Letter of Instruction of 11 March)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taman Siswa</td>
<td>nationalist school system, lit. 'Garden of students'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THHK</td>
<td><em>Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan</em>, the Chinese Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totok</td>
<td>lit. pure or full-blooded; refers to China-born Indonesian Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tritura</td>
<td><em>Tri Tuntutan Rakyat</em> (The People's Three Demands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turba</td>
<td><em>turan ke bawah</em> (down to the people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBK</td>
<td><em>Universitas Bung Karno</em> (Bung Karno University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKI</td>
<td><em>Universitas Kristen Indonesia</em> (Christian University of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UI</td>
<td><em>Universitas Indonesia</em> (University of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPKB</td>
<td><em>Urusan Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa</em> (Bureau for the Promotion of National Unity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDEK</td>
<td><em>Undangan-undangan dasar 1945; Sosialisme à la Indonesia; Demokrasi terpimpin; Ekonomi terpimpin; Kepribadian Indonesia</em> (The five guiding principles of Sukarno's government after 1960: the 1945 constitution; Socialism à la Indonesia; Guided democracy; Guided economy; National identity)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An explanatory note on primary sources

Soe Hok-gie's diary:

The original manuscript consists of six separate parts as follows:

(i) 4 March 1957 to 16 July 1958: 20 entries of unknown format.


(iii) 7 January to 21 January 1966: 16 foolscap pages of single-space typescript titled 'Hari² mendjelang taufan didunia mahasiswa'; dated on the final page 25 January 1966 but covering all of the above period.

(iv) 1 January to 29 December 1968: a commercial 1968 diary book of A5 dimensions; the early entries are fragmentary and often unintelligible, some of them merely records of appointments or rough notes from meetings; as the year progresses the entries become more expansive and once more take on the form of a conventional diary. The volume also contains names and addresses of friends and acquaintances.

(v) 22 October 1968 to 18 October 1969: an A4-size spiral notebook containing 139 pages of almost daily handwritten entries; the diary begins during Soe's visit to the United States in October 1968. During this period he made two sets of diary entries, one in this notebook and another in the 1968 commercial diary listed above. There is also an additional 16 pages of research notes compiled from books and interviews during his period in the US.

(vi) 19 October to 10 December 1969: 25 pages of daily handwritten entries in a foolscap-size notebook.

Shortly after Soe's death, his brother Arief Budiman and a group of friends formed a foundation, Yayasan Mandalawangi, to arrange for the publication of an edited version of the diary. By 1972 a trial printing had been made of an incomplete draft.
However at this point the project stalled, apparently because of opposition to the publication of the diary from various quarters. It was not until 1983 that LP3ES finally managed to release the published volume under the title *Catatan Seorang Demonstran*, with a lengthy and useful introduction by Daniel Dhakidae.

Despite its success and the considerable interest it generated, the published version of the diary is marred in several respects. To begin with, there are a considerable number of typographical and transcription errors. Soe's handwriting presents occasional difficulties and in places the meaning of certain passages has been distorted or rendered obtuse. Secondly, the diary contains a bewildering number of references to individuals. Some are well-known public figures, but many more are friends and acquaintances of Soe from different periods of his life who are unknown outside that narrow context. Despite some explanatory notes at certain places on other matters, the reader is given no assistance in coping with this problem. Furthermore, the issue has been compounded by the editors' decision to use pseudonyms where the diary touches on sensitive and private matters regarded as potentially embarrassing to certain people. But this has not been an entirely satisfactory solution: those inside the small student circle were immediately able to identify everyone in spite of the pseudonyms, while several individuals whose actual names had been retained were deeply offended.

Finally, there were a number of unspecified passages deleted or amended in the published version. While these were mostly references of a sensitive personal nature, despite the claims of the editors to the contrary there were also several damaging references to public figures that were considered too dangerous to publish in their original form.

In the preparation of this study I have drawn on a photocopy of most of the original manuscript which I was able to make during a visit to Jakarta in 1978. At that time the first part of the diary - that section covering the years 1957-58 - had unfortunately disappeared or been mislaid. Consequently I have had to rely on the published version for those entries.
In preparing translations of passages from the diary (and also from Soe's other private and public writing) I have tried to retain the original feel of his characteristic prose style. The places where any words or sentences have been omitted have been indicated by a series of period marks .... Any foreign language words, usually English, in the original are rendered here in italics. Wherever it has been necessary to add additional words for the sake of comprehension, these have been enclosed within square brackets [ ].

In almost all cases I have used the actual names of people as they appear in Soe's original text. The only exceptions to this are references to individuals of a personal nature and a passage from a private letter where I have deleted several names for obvious political reasons.

**Soe Hok-gie's journalism:**

The articles detailed in the listing below have been drawn from all those Indonesian newspapers to which Soe was known to be a contributor. It nevertheless remains an incomplete list of his journalism. In addition to the essays he wrote under his own name (almost always appearing in full, rarely with just his initials 'shg'), Soe also prepared news items and reports for both *Kompas* and *Sinar Harapan* on a variety of matters, but especially about university and students affairs. These were published without a by-line. There were also occasional essays which he decided to write anonymously and on at least one occasion under a pseudonym. I have only included such articles below where I have found strong corroborative evidence verifying these as Soe's work. I have been unable to locate complete files of the Jakarta weekly *Djaja* or the Jakarta edition of *Mahasiswa Indonesia* which may both contain additional articles written by Soe. Unless otherwise noted, references to *Mahasiswa Indonesia* here refer to the West Java edition produced in Bandung.

*************
Bibliographical Listing

1. Works by Soe Hok-gie

a. Unpublished works

Personal diary, original manuscript in the possession of Soe Hok-gie's family.

Correspondence:
Letters to Herbert Feith
Letters to Herman Lantang

'Student politics in Indonesia', undated 17 page manuscript.


b. Published works: books, monographs and journal articles


1964 'Pelopor kesatuan bangsa: Dr Tjipto Mangunkusumo', Bara Eka, 1/1, May: 10-12.

1964 'For a fighting idea the journey never ends', Bara Eka, 1/4, November-December: 3, 6.


1965 'Liem Koen Hian dan perdujangan pembinaan bangsa', Bara Eka, 2/6, July-August: 6-11.

1965 'Ichtisar sedjarah tjita2 assimilasi', Bara Eka, 2/6, July-August: 12-14.


1965 'Mas Marco Kartodikromo: pahlawan jang dilupakan', Indonesia, No.2, August: 100-7.

1966 'Demonstrasi mahasiswa', Gema Psychologi and Mapala, January.


c. Journalism

'Sumpah Pemuda', *Djaja*, 26 October 1963.


'Sebuah penilaian baru terhadap kaum anti Kamunis (sic)', *Harian KAMI*, 20 August 1966.

'Antara kemerdekaan intelektuil dan instruksi partai (Part I and II)', *Kompas*, 20 and 22 August 1966.

'Sembilan tahun yang lalu mahasiswa-mahasiswa Universitas Peking mengamuk', *Djaja*, (exact date unknown, possibly a May edition).

'18 September 1948 - djangan sekali-kali tinggalkan sedjarah...Madiun (Part I and II)', *Kompas*, 20 and 21 September 1966.

'Kehantjuran politik gol. tengah?', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.17, 9 October 1966.

'Indonesia Raya, merdeka, merdeka', *Harian KAMI*, 28 October 1966.
'Bung Karno, faktor politik atau bukan', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.21, 6 November 1966.


1967


'Fakta disekitar peristiwa Madiun', *Kompas*, 10 February 1967.


'Pelarian politik di luar negeri', *Sinar Harapan*, 16 April 1967 (no by-line).


'Mbah Suro Nginggil', *Kompas*, 22 May 1967.


'Pembitjaran buku: The fall of Sukarno (Parts I and II)', *Sinar Harapan*, 16 and 17 June 1967.

'Akibat sosial dari peristiwa "Gestapu" dimasa depan (Parts I and II)', *Kompas*, 7 and 8 July 1967.


'Menaklukkan Gunung Slamet - bukan tempat honeymoon (Parts I and II)', *Kompas*, 14 and 15 September 1967.

'Menaklukkan Gunung Slamet - kalau tamu agung mau lewat (Parts III and IV)', *Kompas*, 16 and 18 September 1967.

'Kedjantanan seorang wartawan', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, (Edisi Pusat), No.3/2, Week 2, October 1967.

'Pendjelasan atas tanggapan A.M. Chandra', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, (Edisi Pusat), Week 4, October 1967.

'Moga-moga KAMI tidak mendadi neo PPMI - menjambut dua tahun KAMI (Parts I and II)', *Kompas*, 25 and 26 October 1967.

'Disekitar peristiwa pembunuhkan besar2an di Pulau Bali (Parts I and II)', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, (Edisi Pusat), Weeks 2 and 3, December 1967, by 'Dewa'.


1968


'Dibalik krisis kemahasiswaan Indonesia', *Sinar Harapan*, 1 February 1968.

'Adu litjik dan main sandiwara - dibalik kisah djatuhnja Ngo Dhien Dhiem' (Parts I and II), *Sinar Harapan*, 7 and 8 February 1968.

'Tjita2 Kartini dim pengalaman seorang mahasiswa Indonesia', *Kompas*, 20 April 1968.

'Resenisi film: "Si anak hilang jang kembali"', *Sinar Harapan*, 22 May 1968.

'Kekuatan raksasa - tersembunji dibalik kota mahasiswa', *Sinar Harapan*, 22 June 1968.

'Mimpi2 terachir seorang mahasiswa tua (Parts I and II)', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, Nos.106 and 107, 23 and 30 June 1968.

'Seorang dosen, seorang pengatjara dan seorang mahasiswa', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.108, 7 July 1968.


'Militerisme dikalangan mahasiswa', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.114, 18 August 1968 (no by-line).
'Kaum agama dan sekuler di Israel', *Sinar Harapan*, 20 August 1968.

'Mahasiswa Indonesia protes imperialis Rusia', *Kompas*, 24 August 1968 (no by-line).


"'Perdjoengan kita" setelah 23 th.'*, Kompas*, 28 August 1968.

'Soal Tjekoslowakia soal kemanusiaan atau soal komunisme?', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.116, 1 September 1968.

'Siapakah saja?', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.117, 8 September 1968.

Srigala biru', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.121, 6 October 1968.

'Perang Vietnam dan tjalon presiden jang tidak mejakinkan', *Sinar Harapan*, 30 October 1968.

'Benarkah AS mau libatkan Indonesia di Vietnam?*, *Sinar Harapan*, 31 October 1968.

'Generasi jang marah', *Sinar Harapan*, 2 November 1968.


'Seorang pastor, pemberontakan petani and keketjewaan', *Kompas*, 20 November 1968.

'Surat dari Amerika: Masaalah identitas negro di Amerika', *Indonesia Raya*, 16 December 1968.

1969


'Kelujuran di campus Amerika Serikat: Saja bukan wakil KAMI', *Sinar Harapan*, 1 February 1969.


'Hak untuk tidak mendjawab', *Kompas*, 8 February 1969.


'Hippies, peace and love', *Sinar Harapan*, 8 March 1969.


'Persoalan tawan politik', *Harian KAMI*, 4 April 1969.


''Pelatjuran'' intelektuil', *Sinar Harapan*, 21 April 1969.


'Kebebasan pers dan keketjewaan masjarakat', *Indonesia Raya*, 12 May 1969.


'Pro dan anti lokalisasi pelatjuran' (Soe Hok-gie and others), *Sinar Harapan*, 21 June 1969.


'FSUI peroleh koleksi buku Prof. Dr. Tjan Tjoe Som Alm.', *Kompas*, 12 July 1969.

'Betapa tak menariknya pemerintah sekarang?', *Kompas*, 16 July 1969.


'Generasi jang lahir setelah tahun empat lima', *Kompas*, 16 August 1969.

'Krisis moral generasi remadja?', *Komunikasi*, 1/4, 25 August 1969; also appears in *Sinar Harapan*, 28 August 1969.

'Kenang²an bekas mahasiswa: Dosen² djuga perlu dikontrol!', *Mahasiswa Indonesia*, No.168, 31 August 1969.


'Wadjah mahasiswa UI jang bopeng sebelah', *Indonesia Raya*, 22 October 1969.


'Siapa mau beli suara mahasiswa untuk pemilu?', *Sinar Harapan*, 1 December 1969.

**Published posthumously**


'Pokok pengantar diskusi tentang: Mas Marco Kartodikromo', *Komunikasi*, No.15, Year 1, 10 February 1970.

'Lahirnya Hari ABRI 5 Okt. '45 - tjukilan sedjarah', *Sinar Harapan*, 5 October 1971.

**2. Books, theses and articles by other authors**

Abeyasekere, Susan

Adam, Ahmat

Adams, Cindy

Ahmaddani G. Martha, Wibisono, Christianto and Anwar, Yozar (eds.)

Amstutz, James Bruce

Andaya, Barbara Watson and Andaya, Leonard

Andaya, Leonard Y., Coppel, Charles, and Suzuki, Yugi

Anderson, Benedict


1990  
*Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia.*  
Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Anderson, Benedict and Kahin, Audrey (eds.)  
1982  
*Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debate.*  
Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University.

Anderson, B.R.O'G. and McVey, Ruth T.  
1971  
*A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia.*  
Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University.

Anwar, Rosihan  
1967  

1981  
*Sebelum Prahara: Pergolakan Politik Indonesia 1961-1965.*  
Jakarta: Sinar Harapan.

Anwar, Yozar  
1980  
*Angkatan 66 Sebuah Cacatan Harian Mahasiswa.*  
Jakarta: Sinar Harapan.

1982  
*Protes Kaum Muda.*  
Jakarta: Variasi Jaya-Kartini Group.

Arndt, H.W.  
1971  
'Banking in hyperinflation and stabilization', in Bruce Glassburner (ed.), *The Economy of Indonesia: Selected Readings.*  
Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

--------  
1963  
*Assimilasi dalam rangka Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa.*  

--------  
1964  
*Assimilasi dalam rangka Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa.*  
(Penerbitan Khusus 326).

Atmakusumah  
1981  
*Kebebasan Pers dan Arus Informasi di Indonesia.*  
Jakarta: Lembaga Studi Pembangunan.

Bachtiar, Harsja W.  
1968  
'Indonesia', in D. K. Emmerson (ed.), *Students and Politics in Developing Nations.*  
New York: Praeger.

Budiman, Arief  
1974  
'A conversation with Pak Harto', in Smith, Roger M. (ed.), *Southeast Asia Documents of Political Development and Change.*  
Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bunnell, F.P.  
1966  
'Guided Democracy foreign policy: 1960-1965: President Sukarno moves from non-alignment to confrontation', *Indonesia,*  
No.2, October: 37-76.

Castles, Lance  
1967  
'The ethnic profile of Djakarta', *Indonesia,* No.3, April: 153-204.
Coppel, Charles


Coppel, Charles and Suryadinata, Leo

Cribb, Robert

Cribb, Robert (ed.)

Crouch, Harold


Cushman, Jennifer and Wang Gungwu (eds.)
1988 Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Dahm, Bernard

Dake, A.C.A.

Davies, A.F.

Dijk, Cees van

Dollard, John
Douglas, Stephen A.
1970 *Political Socialization and Student Activism in Indonesia*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

-----

Emmerson, D.K. (ed.)

Feith, Herbert
1964 'President Soekarno, the army and the communists: the triangle changes shape', *Asian Survey*, Vol.IV, No.8: 969-80.
1968a 'Suharto's search for a political format', *Indonesia*, No 6, October: 88-105.
1968b 'A blot on the New Order's record: the fate of 80,000 political prisoners in Indonesia', *New Republic*, 13 April.

Feith, Herbert and Castles, Lance (eds.)

Feith, Herbert and Lev, Daniel

Finch, Susan and Lev, Daniel S.

Freeman, Maurice
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher/Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
<td><em>Social Commitment in Literature and the Arts.</em> Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gani, M.</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Surat Kabar Indonesia Pada Tiga Zaman.</em> Jakarta: Pusat Publikasi Pemerintah Departemen Penerangan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatta, Mohammad</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td><em>Past and Future.</em> Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1960b</td>
<td>'Demokrasi kita', Pandji Masjarakat, 1 May.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>'Alirans and the fall of the Old Order', Indonesia, No.9, April: 23-66.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia editors</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>'Selected documents relating to the September 30th Movement and its epilogue', Indonesia, No.1, April: 131-204.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kahin, Audrey R. (ed.) 1985  

Kahin, George McTuman  
1952  
*Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1963  

Kahin, George McTuman (ed.)  
1963  

1964  

KAMI  
1966  
*The Leader, the Man and the Gun.* Jakarta: KAMI Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Indonesia [Reprinted in 1984 as Jalur Baru Sesudah Runtuhnya Ekonomi Terpimpin (The Leader, the Man and the Gun). Jakarta: Sinar Harapan].

1984  
Jalur Baru Sesudah Runtuhnya Ekonomi Terpimpin (The Leader, the Man and the Gun). Jakarta: Sinar Harapan.

Karni, Rahadi S.  
1974  

Kroef, Justus M. van der  
1957a  

1957b  

1958a  

1958b  

1962  

1964  
'Indonesian communism's cultural offensive', *Australian Outlook,* Vol.18, No.1: 40-61.

1965a  

1965b  
*The Communist Party of Indonesia.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia.

Kwee, John B.

Latief, A.

Legge, J.D.

Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa
1964  *Pembaina Kesatuan Bangsa* (the Promotion of National Unity). Jakarta.

Lev, Daniel S.

Lim, Linda Y.C. and Gosling, Peter L.A. (eds.)

Lubis, Mochtar

Lubis, T. Mulya and Fauzi Abdullah
McDonald, Hamish
1980  
_Suharto’s Indonesia_. Blackburn: Fontana.

McIntyre, Angus
1972  

1996  
_Soeharto’s composure: considering the biographical and autobiographical accounts_. Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University.

McIntyre, Angus (ed.)
1993  
_Indonesian Political Biography: In Search of Cross-Cultural Understanding_. Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University.

Mackie, J.A.C.
1961  
'Indonesian politics under Guided Democracy', _Australian Outlook_, Vol.15, No.3: 260-79.

1961-62  
'Indonesia’s government estates and their masters', _Pacific Affairs_, Vol.XXXIV, No.4: 337-60.

1963  

1964  
'Inflation and confrontation in Indonesia', _Australian Outlook_, Vol.18, No.3: 278-98.

1965  

1967  
_Problems of the Indonesian Inflation_. Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University.

1974  

1976a  

Mackie, J.A.C.(ed.)
1976  

McVey, Ruth T.
1963b  

1965  

1968  


1994  

Nio Joe Lan  
1962  
Sastera Indonesia-Tionghoa. Jakarta: Gunung Agung.

Nugroho Notosusanto  
1979  
Tentara Peta: pada jaman pendudukan Jepang di Indonesia.. Jakarta: Gramedia.

Nugroho Notosusanto and Ismael Saleh  
1968  
The coup attempt of the 'September 30th Movement' in Indonesia. Jakarta: Pembimbing Masa.

Oetomo, Dédé  
1989  

1991  

Oey Hong Lee  
1971  
Indonesian Government and Press During Guided Democracy. Hull: Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hull.

Paauw, Douglas S.  
1963  

Paget, Roger  
1967a  

1967b  

1967c  

1970  

Pauker, Ewa T.  
1964  
'Has the Sukarno regime weakened the PKI?', Asian Survey, Vol.IV, No.9, September: 1058-70.

1965  

Pauker, Guy J.  
1961  

1964  


1985 *Politik dan Ideologi Mahasiswa Indonesia*. Jakarta: LP3ES.


Saidi, Ridwan
1984
*Pemuda Islam dalam Dinamika Politik Bangsa 1925-1984.*
Jakarta: Rajawali.

Salmon, Claudine
1981

Salmon, Claudine and Lombard, Denys
1977

Siregar, Amir Effendi
1983
*Pers Mahasiswa Indonesia: Patah Tumbuh Hilang Berganti.*
Jakarta: Karya Unipress.

Sitompul, A.
1982
*HMI dalam pandangan seorang pendeta.* Jakarta: Gunung Agung.

Sjahrir, Sutan
1947
1949
1968

Skinner, G. William
1958
1960
'Change and persistence in Chinese culture overseas: a comparison of Thailand and Java', *Journal of the South Seas Society,* No.16: 86-100.
1961
1963

Smith, Edward Cecil
1969

Soe Hok-gie
See attached list.

Soe Lie Piet (Monsieur Adonis)
1929
*Takdir!?.* Surabaya: Penghidoepan.
1929
*Oeler Jang Tjantik.* Surabaya: Penghidoepan.

1931  *Minjak dan aer*. Batavia: Sunrise.

1931  *Tjinta atawa Kewadjiban*. Batavia: Sunrise.


1934  *Pembalasannja Saorang Miskin*. Surabaya: Tjerita Roman.

1934  *Djadi Pendita*. Surabaya: Tjerita Roman.

1934  *Dalam Tjankreman Iblis*. Bandung: Silat Romans.

1934  *Bidadari dari Telaga Toba*. Surabaya: Tjerita Roman.


1939  *Gadis Kolot*. Surabaya: Tjerita Roman.


1954  *Dewi Kintamani*. Jakarta: Purnama-Roman.

Soedjatmoko  

Soedjatmoko (ed.)  

Soeharto  

Somers, Mary F.  
Somers Heidhues, Mary F.


Sudisman

Sumitro Djojohadikusumo

Sundhaussen, Ulf

Surjo Sediono, R.

Suryadinata, Leo


Suryadinata, Leo (ed.)


Tanja, Victor

Tempo
1986  

Thomas, K.D. and Glassburner, Bruce
1965  

Thomas, R. Murray
1969  
1973  

Tickell, Paul
1981  
'Introduction', in Mas Marco Kartodikromo, Three Early Indonesian Short Stories. Translated by Paul Tickell. Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University.

Utrecht, Ernst
1984  
'Peristiwa HMI Jember (Bulan² Mai dan Juni 1964)', Demi Demokrasi, No.2: 33-36.

van der Kroef, J.M.
See Kroef, van der

Wahib, Ahmad
1981  
Pergolakan Pemikiran Islam: Catatan Harian Ahmad Wahib. Jakarta: LP3ES.

Weatherbee, D.E.
1966  
1976  

Weinstein, Franklin B.
1969  
Indonesia Abandons Confrontation. Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University
1976  

Wertheim, W.F.
1966  
'Indonesia before and after the Untung coup', Pacific Affairs, Vol.39, Spring-Summer: 115-27.
1969  
'From aliran to class struggle in the countryside of Java', Pacific Viewpoint, 10: 1-17.
1970  

Wibisono, Christianto
1970  
3. Newspapers and periodicals

Alma Mater (mimeo)
Angkatan Bersenjata
Bara Eka
Berita Yudha
Bintang Timur
Gema Psychologi (mimeo)
Han Po
Harian KAMI
Harian Rakjat
Hoakiao
Hong Po
Kompas
Komunikasi
Indonesian Raya
Liberty
Mahasiswa Indonesia, edisi Djabar (West Java edition)
Mahasiswa Indonesia, edisi Pusat (Jakarta edition)
Mutiara
Pedoman
Pembaharuan (mimeo)
Sastranasya (mimeo)
Sinar Harapan
Star Weekly
Tjin Po

4. Other documents

'The Indonesian Revolution of 1965: Collection of Pamphlets'. Held by the National Library of Australia, Canberra.

President Sukarno's speeches:
'Amanat PJM Presiden Sukarno di hadapan Komando Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia (KAMI) di Istora, Senajan, Djakarta 21 Desember 1965'. Mimeograph, Sekretariat Negara.

'Amanat di Sidang Paripurna Kabinet Dwikora dengan dihadiri juga oleh wakil-wakil dari mahasiwa-mahasiswa dan wartawan 15 January 1966'. Published by Departemen Penerangan.

5. Film